

AMADOR SAWMILL AND MINING ASSOCIATION

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A 501 (c) (3) tax exempt non-profit Ca. corporation

“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.”



HISTORY OF OUR CORLISS STEAM ENGINE

Records show that it was built between 1900 and 1904 as serial number 16836 by the Nordberg Manufacturing Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin with a Bore of 9” and a Stroke of 24” using Corliss long range patented valve gear. It is rated at 60 horsepower at 100 rpm and 125 lbs. pressure and has a vertical fly ball governor. In 1904 it was shipped to Utah where it was set up to operate a creamery. In the late 1970’s it was found by John Burton near Laytonville in Mendocino County CA at a long closed sawmill being cut up for scrap. He salvaged what he could and moved it to his shop and started to put it together. Some small parts were missing and he decided to sell it to Jerry Virtue and Bill Braun in 1997, after which it was moved to Jerry’s shop. In 2001 it was donated to the Association and moved to Bill’s shop where this recent photo was taken. A complete restoration is being undertaken with funds from grants and donations of money and time from dedicated volunteers. The cylinder was bored and a new piston and rod machined along with new rings. New crosshead Babbitt was poured and machined, everything cleaned and painted. Some 19 ½ cubic yards of concrete was poured in February & March of 2006 next to the existing sawmill site for a new foundation. Installation of the 3 1/2 ton engine along with a secure building is under way and steam up is anticipated for the July 2006 county fair.



This is just a snippet of the thousands of board feet of lumber that we produced at the four day Amador County Fair. We counted something like 1000 folks a day enjoying our demonstration of an authentic steam saw mill in action. We answered hundreds of questions and explained through videos and historic photos how it was done before the age of internal combustion engines. Many were glad to see the boiler being fueled only by mill scraps.



The older fellows teaching the younger fellows how to “place” concrete in just the right spot for the foundation for the steam engine.



Bill Braun, Jim Miller and Richard Hansen look over the 30" wide Orton Planer recently donated to the Association by Burnett and Sons. Jim is President of Burnett and Sons, a millwork and lumber company that has been in business in Sacramento and in Jim's family since 1869. The 1940's era planer along with an 8' long American joiner, rip saw, and other equipment is being replaced with computer assisted modern tools at the Burnett plant. These cast iron beauties may be retired from Burnett and Sons for now, but after we rebuild them they will be un-retired and installed in our future millwork museum for demonstration to the public.



In November we set up and ran the mill with the 1954 Chrysler Hemi Industrial engine for 6 hours for a custom millwork job. Afterwards we had a pot luck dinner for the whole crew.



Some of the many volunteers who donate their time and effort to keep this living history museum going.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: The 2006 Amador Fair is July 27-30

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

Corliss restoration work @ Bill's shop
Foundation work at fairgrounds
Mill building expansion construction work at fairgrounds
Prep work for fair: moving logs, moving equipment, set up

Group workdays are 3rd Sat. of month: May 20, June 17

Additional workdays at your convenience.

Don't wait to be called – give Bill a call (209) 245-5097

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