

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Railtown 1897 Steam Train Operating Season Opens April 2-3

Calaveras, Mariposa and Tuolumne County Residents Ride FREE All Weekend!

JAMESTOWN, Calif. – On Saturday and Sunday, April 2-3, Railtown 1897 State Historic Park (SHP) in Jamestown will begin the first weekend of steam train operations for 2011. Once underway, steam-powered excursion trains will depart on-the-hour from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekends through October. And, during opening weekend only, residents of Calaveras, Mariposa and Tuolumne counties ride for free with proof of residency. Visitors from near and far are encouraged to step aboard for a six-mile, 40-minute roundtrip ride along the rails of the famous “Movie Railroad,” passing through California’s scenic Gold Country.

To kick off the first day of operations on Saturday, April 2, the public is invited to attend the “Early Bird” program that starts at 7 a.m. in the Roundhouse to watch as the crew lights the fire and prepares the locomotive for the day. The locomotive is started with the tossing of a burning rag into the firebox, then the crew works to fuel, lubricate and water the engine as the boiler is slowly brought up to temperature. Knowledgeable guides will be on hand in the Roundhouse to narrate every step of the process. Then, interested spectators can follow it out into the yard and watch the turntable in operation as the crew moves the locomotive into place at the Depot. The official ceremonies begin with Vietnam Veteran Jim Sutherland performing the national anthem and a raising of the flag at 9:45 a.m. followed by a grand entrance and ceremonial whistle blowing.

Throughout the day on Saturday and Sunday, many other special activities will be offered as well, including railcar rides, tours of the historic roundhouse and demonstrations of the historic belt-driven machine shop.

Tickets for the steam train excursion rides aboard “mountain observation cars” are \$13 for adults, \$6 for youths ages 6-17 and kids five and under are free. All tickets include park admission and are available on a first-come, first served basis at the ticket window beginning at 10 a.m. on the days the trains are running.

About Railtown 1897 State Historic Park

Operated by California State Parks with assistance from the nonprofit California State Railroad Museum Foundation, Railtown 1897 State Historic Park offers year-round tours plus train rides weekends April-October (selected dates only November-December). Known as “The Movie Railroad,” the Park and its trains have been featured in hundreds of feature films, TV shows, and commercials. The Park is located at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Reservoir Road in Jamestown, reached by highways 49/108. Open daily except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day, the Park’s operating hours vary by season: April-October, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; November-March, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. For more information, call Railtown 1897 State Historic Park at (209) 984-3953, or visit our Web site at www.railtown1897.org

For More, Visit www.parks.ca.gov/CapitalDistrict