



# News Release

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January 12, 2007

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## Ray Carrington Sawmill and Railroad Sculptures to be Exhibited at Museum

*“Scrap Art or Iron Icons?” to debut January 27, showcasing playful and diverse railroad worker sculptures*

**SACRAMENTO** – An all-new exhibit, *Scrap Art or Iron Icons? The Sawmill and Railroad Work Sculptures of Ray Carrington*, opens Saturday, January 27, at the California State Railroad Museum in Old Sacramento. *Iron Icons* recognizes the work of Ray Carrington, a Fairfield, California artist who for over 40 years has been preserving California railroad history via imaginative sculptures. *Scrap Art or Iron Icons?* will continue through July 8.

Most of the exhibition is drawn from the University of California at Berkeley Center for Forestry Carrington Gallery “Carrington Sawmill and Railroad Sculpture Collection,” which contains 235 of Carrington’s metal sculptures. Many of these works are now located in U.C. Berkeley’s Carrington Gallery, located at the Richmond, California, Research Station.

Carrington, a resident of Fairfield, taught high school mathematics in Vacaville for 35 years. He says working with young people helped stir his imagination, and a career with summers off enabled him to pursue his art. Both a self-taught welder and artist, Carrington has never taken an art course. Since 1966 exhibits of his sculptures, made of various materials, have been held in galleries from the San Francisco Bay area to Washington, D.C., Chicago, Illinois, and Portland, Oregon.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ray Carrington is a 1953 graduate of U.C. Berkeley’s School of Forestry who was born and raised in the railroad town of Dunsmuir, California. Carrington has taken objects

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salvaged from three northern California sawmills – Mt. Shasta Pine Lumber Co., Mt. Shasta.; Long Bell Lumber Co., Weed; and McCloud Lumber Co., McCloud – and formed them into sculptures intended to catch the experience, energy, force, and spirit of bygone lumbering days. Each piece is a simple assemblage preserving the identities of the original tools and parts they are fashioned from.

The materials used in Carrington’s “Railroad Worker” series were obtained from various railroad lines in northern California, including the Sacramento Northern (an electric railway which once stretched from Oakland to Chico via Sacramento); Southern Pacific (once the state’s largest railroad and transportation company); McCloud River; and Fruit Growers’ Supply (Hilt). Many of the railroad spikes, track plates, and tools are worn – pitted and ravaged by time and use. Some still bear the markings of their original use.

According to Carrington, his forging, twisting, and welding of old railroad spikes, tools and logging artifacts into sculptures chronicles the toils and the ingenuity of workers in the railroad and logging industries. Decades ago, the two industries were inextricably intertwined – railroads were a primary means of moving logs from forest to sawmill, and finished lumber from sawmill to market. An expanding nation was building homes and businesses, and lumber was needed for furniture, packaging, and plenty of other uses.

Says Carrington, “I knew that these objects would be lost forever if they were not preserved in some valuable form in which they could be passed on. It would be a shame to lose the many reminders of this period’s historic significance to future generations. I have attempted to make every piece a simple assemblage in order to preserve the identity of each tool or part.” He is currently working on 300 sculptures fashioned from materials once found in and around the destroyed company sawmill in the town of Hilt, California.

The U.C. Berkeley Carrington Gallery has been gifted by the nonprofit Carrington Foundation for Public Art, which has donated Carrington’s metal sculptures worldwide. For more information and photographs of the artists’ many works, visit [www.carringtonfoundation.net](http://www.carringtonfoundation.net).

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*Operated by California State Parks with financial assistance from the nonprofit California State Railroad Museum Foundation, the California State Railroad Museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day. Widely regarded as North America’s finest and most popular railroad museum, the complex of facilities includes the 100,000-square foot Railroad History Museum plus the reconstructed Central Pacific Railroad Passenger Station and Freight Depot, 1849 Eagle Theatre, and Big Four and Dingley Spice Mill commercial buildings in Old Sacramento State Historic Park. For updated 24-hour information, call (916) 445-6645 or visit [www.californiastaterailroadmuseum.org](http://www.californiastaterailroadmuseum.org).*

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