



Goleta DEPOT DISPATCH

Newsletter of the Goleta Depot Railroad Museum

Volume 8, Number 3 — Fall 1988

Another Steaming Summer Continues

At this writing, we are at the midway point of our "Another Steaming Summer" program of live-steam train rides for young and old on the museum's 1/3-mile-long miniature railroad.

The public response, thus far, has been terrific. Ridership is up about 46%, rising from an average of 144 daily passengers last year to about 210 this year.



Steve Kramer and Allan Cooley turn the engine.

The final two run dates are Sept. 10 and 24. Hours remain from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

All tickets are \$1, but complimentary passes may be obtained at Santa Barbara Toyota (formerly Redford's), 5611 Hollister Ave., the event co-sponsor.

Docents Enjoy, Learn at Roaring Camp

Five members of the museum docents were treated to an informative and action-packed field trip on July 17 to the Roaring Camp Historical Recreation Center



Malcolm took this shot of his companions.

in Felton, Calif. above Santa Cruz. Participating were Christine Negus, Gene Boswell, Malcolm Alexander, Hilda Volkman, and Bev Casselman, who generously contributed the transportation via his twin-engine Cessna aircraft.

The group left the Santa Barbara Airport about 8 a.m., arriving at Watsonville some 75 minutes later. The museum rented a car for the group to make the 40-mile roundtrip to Felton.

The visit had been pre-arranged with Georgiana Clark, chief executive officer at Roaring Camp, who saw to it that our docents received every kindness during their stay. They received complimentary rides on the two operating railroads – the Santa Cruz Big Trees & Pacific and the Roaring Camp & Big Trees Narrow-Gauge Railway – where they were twice intro-

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DISPATCH QUIZ

... a series of questions — about Goleta Depot, our museum, or railroading in general — for the enjoyment and edification of our readers. Those sending in the most correct answers will be eligible to win a gift membership in their name for a friend or loved one.

Answers to last issue's questions: 1. The depot was moved in November 1981; 2. "Tallowpot" refers to a locomotive fireman. 3. Essay: Judges agreed that the most interesting answer to this question came from Jon Bartel. It is on file in the museum office.

The Dispatch Quiz is being suspended indefinitely, to make room for a new feature, scheduled to appear in the next issue.

duced to their fellow passengers by way of the on-board public-address system.

The purpose of the trip, besides the obvious recreational aspects, was to gather information on uniforms and practices that could be applied at Goleta Depot in the further development of our docents program. Here, too, the personnel at Roaring Camp were most helpful, answering questions and providing addresses where additional information could be obtained.

The group's busy day ended with their safe return to Santa Barbara at about 6:30 the same evening. All in all, it was a most memorable and valuable experience for everyone who participated. As Docent Malcolm Alexander extolled, "I will remember it fondly all of my days." "A very successful and delightful trip," added Hilda Volkman.

Volunteers Have a Party

About 30 museum volunteers, staff, and family members shared a potluck dinner and one another's company on Aug. 13, following another busy day of museum activity. The live-steamers gave rides on the little train and the HO exhibit was opened for viewing, while Al and Alice Jaramillo kept the barbecue fire burning.

It was a chance for our hard-working volunteers to relax and spend time together, as well as to enjoy the museum in a way that they seldom can.

Last Call for Sacramento

As of this writing, there is still space for two on the museum's Sept. 15-19 rail excursion to Sacramento, during the 6th annual U.S. National Handcar Races.

The \$320 package includes roundtrip rail fare; four nights lodging; admission to the California State Railroad Museum, including a VIP guided-tour of the museum and restoration shops; and a Sunday brunch cruise on the stern-wheel steamer, Elizabeth Louise. Group members also will have the chance to cheer for our entry in this year's handcar competition.

Painters Give Depot Bright New Look

For many months, the exterior of Goleta Depot had been a sorry sight. Its paint, already several years old,

was badly faded, cracking, and peeling off the walls in great chunks.

Recently, two museum volunteers devoted many hours labor in the hot sun to remedy the situation with fresh applications of paints to match the historic S.P. Colonial Yellow and its brown-trim companion.



Gene Boswell demonstrates his second-story skills.

Gene Boswell began the project in late July. This was not a new experience for Gene, who twice before had given the building a much-needed facial.

Bob Burtness took over the brushwork in early August. By this time, Bob found, most of the unfinished work was on the second floor.

Bob and Gene, both teachers in the Goleta Valley, deserve our deepest gratitude for generously donating many of their summer days to the museum to give its landmark centerpiece a fresh, like-new appearance.

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PORTRAIT OF A MUSEUM VOLUNTEER

Museum visitors get a taste of Merrie Olde England when the docent behind the express counter or at the HO controls is Timothy Malcolm Alexander.

Born in the City of York, Yorkshire in 1915, Malcolm began railroad work at the ripe old age of 16 as a signal maintenance engineer. A side benefit of the job was the chance to ride some of Great Britain's legendary trains.

He moved to Scotland, working for the British Railway drawing office in Edinburgh and, then, Glasgow, where he saw the Queen Mary launched. Later, he returned to England, joining the outside maintenance staff at Southampton. From 1957, he worked in the southern district drawing office where, by retirement in 1980, he had advanced to the rank of senior technical officer.

Malcolm now lives in Goleta with his son, Lawrence, and daughter-in-law, Jane. Her Yorkshire pudding is his favorite food. Lawrence has his own business, servicing and rebuilding classic MG automobiles. Malcolm's other son, Ian, lives in Fordingbridge, Hampshire.

Hobbies include rail travel and photography. Fortunately for the museum and his fellow volunteers, Malcolm takes pleasure in sharing his fine photos. He stills plays cricket, a lifelong pastime which almost became a career.

His involvement with Goleta Depot began with a museum visit, followed by membership. Later, he joined the model railroaders. Gradually, his participation widened to include weekly service as a museum agent, helping on work days and projects, and Museum Committee service.

Today, Malcolm ranks as the museum's most versatile volunteer, and someone willing to tackle any job.

Sadly, Malcolm will be retiring to his native land in late September. Although he promises to keep in touch, he will be deeply missed. His energy and enthusiasm, his friendship and good humor will not be easily replaced.



Malcolm Alexander

San Diegan Inaugural

The Goleta Depot Railroad Museum participated in the long-awaited debut of Amtrak's *San Diegan* service to Santa Barbara in grand style. A total of 62 adults and 10 children comprised the museum group, including members, staff, and public. Eight members of Gene and Joan Boswell's family joined us in San Diego, where they had been vacationing, and two members of Stu and Rachel Wallace's family, Dorothy Johnson and Debbie Walton, made the roundtrip from Simi.

The museum was a focus of special attention during the inaugural, since our group represented about half of those boarding in Santa Barbara. Gary Coombs was asked to say a few words at the brief morning ceremony, during which he was officially recognized as the new train's "First Passenger." Phyllis Olsen was also honored, joining State Senator Gary Hart and Cal-Trans representative Carolyn Ewing in launching the train by breaking the obligatory bottle of champagne over the front of the Amtrak engine.

Our time in San Diego was brief, but everyone made use of it as best they could. Many in the group enjoyed a leisurely lunch, taking advantage of the large selection of restaurants near the train station. Others visited the Maritime Museum and waterfront, two blocks distance. Some went shopping at a downtown mall, while others drove off with relatives or friends living in San Diego.

The trip back was marked by a train packed between San Diego and Los Angeles with beach-goers (complete with paddle-boards, inner-tubes, and sand)

making a Sunday afternoon return home.

On the journey south, we had learned that the *San Diegan* takes on additional cars in Los Angeles, as well as fully reversing its direction there (making the additional \$10 for the roundtrip in Custom Class a real bargain, since only these seats also reverse!). The train's end car (opposite the engine) is set up for conventional passenger use, but it also contains the remote "motorman's controls" which are used to operate the power units southbound below Los Angeles and northbound above L.A.

We were lucky enough to be assigned this special car on the return, which gave group members the chance to experience some of the excitement of riding in an engine cab. A front window afforded an unobstructed nighttime view of the track in front of us and this, coupled with the sounds of the warning horns mounted on the car, made highway grade crossings a new sensation for even the most seasoned rail travelers in the group.

We reached Santa Barbara about 11 p.m., nearly an hour behind schedule owing to time lost mostly south of Glendale. It had been a long and tiring day, but one that few of us would soon forget.

New Book Honors Beck House

The latest historical publication of the Institute for American Research was unveiled at an Aug. 28 ceremony at the Santa Barbara Humane Society. The subject is Beck House, the restored farmhouse and local landmark — now the Society's administrative headquarters — which appears on the 1988 Goleta Val-

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Depot Day '88 — Special Report

The 6th Annual Depot Day will take place on Sunday, Oct. 16. Scheduled once again as the anchor-leg event of the Goleta Valley Days festival, celebrating its 12th Anniversary this year, Depot Day runs from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

A highlight of Depot Day '88 will be rides on a competition handcar,



on loan from the California State Railroad Museum, sponsor of the U.S. National Handcar Races.

This year's program also includes many popular activities returning from previous years. There is no admission charge.

Christine Negus is serving for the first time as chairman for Depot Day — the railroad museum's No. 1 annual public event. Members are reminded that their assistance is vital to the success of the day. Help is needed with preparations, phone calls, baking, staffing, advance ticket sales, hosting, and other tasks.

If you are able to help — on Depot Day or during the busy preceding weeks — please give Christine a call (964-3436), or leave a message with the museum office.

Barbecue Served in the "Dining Car"

A delicious barbecue dinner will be available from noon until 3 p.m., thanks to the cooperative efforts of the Native Sons of the Golden West and the Institute for American Research Board of Directors.

The meal includes tri-tip, green salad, toasted french bread, and barbecue beans. Tickets are \$6.50 (\$6 in advance); children 12 and under are \$4.50.

Members are urged to buy their tickets in advance. For reservations, call the museum office (964-3540), or purchase tickets there on weekday afternoons or from the agent during museum hours.

"Club Car" to Serve Refreshments

Hot dogs, lemonade, soft drinks, baked goods, and other tasty refreshments will be sold throughout the event day by our volunteers.

Rail Rides Return

Among Depot Day's most popular activities are the rides on the 1/8-size steam trains and the full-scale "speeder." This will be the last steam-train run of the year, coming on the heels of a most successful "Another Steaming Summer" program. After Depot Day, the tracks will be dismantled until next year.

Bob Mahan also will be on hand for another Depot Day, to give

mainline rides on his Fairmont inspection car.

Silent Auction Certain to Please

During Depot Day, don't forget to stop by the Silent Auction tables and place bids on your favorite items. This is an important revenue source for the museum and those who participate always find terrific bargains among the toys, household goods, other new items, trips, meals, railroading, and collectibles.

Members among the merchant or professional communities are urged to call in your pledges of merchandise or services for the auction. Some homemade and good used items also will be included among the items going up for bids.

Steam Display will be Hot

Also returning for '88 is the popular exhibit of steam engines, coordinated this year by Gene Allen and Ernest Thomsen. Last year's display was featured in *U.S. Boat & Ship Modeler*, a hobby magazine.

Bell to Ring Again

Jim Higan again will loan us his old steam locomotive bell for the event. This time around, we hope to make the bell available (at least on a limited basis) to Depot Day attendees. Ear plugs are advised!

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ley Days Button.

The 24-page booklet, *Beck House: A Goleta Farmhouse Reborn*, was co-authored by Institute Executive Director Gary Coombs and Jon Bartel, Director of Publications, UCSB Alumni Assn., and a member of the Institute Board of Directors.

The Institute originated the Goleta Valley Days publication series in 1982. Since that time, the organization has prepared booklets or book-length

works, all for popular audiences, on all of the local historic places selected as Goleta Valley Days landmark themes.

The booklet was made possible by the Institute's Deborah Spalding Pelissero and Godwin Joseph Pelissero Publication Fund and was co-sponsored by the Humane Society. It sells for \$2.50 and is available at the Goleta Depot Railroad Museum bookshop.