



Goleta

DEPOT DISPATCH

Newsletter of the Goleta Depot Railroad Museum

Volume 8, Number 4 — Winter 1988

Visit Sparks "Handcar Fever"

The Goleta Depot Railroad Museum is building its own handcar! The decision came on the heels of the month-long loan from the California State Railroad Museum of one of its competition handcars, following the U.S. National Handcar Races in September.

The handcar's whirlwind visit left little doubt here that having our own handcar would have a tremendous impact on the museum's overall program.

Rides were offered on the borrowed car on the last day of "Another Steaming Summer" and on Depot Day, during which over 300 riders enjoyed the thrill of powering themselves up and down the museum tracks. During its stay, the handcar appeared in the Goleta Valley Days parade, and was highlighted in the local newspapers and on the TV news.

Handcar Fund Established

Dave and Jane Hieter have donated \$100 to kick off a Goleta Depot Handcar Fund. No one caught "Handcar Fever" worse than Dave, who with Jane became this year's two new members to our handcar team.

Dave sees a Goleta Depot handcar as a "hands-on piece of railroad history perfect for a railroad museum" and something with the "potential to be a rallying point" for community involvement and the recruitment of new members. A professional photographer, Dave also has helped the project along by taking an exhaustive series of photos that document the State Museum handcar's construction.

A total of \$2,800 is needed to complete the handcar project, according to Gene Allen, who is now preparing a set of drawings that will allow duplication of the handcar design. He is also assembling the skilled labor needed to execute his detailed plans. Ralph Moore has already agreed to help with the carpentry. Gene expects that the car can be completed during 1989.

Members and friends who wish to contribute to the handcar project may send their check (payable to "Goleta Depot Handcar Fund") to Goleta Depot Railroad Museum, P.O. Box 2125, Goleta, CA 93118. Or, a contribution can be included with your membership renewal. Just enter the donation amount and the words "Handcar Fund" on the "Additional Contribution" line of the membership envelope. This will ensure that this portion of your check will go toward making the Goleta Depot handcar a reality.

Museum Awarded Federal Grant In National Competition

The Goleta Depot Railroad Museum has received a grant in the 1988 competition conducted by the Institute of Museum Services (IMS), an independent federal agency established by Congress to assist museums in their educational role and to help them modernize their methods and facilities.

The IMS competition is open to museums of all sizes and types throughout the United States. Only 416 awards were made this year.

"These prestigious grants are the most sought after federal museum awards," according to IMS. The Goleta Depot Railroad Museum was selected because of its "judicious management of the museum's available resources to provide the best possible services to its community and the general public. The competition for these funds is strong and museums that receive General Operating Support awards have demonstrated their commitment to high standards in operations and services to the public."

In announcing the award, IMS Director Lois Burke Shepard wrote to the museum, "Please accept my congratulations and my encouragement of your continued excellent performance."

The \$5,000 grant is to be used to cover general

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operating expenses. While the cash award is important, this first IMS grant is perhaps more significant for other reasons. The grant demonstrates just how far we have come — while recognizing and paying tribute to the hundreds of people and organizations who have made that progress possible — and it also indicates what kind of potential the museum has for the future.

“Sweetheart Special” Trip To San Diego Marks Valentine’s For Museum

A two-day Amtrak excursion to San Diego is now being planned for the weekend of Feb. 11-12. Accommodations will include roundtrip custom-class seating aboard Amtrak’s San Diegan and one night’s lodging at the Hotel San Diego.

Recently restored, the 75-year-old landmark hotel is within a few blocks walking distance of the Maritime Museum, and shopping at Seaport Village or the downtown Horton Plaza Centre. Our open schedule will allow tour participants about 26 hours to enjoy these or other San Diego area sites and attractions, alone or with other group members.

Costs are \$95 per person double occupancy and \$115 single, which includes rail fares, lodging and taxes, and hotel limousine service to and from the Santa Fe depot.

For further information or reservations, contact the museum office, 964-3540.

Museum Bookshop Reopens In Spacious Downstairs Quarters

The new and expanded museum bookshop is now open in one of the first-floor rooms formerly occupied by the chamber of commerce. The larger space has allowed us to more than double the number of titles and other items available. Additions include a wide assortment of railroad magazines, railroad nostalgia items, and an ever-growing list of books pertaining to the Southern Pacific and western railroading.

The bookshop offers one of the finest and most comprehensive selections of both general local history and railroad titles in Santa Barbara County.

Two member-volunteers have made a world of difference in getting the bookshop up and running. Since September, Theresa Caccese has donated about three afternoons each week to provide the shop with a sales clerk. And Elmer Coombs (who was visiting the area with his wife, Betty, in mid-October for Depot Day and Goleta Valley Days) took time out to apply his carpentry skills to the design and construction of a handsome sales counter. Elmer hopes to return here soon from his Mesa, Ariz. home, when he plans to make a matching stand where a 7-1/2-inch-gauge steam locomotive will be displayed in the bookshop window.

Bookshop Can Solve Holiday Shopping Woes

Please remember the museum bookshop when working on your holiday gift shopping plans. The lines are short, parking is plentiful, the gifts are education-



Elmer Coombs builds a counter for the bookshop.

al, and your patronage benefits the museum!

Members normally receive a 10% discount on all purchases except magazines. To encourage members to visit the new bookshop, we are raising this to a 15% discount through the end of 1988. The shop is open Wednesday thru Sunday, 1 to 4 p.m.

Endowment Progress Reported

The museum recently received the second of the two miniature steam locomotives that were pledged by Dick and Georgia Thomas to found the Goleta Depot Railroad Museum endowment in their names. The engine, a Winton Brown mogul (2-6-0), has already been sold to a Costa Mesa live-steam enthusiast.

The \$6,600 in sale proceeds have been added to the Endowment Fund investments, which currently stand at \$13,300, according to Anna Dato, Development Committee chair. Before the sale, the engine was run briefly on one of the “Another Steaming Summer” Saturdays.

The first engine donated by the Thomases, a Pacific, is being advertised for sale in the November and December issues of *Live Steam* magazine. The asking price is \$18,000.

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PORTRAIT OF A MUSEUM VOLUNTEER

One of the brightest and most energetic new additions to the museum's growing corps of volunteers is Theresa Caccese, who has anchored the museum bookshop as chief clerk, since its recent expansion and reopening.

Theresa and husband Larry Caccese moved here in 1954 from their native Chicago. Their interest in railroading may be traced to their years in The Windy City, when Larry worked on diesels at GM's Electromotive Plant there.

Locally, Larry went to work for UCSB's Physical Plant, at the busy time when the university was moving to Goleta from its Riviera campus. In 1958, Theresa also got a UCSB job, working part-time in Student Health for a year, then joining the Placement Center full-time as a clerk-typist. She retired in 1985.

Married 41 years, the Cacceses have four grown children — Lisbeth, Sam, Mike, and Chris — and four grandchildren.

Theresa and Larry are active in several antique automobile clubs. She is newsletter editor for the Model A Club of Santa Barbara and has served as treasurer of the National Woodie Club since its founding in 1974. For his part in this joint hobby, Larry has restored several vintage autos, including a 1930 Model A Sport Coupe, a '48 Chevy station wagon, and a '41 Ford Super Deluxe wagon. He is now working on a 1931 Victoria leather-back "A".

Wherever they travel, the Cacceses make sure to ride any tourist steam-railroads in the area. They also have taken several of Goleta Depot's Amtrak excursions, including two of the Sacramento trips.

Theresa views her bookshop work as a challenge ideal for anyone who loves books and the past as much as she does.

An active Museum Committee member, Theresa made a big difference for Depot Day this year. As co-chair of the silent auction, she brought in many of the bid items and did a top job in keeping the activity running smoothly.



Theresa Caccese

Annual Dinner Tops January Calendar

The Annual Dinner of the Goleta Depot Railroad Museum and the Institute for American Research will be held Thursday, January 26 at the Holiday Inn, 5650 Calle Real, Goleta. The social hour begins at 6 p.m. with dinner scheduled for 7p.m. Tickets are \$17, which includes meal, sales tax, and tip.

An enjoyable program and evening are planned, so don't miss out! For reservations or further information, call 964-3549.

Party and Tree-Trimming Opens Holiday Season At Museum

The museum's holiday party and tree-trimming will be held Thursday, December 8, from 4 until 8 p.m. This year's event is being sponsored by the Museum Committee, which cordially invites all members to come and bring a guest. Attendees are asked also to bring a snack or hors d'oeuvre to share.

This year, the emphasis will be on trimming the depot tree and preparing the holiday display for the benefit of those visiting the museum during this festive season. New members and those who haven't participated in the past are also urged to bring an ornament, bearing their name and the year, to add to the tree. If you can't attend, please consider mailing in your ornament or bringing it in at another time.

The depot tree has special significance in renewing the custom of railroad station agents and their families to place the traditional tree in the upstairs window bay, where its message of hope and wonder could be shared

with those on passing trains.

The depot tree is lit every evening until New Year's, creating a lovely Victorian scene which may be viewed by car from Los Carneros Road.

Depot Day '88 Concludes Goleta Valley Days Festival

More than a hundred volunteers and organizations helped to make this Depot Day the finest and best attended in the event's history. One of the changes that we have noticed in Depot Day over the years is that it attracts people from an ever-widening geographical area, as more and more people learn about the museum and the event, or return for their second or third Depot Day.

The names of everyone who worked on or contributed to Depot Day will be listed in the 1988 Institute Annual Report, just as was done in last year's issue. Special mention should be made here, however, of Christine Negus, Events Chairman, and Anna Dato, who co-chaired the event.

Our special guest during Goleta Valley Days this year was Barry Garland of the California State Railroad Museum. Barry rode in the parade on the museum float, which also featured the Goleta Depot handcar team, the State Museum handcar, and a 7-1/2-inch-gauge 4-4-0 American recently donated to us by Dr. Lewis Guy of Santa Rosa, Calif. Barry was instrumental in arranging the handcar loan, for which much gratitude is owed.

Many thanks also to Home Savings of America (and Goleta Branch Manager Iris Ellis) for showcasing the

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museum's American locomotive throughout October. Gratitude is expressed also to all of the area merchants that helped by displaying the Depot Day poster.

Black Widows Curbed

In July, a number of Black Widow spiders were observed at various spots inside Goleta Depot. A professional pest control company was brought in on Aug. 1 and the problem was eradicated. The firm's representative explained that this has been a particularly bad year for Black Widows, owing to the drought.

"Steaming Summer" Makes "Another"

The museum's summer program of live-steam train rides was a memorable success. More than 1,100 persons rode the little trains during the six Saturdays in July, August, and September that comprise "Another Steaming Summer". One of the best measures of the event's importance to the museum is the fact that attendance on these six dates alone is about 15% of the museum's annual total! Proceeds were about \$2,500.

Deepest thanks to Denny Franks and Toyota of Santa Barbara for co-sponsoring the event. A debt of gratitude is also owed to Gene Allen, Steve Kramer, and Allan Cooley, who formed the steady nucleus of our train crew throughout the summer. Engines and cars were provided by Carl Eppich, Ed Winnewisser, Gene Allen, and Paul Conover.

Sacramento Excursionists Return

The museum's fourth Sacramento trip Sept. 15-19 was enjoyed by a group of 14 travelers, which included members, museum staff, and others.

The group spent Friday morning visiting the



Excursion group waits to depart Santa Barbara.

California State Railroad Museum. For most, that afternoon was a first chance to use some free time. There would be many such opportunities during the trip, which were used to visit the State Capitol, the Towne Ford Museum, or the History Center; to browse

through Old Sacramento; or just to rest.

Staff members Gary Coombs and Phyllis Olsen spent Friday afternoon in business meetings at the state Office of Historic Preservation and the railroad museum, while Gene Allen did some research about S.P. depots at the museum's extensive railroad library.

Saturday included a morning visit to the museum restoration shops and afternoon time-trials for the handcar races. Participants on this year's team were Gary, Phyllis, Dave and Jane Hieter, and Anna Dato. Jane was a team alternate, who eventually ended up replacing Anna on the car. The State Museum supplied us with pushers this year to round out the five-member team.

Sunday was highlighted by a Sunday brunch river cruise on an authentic stern-wheel steamboat. Absent, however, were members of our handcar team, who had the misfortune to end up in the finals, with a qualifying time that was about three seconds off last year's pace. The team placed fourth in the finals, only 2.4 seconds out of third place (and 2.5 out of second) in the Masters Mixed Division.

Following the competition, the State Museum generously allowed us to bring one of the handcars back with us. Gene Allen carried the car in his pickup, which Dave and Jane Hieter had driven up to Sacramento three days earlier.

All in all, this year's Sacramento journey was an eventful and productive occasion, both for its participants and for our museum.

Monthly Work Sessions Resume

A work day will be held on Saturday, Dec. 10 beginning at 9 a.m. Anyone interested and physically able to help are urged to come out and lend a hand. Work days are devoted to groundskeeping, building maintenance, restoration, housekeeping, and new projects. These activities are absolutely vital to the museum and to the preservation of the historical landmark.

The Saturday work days had been suspended during the summer and fall months, while the museum focused attention on "Another Steaming Summer" and Depot Day.

