



Goleta

DEPOT DISPATCH

Newsletter of the Goleta Depot Railroad Museum

Volume 9, Number 2 — Summer 1989

Museum Wins Second IMS Grant

The Goleta Depot Railroad Museum has been awarded a \$6,540 grant by the Institute of Museum Services. The grant represents a 10% match of the Museum's 1989 operating budget, including credit for volunteer service and other in-kind contributions.

These are the most sought-after Federal grants that are bestowed on museums. They are awarded annually on the basis of a nation-wide competition which is open to all of America's museums, zoological parks, historic sites, and science and nature centers. Ours was one of only 400 grants presented throughout all 50 states in 1989.

IMS awarded a \$5,000 grant to the Museum in 1988, its first year of eligibility.

The grant is an important validation of the Museum's successes in developing and delivering quality educational and recreational programs. The grant is also evidence of the Museum's potential for future growth and accomplishment.

Endowment Makes Possible Historic Depot Sign Re-Creation

Museum visitors can now enjoy a faithful reproduction of Goleta Depot's old Western Union telegraph sign, thanks to contributors to the Richard and Georgia Thomas Endowment Fund. The Endowment furnished the funds necessary for the sign preparation and painting.

The replica was based on detailed information on the original sign supplied by Steve Arbuckle. The handsome white-on-navy replacement metal sign now hangs outside the freight office window bay—in the same spot as its historic forebear.

Endowment donor Eugene Allen shows off new sign.



Sacramento Trip Draws Near

This is the last call for reservations for the Museum's Sept. 14-18 rail excursion to Sacramento!

The \$325 per-person package includes round-trip rail fare; four nights' lodging; and State Railroad Museum admission, including a VIP guided-tour and, for the avid railfan, a visit to the car-restoration shops. Not included are meals, road transportation, and gratuities.

A Sunday brunch cruise on the Sacramento River aboard the stern-wheeler, *Matthew McKinley*, is planned as an excursion option. The trip also coincides with the 7th Annual U.S. National Handcar Races. This is the third consecutive year that our museum will be entering a team.

The excursion group will be limited to 16 persons. Reservations are on a first-come first-served basis, so don't be left out. Call the Museum office, 964-3540, today!

New Engine To Star During "Summer"

"Another Steaming Summer" is almost here, but this year the little "puffer-bellies" will share the spotlight with the Museum's new 1-1/2"-scale EMD diesel-prototype yard switcher. Four new Museum passenger cars, built by our volunteers, also will be a feature of this second annual event.

Runs are on the second and fourth Saturdays of July, August, and September, from 11 to 3:30 p.m. Tickets are \$1.

This "Summer" is being co-sponsored by Toyota of Santa Barbara, 5611 Hollister Ave., where complimentary ride tickets may be obtained beginning July 1.

The diesel switch-engine was purchased using the 1988 Asphalt Regatta proceeds. It is being finished in the colors and detailing used by Southern Pacific on its early (circa 1940) EMD yard diesels. Bob McNeel has supplied the technical data on S.P. engines of this builder, class, and vintage.

Handcar Progress Reported, Funds Are Still Needed

Attendees at the Annual Dinner on May 11 were treated to a first-hand look at the completed oak frame and decking of the Museum's handcar-under-construction. All of the car-

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penry, including the fine turned-pieces that accent the A-frame, is the work of Ralph Moore.

Also completed, as of this writing, is the massive 72-tooth bull gear, which Jim Higman turned and cut from a 220 lb. slab of solid steel. Jim and Gene Allen shared the task of creating the companion 18-tooth pinion gear.

Bob Mahan, who is building the pump-lever, has readied the four wheels, which were salvaged from an old inspection car purchased last fall with Handcar Fund monies. The junked inspection "speeder" will also supply the handcar with its axles and journal boxes.

In all, about 140 volunteer hours to date have gone into the construction of the handcar, which is expected to be finished by Depot Day. Contributors of materials include Steve Tilford and the Bardex company.

About \$1,000 is still needed to finish the handcar project. Those wishing to make a tax-deductible contribution, are urged to use the accompanying form.

Persons who have already contributed to the Handcar Fund include: Dave and Jane Hieter (who started the fund), Robert L. Bevier, Theresa Caccese, Helen J. Coffey, Paul and Mary Conover, Marguerite G. Dahms, Earl Hill, Morris and Opal Jeffers, Frank and Gloria Kellogg, George Paine, Ray Rautio, Theresa Ruether, Tallant Smith Family, Ernest Thomsen, and Al and Hilda Volkman.

... And Speaking Of The Annual Dinner

You missed a real treat if you weren't on hand to see the Dos Pueblos High School Madrigal Singers perform. The formally-attired chorus kept everyone on the edges of their



Madrigals ask, "Can we, please, have some water?"

seats with their harmonious mixture of classical and popular songs, with arrangements that ran from the serious to the outrageous. It was a perfect complement to the rest of the evening's program.

Docent Association Holds First Meeting

The first gathering of the Museum Docent Association was held on May 15. Practically the entire membership attended the meeting, which included a railroad film supplied by Bill Everett and refreshments courtesy of Theresa Caccese.

The purpose of the Docent Association is to provide volunteer support for Museum programs. Its membership encompasses participants in the live-steam and model railroad groups, as well as tour guides, agents, and Museum Shop personnel.

Persons interested in joining the Docent Association are

urged to contact the Museum Office for further information and an application.

Ticket Box Is Museum's First Artifact From Original Depot Freight Office

Until recently, none of the artifacts and furnishings that decorated Goleta Depot's freight office were original to the building. All that has changed now, with the donation of a cubby-hole-filled wooden box by one of the Museum's generous members. Found in a local antique shop, the box was purchased and presented to the Museum by Robert Burtness.

Subsequent research has revealed not only that the box was a ticket box from Goleta Depot, but that it was probably the **original** ticket box, dating to 1910 or earlier. Analysis of the freight office wall also has led to the discovery of the box's historic location next to the ticket window, where the relic hangs today.

The other items used to refurnish the freight office come either from other depots or are appropriate items obtained from other sources.

Wig-Wag Work Tops Impressive Projects-Completed List

A long-awaited day came in May, when the wig-wag signal was finally erected along the tracks in front of Goleta Depot. The Museum had been in possession of the wig-wag equipment since 1982, when Philip Goldman donated the signal mechanism and Bill Shrives procured the pole.

The eventful day was brought about by young Ryan Maloney, grandson of Hilda and Al Volkman, who selected the wig-wag installation as his Eagle Scout project. Ryan and his work crew — including friends, Tom, Michael, and David Hatch, and his father, Jerry Maloney — logged 76 hours digging the foundation for the wig-wag standard and painting the equipment from one end to the other.

Gene Allen and Al Volkman poured the foundation, using concrete donated by Cart-Crete.

The work of erecting the pole was performed by Specialty Crane and Rigging. Specialty owner Seth Hammond, who donated the crane service, was on hand to run the hoist while his young son, Colin, took care of numerous chores, including bolting the signal mechanism onto the upright pole.

On June 8, as this issue goes to press, Bill Shrives and his crew completed the signal wiring and a successful test of the equipment. The wig-wag is now ready for operation.

Other Museum Projects Finished

In May, Al and Hilda Volkman restored a trunk and an old Ceylonese tea box, which had been left behind when S.P. closed the station. While Hilda enhanced the box lettering, Al did a lot of repair work, finishing up with the application of

Goleta Depot Dispatch
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Published quarterly by the Institute for American Research
300 N. Los Carneros Rd., Goleta, Calif.
Mailing address: P.O. Box 2125, Goleta, CA 93118
Phone: (805) 964-3540 or 964-3549

Printing courtesy of Kimberly Press, Goleta

PORTRAIT OF A MUSEUM VOLUNTEER

Bob Burtness has been a docent since 1983, the first full year of the Museum's volunteer program. He was an original "Friend of Goleta Depot," distinguishing himself as one of the most generous early supporters of the drive to save the Depot.

A Santa Barbara native and son of a prominent Sansum Clinic physician, H.I. Burtness M.D., Bob attended Peabody School and Santa Barbara High, where he was active in Marching Band and ROTC. He continued these activities at Claremont Men's College, where he received a bachelor's degree in business administration.

Bob joined the Air Force, hoping to become a pilot, only to discover that he suffered from air sickness. He served as a logistics and supply officer in New Jersey, and Greece.

In the late '60s, Bob went back to school, receiving his secondary school teaching credential and a master's degree in English from Chico State College. Back in Santa Barbara, he taught for two years at La Cumbre Jr. High School before securing his present position with the English Dept. at San Marcos High.

Bob's involvement with the Museum is only one of a number of organizational affiliations that he maintains. The common thread throughout many of these — Sierra Club, Santa Barbara Organ Society, Goleta Valley Cycling Club, to name but a few — is his concern for history and the environment. He is also a captain in the Calif. State Military Reserves and is active in the Love Yourself Foundation, which makes cheer visits to area convalescent homes.

Bob's love of railroading is also reflected in his Toy Train Operating Society membership and in the houseful of O-gauge trains that he shares each year, helping to make the holiday season a magical time for everyone fortunate enough to receive an invitation.

Bob is the author of a book, *Camper's Guide To The Tri-County Area*, published by the Mission Council, Boy Scouts of America. Somehow, he finds enough spare time to complete a daily 3/4-mile swim. He also enjoys backpacking, scuba diving, and furniture restoration. His favorite color is red and he claims to like all foods except pickled pigs' feet.

The Museum is fortunate to have this erudite and multi-faceted individual as one of its most active members.



Bob Burtness

several coats of varnish to act as a weather retardant. The trunk and box have now been affixed permanently to the freight cart displayed beneath the eave on the north side of the Depot.

Gene Allen has been regularly devoting Thursday mornings to projects around the Museum, with considerable effect. Among other work, he has completed the installation of the train-order signal ladder, filled and painted deteriorating portions of the depot's exterior walls, and repaired the front freight office door, which has been gradually splitting. Gene was joined on a recent Thursday by Mildred Kern, who went to work painting parts of the train-order signal.

Another long-awaited project was the replacement of the train-order board which had been destroyed in an early-1988 storm. Museum Director Gary Coombs devoted his Memorial Day morning to installing attic insulation to add further climate protection for the upstairs collections-storage area.

Asphalt Regatta Report

The 8th Annual Asphalt Regatta raised about \$4,700 for Museum programs. The April 15 event, held at Goleta Beach and along the scenic bikeway to Turnpike Road, was blessed with mild temperatures and nothing but tail winds.

Participating this year were Eugene Allen, Jon Bartel, Edee Brown, Sam and Nick Caccese, Allan Cooley, Gary Coombs, Anna Dato, Al Jaramillo, Steve Kramer, Christine Negus, Diana Mina, Phyllis Olsen, Bill and Janis Shinn, and John Starr. Hilda Volkman served refreshments and issued directions to the bewildered at the Patterson Avenue crossing, while Ed, Judy, and Hanna Savage did the same at the turn-around point. Lynn Alderman and Theresa Caccese handled the registration and bookkeeping.

After the event, everyone enjoyed a delicious and much-deserved potluck luncheon, while Institute President Jon

Bartel presented "I survived the Asphalt Regatta" pins to those who did.

At the Annual Dinner, all Regatta participants were honored for their valuable contributions to the Museum's most important annual fundraising event. Anna Dato and Steve Kramer received special recognition for garnering the most in pledges.

Two Museum Teams Will Compete In Roaring Camp Handcar Meet

The Museum has entered two teams in the handcar races to be held at Roaring Camp on July 15-16. The teams include a mixed team of three men and two women and an all-men's team. Both teams are entered in "over-40" classes, although some participants have ardently denied attaining the watershed two-score figure.

Captain Dave Hieter sees the Roaring Camp event as excellent preparation for the U.S. National Handcar Races in September. But, Dave, will any of the team members ever be willing to climb aboard a racing handcar again?

Lost Poem Found

Not two days had passed after the spring *Depot Dispatch* was mailed before a copy of the missing poem mentioned in that issue was on its way to the Museum. In that *Dispatch*, a request was made for information about a particular old poem with a railroad theme.

Joyce Douglas, who supplied the elusive verse, wrote that it was her husband, Walt, who called her attention to the newsletter plea. She recognized the poem at once, but admitted that "I had been trying for several years to reconstruct it in my mind, and could remember most of it, but not all. So I phoned my brother, Carl W. Smith, Jr., in Mid-

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dletown (Illinois), and we worked it our together.”

Here are the lines, complete but still without a title, that Joyce and her brother recalled:

Can't tell you much about the thing, 'twas done so powerful quick,
 But 'pears to me, I got a most outlandish heavy lick!
 It broke my leg, and tore my sculp, and jerked my arm most out;
 But have a seat, Stranger, and I'll try and tell you how it came about:
 Y'see, I'as drivin' down the road with that 'ere team o'mine,
 A-haulin' a load o' corn for Ebenezer Cline —
 And drivin' slow — about a day or so before,
 The off-horse run a splinter in his foot and made it sore.
 You know where the railroad cuts across the lot at Martin's Hole?
 Well, thar I seed a great big sign stuck high up on a pole.
 I was mighty curious to find out what it said,
 So I stopped the horses on the railroad track, and read.
 I ain't no scholar, recollect, and so I had to spell —
 I started kind o' cautious-like, with R-A-I, and L.
 That spelled RAIL, as clear as mud. R-O-A-D was ROAD.
 Alumptum RAILROAD was the word, and that 'ere much I knowed.
 C-R-O, and double-S, with I-N-G to boot,
 Spelled CROSSING just as plain as Noah Webster dared to do it!
 L-double-O-K was LOOK —
 And I was a-lookin' all the time and spellin' like a book.
 O-U-T was OUT,
 And there it was: LOOK OUT!
 F-O-R and T-H-E 'twas then LOOK OUT FOR THE.
 And when I tried the next word, it commenced with E-N-G.
 I got this fur when, suddenly, there came an awful whack!
 A thousand fiery thunderbolts just scooped me off the track.
 The horses went to Davy Jones, the wagon went to smash,
 And I was h'isted seven yards above the tallest ash!
 Now, 'tain't the pain, and 'tain't the loss of that 'ere team o' mine,
 But, Stranger, how I'd like to know the rest of that 'ere sign!

Joyce says that she learned the poem “back in the days of the Great Depression, when we had to entertain ourselves with some activity that didn't cost anything.” “We would sit around the heating stove in the winter and on the porch in the summer and read aloud to each other, or simply quote the poetry we had memorized. This one our mother knew, and we asked her to say it so often, we just naturally learned it.”

She wasn't sure, but Joyce thought that her mother probably picked it up from an older brother or sister who had attended the Bee Grove country school near Middletown before the turn of the century and the family's relocation to the city.

The *Dispatch* request for the poem was made by Museum Director Gary Coombs, who had learned the poem in much the same way from his Iowa-born-and-raised grandfather. As promised, Coombs has donated \$100 in the names of Joyce and Walt Douglas to the Museum.

America By Rail Tours Available Through Museum

Some of the finest first-class rail tours in all of North America are offered by America By Rail. A wide range of trips, running from 9 to 18 days, cover the Eastern and Western U.S., Canada, and Mexico.

Now, for the first time, it is possible to book America By Rail tours through the Museum. While there is no additional cost to the traveler, this does benefit the Museum, which receives a commission for the booking.

Copies of the 1989 America By Rail dream-vacation catalog are available at the Museum for anyone interested in finding out more.

Two More Youth Amtrak Trips Complete Another Year

Two final Amtrak excursions concluded the Museum's busy schedule of rail fieldtrips for another elementary school year.

In April, students from a Vieja Valley School 4th grade participated in the Museum's first **southbound** fieldtrip. The group of 32 — 24 children, five parents, teacher Muriel Krebs, and Museum staff members Phyllis Olsen and Gary



Vieja Valley School group enjoys a brief Glendale stop.

Coombs — took the early morning *San Diegan* to Glendale and returned by noon via the *Coast Starlight*.

The following month, the Museum reprised its popular northbound excursion with a group of 61 from La Paterra School, including 3rd graders from John Strickley's and Joyce Singelman's classes, several Special Education students, parents — plus Museum staff. Although a special stop in Guadalupe had been arranged, the southbound *Coast Starlight* was late that day, allowing us to venture as far as San Luis Obispo.

This was fortunate because it was May 3, the day that S.P. Engine No. 4449 and its train of *Daylight* cars were enroute to Los Angeles for the 50th Anniversary of Union Station. The celebrated train was waiting in San Luis for our train's arrival, which gave the group a unique view of that spectacular engine steaming past to the “oohs” and “ahhs” of the children.

Activities For Children Highlight Museum's Spring Season

Children's programs are coming to play an ever-increasing role in the Museum's annual calendar of events.

All five of the local elementary school classes participating in the Museum's rail fieldtrips took special guided tours of the Museum during the March-May period. Museum staff members also made classroom visits prior to each rail trip, to acquaint the children with some of the ins and outs of rail travel and to enhance the educational experience.

In April, the Museum participated in the Week of the Young Child, an event sponsored by the Tri-County Association for the Education of Young Children.