



Goleta DEPOT DISPATCH

Newsletter of the South Coast Railroad Museum
Volume 11, Number 3 — Fall 1991

Starr Match Challenge Met

The goal of raising \$1,200 in donations to match the pledge made by Trustee **John Starr** has been reached. The **Goleta Lions Club** put the campaign over the top in August with a \$500 contribution, which was also the largest amount received.

The grand total stands at \$1,728, representing gifts from 34 members and friends. Donors include **Walt and Joyce Douglas, Sue Borgatello, Robert and Louise Prottengeier, Mahneke Motors, Inc., Morse & Opal Jeffers, Ellen G. Keeter, Don and Jo Hollister, Mr. and Mrs. Homer Dahms, Mike and Ruth Marple & Family, Barbara R. Philip, John & Evelyn Schaller, Ernest Thomsen, Tom & Beulah Strout, Sally Gane, Hilda Volkman, Mrs. Jesshill Love, Mrs. Ernest F. Menzies, Lucille Beckman, Warren & Nancy Miller, Harry L. Harrison, T.M. Ruether, Judy & Ed Savage, William S. Burtness, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel V. Lopez, Mrs. Velma M. Hill, Charles B. Baldrige, Santa Barbara Research Center, Mary Cole, Frank and Gloria Kellogg, Phyllis Olsen, and Gary Coombs.**

A contribution in memory of **Ruth C. Hammond** was also received. Two other donors requested that no acknowledgment be published. ♦

Morro Bay and Hearst Castle Are New Rail Package Destinations

A number of families and couples, from both our membership and the general public, have taken advantage of the museum's new program of unescorted rail trips to Disneyland-Anaheim.

The new program has been so successful that trips to Morro Bay and San Simeon have been added to the list of available destinations. The new Central Coast excursions offer a number of travel choices, including optional Hearst Castle tours, a fine selection of accommodations, and stays of two days/one night or more. All packages include roundtrip Amtrak rail to San Luis

CALENDAR OF MUSEUM EVENTS

DEPOT DAY. Oct. 20. The museum's big fall fundraiser. Activities galore! 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

MINIATURE TRAIN RIDES: Every Saturday thru Sept. Hours: 1 to 4 p.m. Single ride \$1. All-day ticket \$2.

ANOTHER STEAMING SUMMER: Sept. 28. Live-steam train rides; refreshments by Goleta Lions Club; *Thomas The Tank Engine* films; and much more! Hours: Noon to 4 p.m.

HANDCAR RIDES: Sept. 21, Oct. 19, and Nov. 16. Hours: 1 to 4 p.m. Riders must be 42 inches tall. Free, donations appreciated.

FILMS: Every Sunday afternoon. Coming features: *Changing Trains* (during Sept.; European rail documentary); *The Long Straight* (Oct. except Depot Day, Trans-Australian adventure) *Terror By Night* (Nov., Sherlock Holmes train mystery) Free. Call for times and reservations (964-3540).

MUSEUM HOURS: 1 to 4 p.m., Wed. thru Sun.

Obispo, overnight accommodations, tour bus or rental car transportation, and all applicable taxes.

For more information about any of the museum's unescorted rail excursions, please call the office any weekday afternoon (964-3540). ♦

New Exhibit Features Toy Depots

Don't miss the new exhibition, "Toy Trains Need Depots, Too!: The Railroad Station in Miniature", now showing in the Waiting Room through October. Featured are 19 antique toy stations from the collection of **Robert Sponsel**. They are accented by an assortment of human and animal figures, vehicles, baggage, signs, and other accessories - also from the Sponsel collection.



Bob Sponsel is sharing some of his toy depots with museum visitors.

The exhibit covers the period 1918-1942. It includes examples from three major American manufacturers of toy trains: Ives, American Flyer, and Lionel. These companies made both clockwork and electric trains.

The exhibition is housed in a new display case built for the museum by the Pacific Fixture Co. of Woodland Hills. The handsome case will be used for a new program of changing-exhibits at the museum. The purchase was made using income

from the **Richard and Georgia Thomas Endowment Fund.** ♦

Museum Loses Two Longtime Friends

Eugene Sheller, a charter member of the "Friends of Goleta Depot," passed away in the spring. The museum has received a memorial gift in Eugene Sheller's name from **Gene and Alma Allen**.

Bev Casselman, who served as a Goleta Depot "agent" volunteer for several years, also has died. The **Goleta Lions Club** has started a special fund in Bev's memory in the museum endowment. Contributions have also been made by **Earl and Rose Ann Hill** and **Gary Coombs**. Persons wishing to donate to this fund should add the notation "Bev Casselman memorial" to their check, which may be sent to the museum. ♦

Wells Fargo Express Sign Re-created

Another valuable restoration step was made recently with the long-awaited production and installation of a replica Wells Fargo Express sign like the one that once hung outside of Goleta Depot's freight office window bay. The project was funded by proceeds from the **Richard and Georgia Thomas Endowment Fund**.

In Oct. 1869, just a few months after completion of the transcontinental railroad, the Central Pacific Railroad awarded Wells Fargo & Company an exclusive contract to carry express over its routes. In exchange, the Central Pacific, which later became the Southern Pacific Railroad, received one-third of all Wells Fargo stock. Thus, when Goleta Depot opened in 1901, the depot office incorporated a Wells Fargo & Company express facility, with the stationmaster doubling as Wells Fargo agent.

An early photograph of Goleta Depot, presented to us several years ago by the **Southern Pacific Transportation Co.**, shows two signs flanking the front of the window bay: a Western Union telegraph sign on the left (re-created in 1989) and a Wells Fargo sign on the right. From this rare photo and information provided by Wells Fargo Bank's History Museum in

Los Angeles, it was determined that the company had installed one of its standard signs at the Goleta station.

Specifications for the replica sign were based on a surviving example of this standard. The metal sign is 9 inches tall and 18 inches wide, with white lettering and detail on a dark blue background. Distinctive of the sign is an inset-stripe border and a fancy double-scroll design in the center.

In 1918, as a wartime measure, the U.S. government consolidated the country's major express companies, including Wells Fargo, to form American Railway Express, later the Railway Express Agency. The Railway Express Agency office at Goleta Depot served local households and businesses until 1961.

Special thanks are owed to **Beverly Smith**, Curator of the **Wells Fargo History Museum** in Los Angeles and to **Dr. Harold Anderson** of Wells Fargo Bank's History Dept. in San Francisco for their cooperation in the research and for arranging corporate permission for use of the Wells Fargo & Company registered trademark on the replica sign. ♦

Other New Signs Give Direction

Visitors now have a number of new informational signs to direct them around the museum and grounds. One sign identifies the location of the Gandy Dancer Theater. Also, the street and parking lot signs have all been redone to reflect the museum name change. Finally, for use on days when the miniature train runs, there is another new sign indicating where tickets can be purchased and where one waits for a ride.

Museum Stars In Public Library Display

Throughout August, the Santa Barbara Public Library, shared a display of railroad museum scenes, artifacts, programs, and activities in its Main Branch lobby. These community displays are an effective way to reach people who haven't visited the museum or are unaware of what there is to see and do here. ♦

County Work Furlough Program Benefits Museum

The railroad museum is participating in the county program in which misdemeanor offenders are sentenced to community-service hours instead of jail time. **Gene Allen** has been supervising the work details, normally scheduled for Thursdays.

The museum has already received more than 100

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hours of free labor through this on-going program. Most of the work has focused on the museum grounds, including landscaping and maintenance of the miniature railroad track, among other activities. ♦

Docent Sale Is Big Success

The **Docent Association** did a first-rate job with the "Unclaimed Freight and Baggage Sale" on June 22. The benefit raised about \$630, a sizable contribution from the volunteer group to the museum. The sale was also a perfect way to kick off this year's *Another Steaming Summer*, attracting many additional people to the event and providing something extra to do for everyone in attendance.

Hats off to **Jane Hieter** for all of her hard work in organizing the sale. **Edee Brown** and **Theresa Caccese** helped with pricing the merchandise and **Dave Hieter** shared the day-long staffing chores. **Bob Burtness**, **Jack Cogan**, and **Jim Allen** were on hand to assist with the heavy setup and cleanup activities. Many docents, members, and friends contributed items to help to assure a profitable day. ♦

Greetings To New Members

New Sustaining Members are **Wilma Patton**, **The Printed Word**, **Rodrick Soria**, and **Your Travel Center**. New Junior Engineers are **Austin Beede**, **Dana Stuster**, **Allen Thrift**, and **Douglas Thrift**. Other new members include **Benjamin Beede**, **Tom Braunger**, **Joaquin Gray**, **Lloyd Hunt**, **Peter Laraway**, **Veronica Milo**, **Robert Pike**, **John Sieckowski**, and **Marilyn and Bill Thrift**.

Welcome and thank you for your support! ♦

Endowment Campaign Advances

A milestone in the campaign to build the **Richard and Georgia Thomas Endowment Fund** was reached a few weeks ago when the pledge total passed the \$75,000 mark, dropping the balance needed to under \$100,000. A \$250 increase in **Home Savings of America's** commitment made the critical difference.

As of this writing, the campaign is at the \$77,660 level, less than \$10,000 from the pivotal half-way point. The Board of Trustees set the initial goal of \$175,000 in 1988 when the endowment was started.

All gifts to the endowment are invested and kept in perpetuity. Proceeds from the endowment investments are used exclusively for Goleta Depot and the railroad museum. The **Earl and Rose Ann Hill Education Fund for Children's Programs** comprises a special part of the overall museum endowment. If you would like more information, please contact Museum Director Gary Coombs or Asst. Director Phyllis Olsen. ♦

Summer Program Going Strong

It's turning out to be another record-setting summer for the museum and its miniature train-ride program, where ridership has topped 1,800 since June 1. Attendance has been especially busy on the three *Steaming Summer* dates, which have accounted for 710 riders. Tickets issued on Aug. 24 and July 29 were the second

and third highest, respectively, in the four-year history of the event. Through Aug. 24, the trains have carried 2,650 passengers in 1991, up 25% over a year ago.

Important to the increase have been the expansion to a weekly schedule since July 1 and the new \$2



Patriotic look highlighted July 4 activities.

"All-day Tickets," which are good for unlimited rides.

Steaming Summer has benefitted greatly from its special attractions, including the delicious hot sandwiches served up by the **Goleta Lions Club**. Guest steam-engines have included **John Darby's** mogul, **Ed Winnewisser's** 0-6-0, and **Gene Allen's** American. The addition of free showings of *Thomas The Tank Engine* videos has also been very popular. *Another Steaming Summer* is co-sponsored by **Toyota of Santa Barbara**, where discount ride coupons are available. The last day for this *Steaming Summer* is Sept. 28.

As with many of the museum's programs, *Steaming Summer* and the miniature train ride would not be possible without our hard-working and dedicated volunteers, including train-crew members as well as those who staff the other museum areas. ♦

Successful Projects Day Held In June

The **Docent Association** sponsored a productive Conservation and Projects Day on June 8. Workers included **Gene Allen**, **Jim Allen**, **Dave Hieter**, **Bill Shrives**, **Ellery Smythe**, **Mike Williams**, **Gary Coombs**, and **Phyllis Olsen**. ♦

Youth Groups Tour Goleta Depot

The museum has had several recent visits from youth organizations. These include **Santa Maria's Pacific Christian School**, **Girls Inc.** of Greater Santa Barbara, a **Goleta Valley Brownies** troop, and a large contingent from the **Santa Barbara YMCA**. ♦

DEPOT DAY is Coming Oct. 20

The 9th Annual Depot Day will be held Sunday, Oct. 20. Hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event, which is sponsored this year by the Docent Association, will again serve as the closing event of the Goleta Valley Days Festival.

❑ Rail Rides

Miniature steam-train, handcar, and inspection car rides will once again prove to be highlights for all ages. Tickets will be \$1 for the train and 50¢ for the other rides.

❑ Donations Requested

As was the case last year, we will ask for a donation of \$1 upon admission to Depot Day. Members may elect to make this donation or not.

❑ Tri-Tip Barbecue

The Native Sons of the Golden West will once again prepare their famous tri-tip barbecue.

The meal includes tri-tip, green salad, toasted french bread, and ranch beans. Advance tickets are \$6 for adults and \$4 for children 12 and under. Tickets may be purchased at the museum's Trackside Shop, Goleta Valley Community Center, Goleta Valley Chamber of Commerce, or from any member of the Docent Association.

Everyone is urged to buy

their barbecue tickets before Depot Day. Not only will this earn you the advance price discount, but it will also help planners to estimate the number of meals that will be needed.

❑ Other Refreshments

If a full meal isn't to your liking, we will also be serving hot dogs, lemonade, soft drinks, baked goods, and popcorn throughout the day.

❑ Silent Auction

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. Participants usually come away with some real bargains. We will have a wide variety of items in the auction. If you have a business or personal donation you would like to make to the auction, please call the museum office.

❑ NEW, NEW, NEW

This year there will be a special children's activity area in the George Adams Picnic Grove. Besides the traditional Story Hour, Charlotte Moore will have our young visitors constructing a variety of trains and participating in a scavenger hunt.

As you walk the path toward the picnic grove, stop

to admire the exhibit of Model-A vehicles, another new attraction for this year.

For the first time, Depot Day will also feature the Goleta Valley Days Festival Drawing. There are lots of terrific prizes.

❑ Steam Display

Also returning for Depot Day '91 is the popular exhibit of stationary steam engines. The display will be coordinated this year by Ernest Thomsen and Jim Higman.

❑ Live Entertainment

We are presently pursuing some live entertainment for this year's event. If you have a performing talent that you would like to share on Depot Day, call the museum and let us know.

This year's Depot Day promises to be another super event. Please don't miss out on all the fun and excitement! We hope to see you there.

