



Goleta DEPOT DISPATCH

Newsletter of the South Coast Railroad Museum
Volume 12, Number 2 — Summer 1992

New Goleta Amtrak Stop Is May 20 Topic

The exciting prospect of "A New Train Station for Goleta" will be the subject of a presentation at the museum meeting on Wednesday, May 20, 7:30 p.m., at the Goleta Library, 500 North Fairview Ave. **Michael G. Powers**, Deputy Director of the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, will discuss the status of the proposed project, including the availability of state transportation-bond funding, and a review of the alternate sites being considered for the new station, which would bring Amtrak passenger service to the Goleta Valley for the first time. The event is free and open to members and the general public.

After the presentation, refreshments will be served, followed by a general meeting of the museum volunteers and anyone interested in learning more about the Docent Association or helping with the museum's busy summer schedule.

Earl Hill Memorial

A tree will be planted in memory of the late **Earl M. Hill** at Goleta Depot on Saturday, Aug. 8. Friends and family are invited to attend the 10 a.m. ceremony. R.S.V.P. Asst. Director Phyllis Olsen at the railroad museum, 964-3540.

Museum Helps Young Readers

The South Coast Railroad Museum is again participating in the Summer Reading Program of the Santa Barbara Public Library. About 1,200 youngsters, age 3 through junior high school, are expected to participate in this year's activity. Those who successfully complete the reading program will receive a free miniature train ride at Goleta Depot.

We're Going To Disneyland!

The museum is organizing an escorted June trip to Disneyland. The group will travel via Amtrak's *San Diegan*, departing Santa Barbara on the afternoon of Monday, June 15 and returning the morning of Wednesday, June 17. This schedule will leave all day Tuesday for adventure at the "Happiest Place On Earth," which will be open from 9 a.m. until midnight. We will stay at the Best Western Park Place Inn.

Prices vary depending on the number of adults and children per reservation. Please call the museum (964-3540) and speak with Gary, Phyllis, or Reda, who have all of the prices and particulars.

If these dates do not fit your summer plans, or if you'd prefer an unescorted trip, please ask about the museum's unescorted Disneyland package, which we've offered since last summer. The prices are the same and it's available to any size family or group, for any dates or length of stay.

Asphalt Regatta Update

As this issue of the *Depot Dispatch* goes to press, prospects look excellent for a highly successful Asphalt Regatta fundraiser on May 2 and 16. **Everyone** who participates is **guaranteed** they will earn a **minimum \$41 for the museum**; this dollar amount could reach or exceed **\$50** by event time.

Readers who didn't attend on May 2 are urged to come out on Saturday the 16th. There's no entry fee and no requirement to find or collect pledges on your own. Just show up and walk. It's that simple! Please arrive between 9:45 and 10 a.m. for registration.

Amtrak Stars In New Display

Next time you visit the museum, be sure to reserve a few minutes for the Amtrak exhibition now showing in the Waiting Room. Featured are a conductor's uniform, colorful posters, photographs from the museum's rail travel program, and many other items. Docent **Dan Lopez** provided most of the HO-scale Amtrak cars exhibited and member **Bob Sponsel** supplied the manikin.

Here Comes "Steaming Summer"

Our 1992 season of live-steam miniature railroading will begin June 27, the first day of the South Coast Railroad Museum's 5th Annual *Another Steaming Summer*. July 25, Aug. 22, and Sept. 26 are the other *Steaming Summer* event days.

Festivities will run from 11 a.m. 'til 4 p.m. each day, with all regular museum areas open. Returning this year by popular demand will be continuous free showings of *Thomas The Tank Engine* videos in the

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Gandy Dancer Theater.

Members of the **Goleta Lions Club** will be here, preparing and selling barbecued chicken and hot sandwiches, with all proceeds benefitting the museum.

Steaming Summer would not be possible without the sponsorship of **Toyota of Santa Barbara** and its owner, **Denny Franks**. Coupons good for 1/2-off on rides, including all-day passes, are available to adults visiting the car dealership at 5611 Hollister Ave.

School Rail Trips

May promises to be the busiest month of rail adventures for area school children in museum history.

This year, we've added a new, morning Oxnard trip, to make our popular program available to grades K-2. Three local school groups are taking advantage of this new offering during May.

On March 24, Museum Director Gary Coombs and Asst. Director Phyllis Olsen escorted a group of 60 children, parents, and faculty — representing the combined El Rancho School 3rd grade classes of teachers **Lory Peterson** and **Frances Tieszen** — to San Luis Obispo. Another trip north is slated for May 5.

The next issue of the *Depot Dispatch* will include a report on all four of the museum's May rail excursions, including our first-ever journeys to Oxnard.

Summer Schedule Runs June - Sept.

The miniature train will operate every Saturday, June through September. Hours will be the usual 1 to 4 p.m., except during the four days of *Steaming Summer* (see story, above), when operations will begin at 11 a.m.

Single-ride tickets will be \$1 except July 4, when \$1.50 will be charged. To cut down on the long line, members are requested to avoid the miniature train ride on the Fourth of July, if possible, but are encouraged to attend the day's other festivities at neighboring Stow House. The popular "all-day pass" will be sold for \$2.50 on all days except July 4.

Funds Sought For New Engine

The museum's diesel-prototype engine, *No. 1316*, has hauled thousands of miniature-train passengers since it first saw service in the summer of 1989. Although the engine continues to run well, its history of hard work has begun to concern **Eugene Allen**, superintendent of the museum's miniature railroad. Gene has requested that we begin raising the funds necessary to purchase a companion for *No. 1316*. Accordingly, the Board of Trustees, at its April 25 meeting, established a restricted fund expressly for a new engine. A total of \$4,800 is needed for the purchase.

Members and friends wishing to contribute to the fund should make their tax-deductible checks payable to the railroad museum, with a notation that the donation is for the "New Engine Fund." Or, use the contribution form on page 4 of the *Depot Dispatch*. Mail to South Coast Railroad Museum, P.O. Box 2125, Goleta, CA 93118.

Waiting Room Gets Timetable Display

Plans for the restoration and refurbishing of Goleta Depot's Waiting Room got a long-awaited boost recently when the **Certified Folder Display Service** donated a brochure rack to the railroad museum. The lower part of the rack will be modified with protective sheet acrylic to allow the display of historic timetables from the museum collections. The upper portion of the rack will be left open and used to distribute the museum brochure, Amtrak timetables, and other current literature of interest to our visitors.

This dual usage is in line with the museum's overall goal of bringing Goleta Depot back to life while maintaining a strong continuity between today and the past. Timetable racks were a common feature of the historic railroad waiting room, just as they are in the Amtrak stations of the 1990s.

New Members

The museum family happily welcomes all of its new members: **Doris Phinney** (Life Member); **Mr. and Mrs. John Andervont** (Contributing); **Richard and Bette Stuebing** (Sustaining); **Joe and Kathy Bahamonde**, and **Bruce J. Morehead** (Active).

Tim Aceves, **Matthew Keeling**, **Anthony Orozo-Laabs**, and **Robert Orozo-Laabs** are the most recent additions to the Jr. Engineers Club.

Bedroom Refurbishing

The mattress and box spring needed for the Agent's Bedroom exhibit has been donated by the **RAD Thrift Store**, thanks to the efforts of **Bill Willingham**.

The room was cleaned out and its furnishings arranged during the Work Day on April 4. Since then, the bedroom has been shown to visitors as part of the Saturday afternoon guided tour.

There's still a long way to go, however, before the historic room display can be called complete. Needed are a washstand, curio shelf, bed linen, hall tree, plant stand, rug, chair, framed pictures and other wall items, and small bedroom artifacts of the 1890-1950 periods.

Other Projects Advance

Gene Allen redesigned the miniature railroad's return-loop to improve safety. Then, he enlisted **Ralph Moore** and **Mike Williams** to help with the actual alignment changes.

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Ralph also rebuilt the ramp that allows visitors access to the caboose from Goleta Depot's loading dock, while electrical repairs in the Freight Office were recently performed by Mike.

Thanks to Gene, Ralph, and Mike for their valuable and skilled labors.

Sweetheart Special Cancelled

Sadly, efforts to reschedule the *Sweetheart Special* proved unsuccessful. The original event dates, Feb. 15-16, became impossible when heavy rains shut down rail operations south of Santa Barbara.

Cancellation of this year's event was a real heartbreaker, both for those holding reservations, who were looking forward to the Valentine's-theme getaway, and for the museum, which lost more than \$2,000 in much-needed revenue.

Undaunted, museum planners have already begun arranging for the 1993 *Sweetheart Special*, scheduled for the Valentine's weekend of Feb. 13-14. Call the museum if you'd like to be added to the list.

Weekday Miniature Train A Big Hit

Weekday miniature train rides proved even more popular than expected during the test conducted every Thursday in March. There were 102 riders in all, filling most trains to capacity and causing extra trains to be dispatched every day. It was particularly exciting to learn that the expanded program brought many visitors who had never before been to the museum. Overall attendance at the museum on March Thursdays was **five times** that recorded in 1991!

Many Jr. Engineers made use of the free passes that were included in their last "Fun Page." Participating were **Robert Adams, Cody Barry, Austin Beede, Josh Moore, Jason Olin, Kelly Olin, and Dana Stuster**, along with an assortment of friends and family members who were included in the complimentary tickets.

Testing will resume in May, with rides offered every **Wednesday**, using a somewhat expanded operating schedule. Starting at 2 p.m., trains will depart every 20 minutes, with the final departure set for 3:30 p.m. each day.

If May's results are equally encouraging, watch for weekday miniature train rides to become a regular, weekly feature at the museum in the near future.

More Saturday Riders, Too

Through April, miniature train ridership on Saturdays in 1992 was up a spectacular 42% over last year. In fact, we set off-season records in February and April, with 217 and 216 riders, respectively, totals that compare favorably with the 228 average daily riders counted last year during **Steaming Summer!!**

"Freight" Sale Moved To Oct. 10

The "Unclaimed Freight and Baggage Sale" originally set for June 27 has been rescheduled to Oct. 10. If you have rummage, furniture, collectibles, applian-

ces, antiques, or railroadiana to add to the sale, please call Reda at the museum any weekday afternoon.

We think we've found a place to store the goods before the event, but more volunteers are needed to help with the pricing and selling.

Last year's sale earned about \$600 to support museum operations and programs.

Starr Attends Railway Symposium

Presentations by a dozen historians, museum professionals, and restoration experts highlighted the fourth annual National Railway Preservation Symposium, held April 3-5 at the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento. The symposium was jointly sponsored by CSRM and the Pacific Coast Chapter of the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society.

Some 90 participants from the U.S. and Canada toured the nearby Western Railway Museum and viewed demonstrations of restoration techniques on Friday. Noted authors **George Hildebrand** and **Harre Demoro** reviewed the histories of the Sacramento Northern Railway and the Bay Area Electric Railway Association. BAERA operated the museum, which is located at Rio Vista Junction, a station on the former SN route from San Francisco to Chico.

Diversity was a hallmark of Saturday's proceedings. Topics ranged from the recent restoration of former Santa Fe steam locomotive *No. 3751* to the revival of Chicago Transit Authority service on the abandoned Skokie line in the 1960s. And, in a fascinating departure from railroad themes, **Anne McCombs** provided illustrated insights into restoration and preservation methods used at the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum facility in Maryland. Ms. McCombs is a staff specialist whose current projects include restoration of the World War II bomber, *Enola Gay*.

Attendees were treated Saturday evening to a

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

NAME _____
(IF THIS IS A GIFT, PLEASE USE RECIPIENT'S NAME HERE, GIVER'S NAME BELOW)

STREET _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____

Please enter/renew my membership (mark desired category):

Active - \$10 (special rate for Docent Assn. members only - \$5)

Sustaining - \$25

Contributing Member/Corporate Member - \$50

Life Member - \$175

Jr. Engineer's Club - \$10 (w/adult member at same address - \$5)

GIFT. Giver name for gift card: _____

RETURN COMPLETED FORM WITH CHECK, PAYABLE TO:
SOUTH COAST RR MUSEUM, P.O. BOX 2125, GOLETA, CA 93118

South Coast Railroad Museum is an educational program and business name of the Institute for American Research, a local nonprofit organization. Contributions are deductible from state and federal income taxes.

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sunset ride along the Sacramento waterfront aboard a CSRM train of vintage heavyweight passenger cars. Dinner followed, served amid the cars and engines displayed under the train shed of the re-created Central Pacific depot.

Capping the day's events was **Ward Kimball's** entertaining narrative of film clips showing his "Grizzly Flats Railroad." Kimball, retired chief animator for Walt Disney's studio, began in the 1930s a pioneer collection of narrow-gauge equipment. His collection, soon to be donated to the Orange Empire Railway Museum at Perris, includes some rolling stock from the Pacific Coast Railway.

The symposium's final session on Sunday morning featured a discussion of the National Park Service's program at Steamtown National Historic Site in Scranton, Penn. **John Latschar**, who directs Steamtown operation for NPS, was eloquent in his examination of preservation principles and policy issues.

Trustee **John Starr**, who submitted this report, represented the South Coast Railroad Museum at the symposium. He describes the weekend as "exhilarating and exhausting," noting the first two days' activities began before 8 a.m. and lasted 13 to 14 hours. "I really appreciated the opportunity this event afforded participants to exchange information," he says. "And I was pleased by the number of people who said they had been impressed by visits to our museum or by word of its reputation for excellence."

S.B. Foundation Awards \$12,776 Grant

The museum has received a major grant from the Santa Barbara Foundation. The \$12,776 award will be combined with an earlier grant from the County of Santa Barbara (see *Depot Dispatch*, Vol. 11, No. 4, Winter 1991, pp. 2-3) and used to fund a new professional paint job for the exterior of Goleta Depot. The grant is the largest foundation stipend ever received by the railroad museum or Goleta Depot project.

DONOR CONTRIBUTION FORM

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____

Enclosed please find my check, made payable to South Coast Railroad Museum, in the amount of: \$ _____

Please use my contribution for _____

Return completed form to: SOUTH COAST RAILROAD MUSEUM,
P.O. BOX 2125, GOLETA, CA 93118

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The first exterior painting of Goleta Depot at its new site began almost ten years ago, on Aug. 28, 1982, and was finished Sept. 18 — just in time for the Oct. 10 landmark dedication. All labor, paint, and other materials were donated by the local painter's union, painting contractors association, and area paint stores.

Since then, museum volunteers and staff have tried to maintain the exterior finish with spot painting. In late 1990, consultant **Sara Chase**, an architectural conservator, recommended that the museum seek funding for a complete restoration-quality repainting of the landmark's exterior, which led to the Santa Barbara Foundation and county grants.

The new work is expected to begin by the end of May, according to Museum Director Gary Coombs.

June Talk To Focus on Pacific Coast Ry.

James Norris of Los Olivos will speak and present slides on the historic Pacific Coast Railway on Wed., June 17, 7:30 p.m. at the Goleta Library. The talk, which is sponsored by the South Coast RR Museum, is free and open to members and the general public.

The Pacific Coast Railway, started in 1875, developed into the largest narrow-gauge railroad in Southern California, with about 103 miles of track connecting Avila, San Luis Obispo, Los Olivos, and intermediate towns.

Jim Norris is chairman of the Santa Barbara County Historical Landmarks Advisory Committee. His publications include a number of titles on the Santa Ynez Valley and its history. Works on the Pacific Coast Railway include *The Last Train Out PCRY* and *Los Olivos and the PCRY*.

Local Groups Benefit From Outreach

In February and March, Director Gary Coombs spoke about recent progress at the railroad museum to three local service organizations: **Breakfast Optimist Club of Goleta**, **Santa Barbara Evening Optimist Club**, and **Goleta Noontime Rotary Club**.

Coombs and Asst. Director Phyllis Olsen joined forces on March 17 when they visited two classes at **El Rancho Elementary School** to discuss trains and rail travel.

Slow Train To Vegas

The museum's April 5-7 trial trip to Las Vegas was a big success. Everyone in the group, which numbered a lucky 13, seemed to like the hotel's colorful features and convenient location. The group was kept small (with no media publicity, for example), because we weren't sure how people would respond to the long train ride, but there were no complaints. A leisurely dinner at Olvera Street seemed to fill perfectly the hours-long layover in Los Angeles while we waited for the *San Diegan* to bring us home.

Watch for news of plans for another "Slow Train" Las Vegas trip, perhaps for November or early December, in the next issue of your *Depot Dispatch*.