



Goleta DEPOT DISPATCH



Newsletter of the South Coast Railroad Museum

Volume 18, Number 2 ❖ Summer 1998

"Steaming Summer" Is On The Horizon (Aug. 1 & 2)

A circus theme will highlight the museum's 12th annual *Another Steaming Summer*, which is more widely known for the assemblage of operating live-steam locomotives that haul passengers on the Goleta Short Line during the event.

This year, one of the trains operating on the Goleta Short Line will be a circus train, containing several circus cars from the collection of **Ted Cheesman**. Event attendees will be able to ride the circus train, as well as the other trains operating that day.

The circus motif will be carried over into the model-railroad exhibit, where **Ken Weber** will be sharing cars from his HO-scale circus-train collection. Ken expects to have a 15-to-20-car circus train operating throughout the event. The exhibition will also feature a miniature circus and additional theme cars on static display.

The two-day event, which is sponsored by **Toyota of Santa Barbara**, will be Aug. 1 and 2. Hours each day will be 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., but museum members are invited to come early (10-11 a.m.) to watch the engines being steamed-up in preparation for the day's activities (Early-bird attendance is limited to members and their accompanying guests only, please).

Admission to the event is only \$3, which includes **unlimited rides** on the Goleta Short Line and handcar. The admission charge applies to everyone, including those who elect not to ride; while infants and any others who are unable to ride the train will be admitted without charge. For late arrivals, the admission price will drop to \$2 after 3 p.m.

Gene Allen is putting together another terrific collection of steam locomotives and other steam equipment for operation or display. As of late May, when this issue of the *Depot*

Dispatch went to press, the list of scheduled visiting equipment included:

- ✓ Gene own 4-4-0 American, a *Steaming Summer* regular — a working 500-lb., coal-burning replica of an engine built in 1888 by the Cook Locomotive and Machine Co. of Patterson, N.J.;
- ✓ An 0-6-0 switch-engine owned by **Ed Winnewisser** of Atascadero, another *Steaming Summer* mainstay;
- ✓ A trio of Allen Models 2-6-0 moguls is expected, owned by **Bill Hoey**, **Dan O'Brien**, and **Michael Zuker**;
- ✓ A 1"-scale wrecking train, featuring an operating steam-powered wrecker car, which will be demonstrated by owner **Art Reiter** of Atascadero;
- ✓ An 1-1/2"-scale Climax geared logging locomotive;
- ✓ An operating model fire engine, fashioned after a turn-of-the-century steam pumper.

Also planned is an operating tabletop display of miniature stationary steam engines and steam-driven tools and devices, powered by **Jim Marchiando's** amazing steam plant.

The program will also include continuous free showings of railroad films, with an emphasis on steam power, including tutorials on how to operate and maintain a steam locomotive — shown in the museum's Gandy Dancer Theater.

Goleta Lions Club members will again be here, selling their delicious tri-tip sandwiches and "Depot Dogs," with all proceeds going to the museum.

Don't miss this once-a-year chance to experience the steamers in action! It's a fun event, as well as a terrific bargain for anyone who enjoys riding the trains!



Interpretive Program On Coast Starlight Begins



Despite a rocky start, including several trip cancellations due to excessive train delays, the guide-training phase of the *Coast Starlight* interpretive program is now well underway.

A total of nine training trips were completed through the end of May. The program was tested successfully on May 12, with Museum Director Gary Coombs serving as narrator and Assistant Director Phyllis Olsen interacting with passengers in the lounge car's upper level. The program was repeated on May 19 and 26 and will be a part of all future trips. The volunteers will participate in the program presentation beginning in June.

The program covers the area between Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, and the museum's onboard guides share the area's natural, cultural, and historical sites and points of interest with *Coast Starlight* passengers.

Sponsors of the interpretive program include **California State Parks**, **Goleta Valley** (continued on page 2)

May 19 team included Jim Felland, Kay Woolsey, Phyllis Olsen, Morgan Provan, Gary Coombs, Fran Corcoran, and, behind the lens, Derry Godar.



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Chamber of Commerce, Santa Barbara Conference & Visitors Bureau, and Santa Barbara County Parks.

And the (*Great Goleta Rail Race*) Results Are In!

The second annual *Great Goleta Rail Race* was held Saturday, May 16. The race began promptly at 1 p.m., whistled to a thrilling start by Assistant Director **Phyllis Olsen**. The miniature-train was operated throughout the competition by **Joel Bingham** and Museum Director **Gary Coombs**, with Olsen providing occasional relief as conductor. The handcar crew included Trustees **Noel Langle** and **Bill Parker**.

The handcar was declared this year's winner, although the judge's decision has been challenged. The dispute arose when it was revealed that the miniature train actually received a higher score based on one of the two handicaps calculated from last year's results, edging out the handcar by a razor-thin *one-tenth* of a rider-mile.

The judge went with the handcar in his split-decision, however, since, based on the second handicap, the people-powered conveyance beat the train soundly, by more than *seven* rider-miles. It looks as if the race results will remain in dispute, perhaps until next year's competition clarifies the issue!

In combination, the train and handcar carried 481 total riders (passengers and crew), logging

more than 99 rider-miles over the three hour span. The train completed 23 trips, two more than in 1997, while the handcar finished 62 repetitions of its 488-foot course.

The general public as well as museum members took part in this year's event, by riding one or more times on the handcar, train, or both. It was a day of unlimited free rides for all museum visitors, made possible by about 150 supporters who made spring-fundraiser pledges. Special certificates, proclaiming "I Survived the Great Goleta Rail Race," were available on the day to all race participants.

Goal Met, Record Set In Spring Fundraiser

The *Great Goleta Rail Race* is not only a day of fun and free rides. It's also the museum's spring fundraiser. In this latter role, everyone went home a winner.

This year's goal was \$10,000 and contributions have already exceeded that figure, reaching \$10,321, with pledges still being reported (see accompanying sponsor list). This is the largest amount ever raised in the 17-year history of the spring fundraiser.

The spring appeal is one of the railroad museum's most important annual income sources, producing more than 10% of all monies needed for operations. Money from the event is also used to sponsor three days of free miniature-train rides during 1998, including the *Great Race* day, itself, plus two additional free days, on July 18 and Nov. 7.

All event sponsors making gifts of \$10 or more are being acknowledged in the list of *Great Goleta Rail Race* supporters, which is prominently displayed at the museum before and during each of the three free days. A reduced-size copy of the sponsor's list has been included in this mailing to members.

Donations Still Sought

It's not too late to earn a spot on the *Great Goleta Rail Race* sponsors list. Just use the accompanying donation form, to make a contribution of \$10 or more, or to add to a donation you have already made. The listing is tiered, with larger gifts acknowledged toward the top of the listing.

Please help the museum and "get on the list" with your tax-deductible gift.

Welcome New Members

We are pleased to welcome new museum members **Jim Harasta**, **David Humphreys**,

James and Susan Petrovich, and **Jack Reith**.

New Junior Engineers Club members are **Steven A. Hirschberg**, **Garrett Humphreys**, **Nicky Newman**, **Justin Palmer**, **Ryan Stanchfield**, and **John Paul Tipich III**.

It's great to have all of you aboard!

Storms Subside, Recovery Begins

It's beginning to feel as if the onslaught of winter and spring storms is finally over. Sunny days are back and thousands of California poppies and nasturtiums are blooming around the museum grounds. Regrettably, despite the improved weather, the museum still hasn't recovered its full audience, based on a comparison of visitor data from previous years at this time of year.

Principally through the efforts of **Gene Allen** and **Noel Langle**, we've been able to right the pepper tree that came precariously close to toppling over back in February. Gene also plans to try and save two of the peppers that did fall during the same rainstorm that brought gale-force winds to the area.

Goleta Depot Featured In Student Film

Janet Howard, a graduate student in the film program at the University of Southern California is using Goleta Depot as the principle location for her master's thesis film.

The 12-minute short subject, entitled *Vanishing Point*, deals with the interactions of people waiting at a train station. Most of the filming is taking place during late afternoon and evening hours. A crew of about two dozen, including actors and production staff, were on hand during the main shooting dates, May 9-11. The film will be in post-production for several more months, according to Howard.

Goleta Depot Dispatch: Newsletter of the South Coast Railroad Museum.

Published quarterly by the Institute for American Research, 300 North Los Carneros Rd., Goleta, CA 93117-1502.

Photo on Page 1 by Derry Godar.

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Caboose Repositioned

The museum's caboose has been moved about eight feet to the north. Although the distance may not seem like much, this repositioning has had an important effect for the museum and its visitors, primarily by providing a less obstructed view of Goleta Depot's handsome facade. The caboose interior is still accessible from the ramp at the northwest corner of the depot loading dock.

The caboose move was completed by a work crew that included **Noel Langle** and **Kip Kramer**. They also used the opportunity to improve the safety railing at the caboose entry.

In early 1997, County SWAP workers under the direction of **Gene Allen** added a 22-foot extension to the north end of the depot house-track where the caboose has resided for more than a decade. The track was lengthened, in part, to provide room for the caboose repositioning. The rail and some of the ties for the earlier project were obtained by donation in the late 1980s. The track materials came from the old Sears Warehouse spur, west of La Patera Lane, where the new Goleta Amtrak station is located.

Museum Receives Gift of Utility Building

A 10x13-foot utility building has been donated to the museum by **Sally Bennett** of Goleta. **Gene Allen** has taken on the responsibility of assembling the building, which is being placed in the eucalyptus trees adjacent to the shed that houses the handcar and miniature-train equipment. The building will be used for garden tools and general storage.

Memorial Gifts Received

A donation in memory of **Reuel K. Brown** has been received from his daughter, **Ann Garcia** of Carpinteria.

The museum has received additional donations in memory of **Ernest Thomsen** from **Bruno and Phyllis Mautino** and **George and Helen Potter**.

Rescheduled Bunny Event Draws Smaller Crowd

The rains of early 1998 have done the museum in once again. This time, it was the *Easter Bunny Express* that fell victim. Due to rain, the event had to be rescheduled to April 18, drawing a crowd estimated to be about one-third less than the usual 1,000 attendees. Planners were

aware that the event would probably lose much of its attraction once Easter had passed, but there was little choice but to proceed given the importance of the event to annual museum fundraising.

A special thank you is owed to everyone who helped on the day. Members of the **Goleta Lions Club**, organized by **Jack Rutten** and **Tom Tucker**, managed the food booth. Representatives from the **Dos Pueblos High School Interact Club**, including **Zeynep Gunday**, **Lauren Tanaka**, **Tyler Fredrickson**, **Jeff Frost**, **KK Holland**, **Luke James**, and **Katie Tobin**, helped in several areas. **Country Meat Market** donated the lemonade served to ticket-holders at the "Harvey's House" station.

Kari Adams put on the Easter Bunny suit this year, when perennial **Bunny Bob Burtness** was unavailable on the make-up date due to a prior commitment. **Barbara Cornish** and **Ellyn Roberts** served as Bunny Helpers.

Other volunteers on the day included **Ken Becker**, **Joel Bingham**, **Maurice Caler**, **Mary Cole**, **Noel Langle**, **Peggy Langle**, **John Locke**, **Jim Moyer**, **Bill Parker**, **Elsie Pliha**, **Margaret Pryde**, **John Sanchez**, **Judy Savage**, **Hannah Savage**, and **Hilda Volkman**.

Neal Graffy Shares The Arlington Saga

Local lecturer and historian **Neal Graffy** presented *Two Hotels and a Theater: A History of the Arlingtons*, on May 20 at Goleta Library. The program was the latest installment of the railroad museum's *Continuing Lecture Series* and marks the fifth time that Graffy has spoken to a museum group, going back to 1993.

The audience was treated to a fascinating narrative and an extraordinary collection of rare historical photographs and other images spanning more than a century.



Goleta Rail Station Work Continues!

It looks as if this will be the last *Depot Dispatch* to announce that Goleta's new Amtrak station remains unfinished. Even the most conservative estimates now place the completion date before July 31.

Bad weather continued to plague the project well into May. Installation of the switch by Union Pacific Railroad crews, for example, was

delayed several weeks due to unexpected rains in late April.

Plans are still in place for the museum to play a principle role in the station grand opening, in cooperation with **Amtrak**, **CalTrans**, and the **Goleta Valley Chamber of Commerce**. Be sure to watch the newspapers and broadcast media, or call the museum, for information and scheduling of the event.

Museum Director **Gary Coombs** continues writing a column for the *Goleta Valley Voice*, the community's weekly newspaper, leading up to the station opening. The seventh article in the series, published May 20, deals with the *Coast Mail*, the last local train to serve our area.

When the *Coast Mail* was discontinued on May 20, 1965, it marked the last time that a train stopped for passengers at Goleta. Thus, the new station will resume a tradition that came to an end at Goleta Depot more than 33 years ago.

Museum Grounds Projects Move Forward

The County Park Dept. completed construction of the museum's new group-picnic and birthday party area in March. The area is surfaced with decomposed granite and includes one eight-foot table and one 16-foot table with provision for wheelchairs. The work was done under contract with the County Park Dept., with grant funds from the **Wood-Claeysens Foundation**, **Alice Tweed Tuohy Foundation**, and **La Vista Foundation for the Blind and Physically Handicapped**.

A portion of these same funds are also being used for the museum's new entry structure and the resurfacing of the walkways to the miniature-train boarding area and picnic area. These grant funds also were used for additional post-and-rail fencing work, completed in March.

Schipper Construction is handling the entry and walkway work, which should be finished in early June.

Mid-State Bank Supports Museum/Library Program

The railroad museum is again participating in the Summer Reading Program of the **Santa Barbara Public Libraries**, thanks to the generous support of **Mid-State Bank**.

Last year's program, sponsored by the **Santa Barbara Elks Lodge**, was a huge suc-

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cess. More than 2,100 train-ride certificates were distributed to those children who completed the program by reading 15 or more books. Participating libraries include Santa Barbara (both Central and Eastside), Goleta, Solvang, Carpinteria, Montecito, Santa Ynez, Los Olivos, Lompoc, and even the Bookmobile!

The South Coast Railroad Museum has been involved in the summer library reading program since 1987.

Volunteers Still Needed

The museum continues to experience a shortage of volunteers, especially shop clerks, depot agents, and miniature-train crew members.

Many of our volunteers are generously giving extra hours each month to fill the gap. During March, April, and May, for example, additional hours beyond the basic monthly requirement were staffed by all of the following volunteers: **Gene Allen, Joel Bingham, Edee Brown, Al Jaramillo, Ed Leska, Bruce Morden, Tom Pollock, Margaret Pryde, and Hilda Volkman.**

Please consider joining this wonderful corps of dedicated members. If you have at least one afternoon (only about three hours) available per month to give to your museum and would like to share our wonderful historical landmark and activities with museum guests, please give Assistant Director Phyllis Olsen a call at 964-3540. She will be happy to tell you more about the rewards and benefits of the museum's volunteer program.

Volunteer docents are critical to many of the activities and services that our visitors enjoy. Some volunteers are engineers, conductors, and crew on the Goleta Short Line miniature-train and museum handcar. Others are clerks in the Trackside Shop, operate the Gandy Dancer Theater, or share Goleta Depot and the model railroad exhibit with our guests.

Goleta National Bank Gives Free Rides for Dads

On Father's Day, Sunday, June 21, all dads visiting the museum will be treated to free rides on the Goleta Short Line, compliments of **Goleta National Bank.** Trains will run continuously beginning at 1:15, with the last train pulling out of the station promptly at 3:45.

The complimentary tickets may be picked up in advance at Goleta National Bank's office at 5827 Hollister Ave., or in Goleta Depot's Waiting Room, during event hours only. Tickets, at \$1 each, will also be available during the event for other family members and the general public.

Goleta National Bank has sponsored every "Free Rides For Dads" since the event was started back in 1994.

Computer Companies Donate Software

Two software manufacturers recently have donated products to the railroad museum. From Carpinteria-based **MetaCreations**, the museum has received a copy of "Kai's Photo Soap." Micrografx has donated "Picture Publisher 8."

The museum is already using both of these products for a variety of purposes including preparation of photographic and other illustrations for inclusion in both museum exhibitions and our internet web site, as well as for archiving and repairing some of the historical images in the museum's photographic collection.

Readers with internet access can see some of the ways the museum has been benefitting from these gifts by visiting the museum's web site (www.silcom.com/~scrm/), which contains a number of photographic images and graphic illustrations that have been enhanced with these two products. In particular, be sure to drop by the new "Museum Programs" and "A Visit To The Freight Office" areas.

Junior Engineers Party Will Be July 16

The sixth annual *Junior Engineers Club Party* will be held Thursday, July 16, from 2 p.m. until 3:30. Included will be free rides on the Goleta Short Line, special showings of *Thomas The Tank Engine* videos, prizes and surprises, and delicious refreshments, including a Junior Engineers cake!

Don't miss this special summer get-together, Junior Engineers! Please RSVP, 805-964-3540.

Director Is Railway Conference Presenter

Museum Director **Gary Coombs** served on the faculty of the 10th Annual Railway Preservation Symposium, held March 20-22 at the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento. Gary's duties included both panel participation and a formal presentation, which focused on the South Coast Railroad Museum as an example of professionalism in a small-museum context.

The event drew more than 100 representatives from railway museums and other railway-preservation organizations from throughout the U.S. and Canada.



Many school and other youth groups tour the museum and historical landmark each year.

Groups Tour Landmark

Recent school tours of the historical landmark and museum have included visits by three **Hollister Elementary School** 5th-grade classes, one Hollister School 3rd-grade class, and a Special Education group, ages 5-8, from **Honica School** in Buellton.

Upcoming tour groups include **Santa Barbara Christian School, Santa Maria Senior Travel Group**, kindergartners from **Santa Barbara YMCA, First Presbyterian Church Preschool**, and two groups from **Franklin Children's Center.**

Museum Hosts Birthdays

Those celebrating recent birthdays with parties at the museum include **Keith Avery, Newton Cutcliffe, Jack Damen, Andrew Leicht, Jacob Moghtader, Nicky Neumann, Justin Palmer, Tyler Smith, Cole Smith, David Solis, and Catherine Zaccaglin.**

Come ride the handcar on the 3rd Saturday of any month and receive a free "My First Handcar Ride" certificate! (Riders must be at least 48" tall.)

