

Hot



Scoop

HotScoop Shovel Logo by Larry Rose

A publication dedicated to San Diego Railroad Museum volunteers

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MUSEUM NEWS

VOL XII NO XII

*** A Visit To The Algoma Central RY. *** *Arn Hunsberger, SDRM President*

A reflection of our future?

It was time this past September for Margaret and me to make our annual Fall pilgrimage to Mackinac Island. It lies in the Straits of Mackinac between Lake Huron and Lake Michigan in northern Michigan.

We decided this year to leave a few days early to enable us to ride a scenic excursion train we had heard about at Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada. Called the Algoma Central Railway (formerly the Algoma Central & Hudson Bay Ry.), it is a single-track common carrier, diesel-electric powered line operating between Sault Ste. Marie (pron.: soo saint mar-EE), a town of about 80,000 across the toll bridge from its namesake town in Michigan, and the town of Hearst, 296 miles to the north on the Canadian National Ry. It traverses some of the prettiest and most remote country anywhere in North America on the way.

Although you can ride the full length of the line to Hearst, including an overnight stay and return the following day, we opted for the one-day Wilderness Tour trip from "Soo" to the scenic Agawa Canyon and return.

We bought the "package deal", which included two nights' lodging, the train ride in a real dome car, and breakfast and lunch on board. Our train consisted of 3 diesel locomotives and 24 cars, plus a Private Party car on the rear similar to Mr. Sefton's "Cyrus K. Holliday" car in San Diego.

We left the "Soo" at 8 a.m. with 1400 passengers (that's right: 1400). I was told the one-day trip, which runs June thru October, operates on a daily basis with substantially full trains each trip. The Hearst train runs all year, and there is a special snow train on weekends, December thru March. The Fall colors were just beginning to show their stuff as we worked north through the freight yards and the lovely rolling hills and many remote lakes beyond. As we passed the roundhouse, you could overhear the passengers commenting about the various rolling stock, particularly the snowplow. There was a docent in each car, supplemented by a P.A. system, which announced items of interest approximately every 10 minutes along the route.

Many of the lakes, homes and lodges along the track could be reached only by rail, and a 3-car Local provided service to these remote areas during the week.

During the run-around at Agawa Canyon, I asked the engineer how he liked his job and suggested maybe he would like to come to California when we get our Desert Line trains running. He replied he really liked his work and was paid very well, so "thanks but no thanks"! He said train maintenance was a never-ending battle (sound familiar?) and in fact, two diesel mechanics were onboard the trip today, just in case.

The dining cars were regular coaches that had the seats removed and replaced with standard household breakfast tables and chairs. The tables were not fastened to the floor or the wall. The passengers packed the dining cars and there was lots of clinking silverware and lively conversation as they pointed out various scenic wonders along the way.

On the return trip, I walked through the cars randomly asking passengers if they felt they had received their money's worth and would they suggest any changes. Almost without exception, they were entirely pleased and had no complaints other than two people who felt the trip time could be shortened somewhat, but in the same breath revealed they would ride the train again.

I described to many of them our Museum's plans for restoring passenger service over the scenic Desert Line through Carrizo Gorge, with the 17 tunnels and many bridges, etc., and you wouldn't believe how many of them wanted me to take their names and contact them when our line was operating. They didn't even ask what it might cost. They just wanted to know when.

Freight business on the line consists primarily of logs for an on-line paper mill, and iron ore. The combination of the popular tourist business and the freight traffic allowed the line to be economically viable. They did not handle much interline freight.

I was especially interested to note that this operation was very similar, in many respects, to what we envision for our Desert Line in the near future, and my personal hopes and dreams were greatly reinforced by this experience.

I brought back a videotape they produced, covering both freight and passenger operations, as well as their maintenance facilities. I've made some copies which I will leave on the lunch counter in the car barn at Campo for anyone to enjoy. I ask only that, if you remove the tapes from the premises, you return them when you're done so others can enjoy them.

For more information, check the Web or call the Algoma Central Ry. at (705) 254-4331. They also have an annual listing in the Steam Passenger Service Directory.

***** Executive Director's Notes ***** *Rich Borstadt*

Good news! MTDB and RailAmerica/SD&IV have initiated formal discussions with us to revise our contract to give the Museum expanded use and custody on the Desert Line, to include the Campo Depot, greater flexibility in scheduling excursions on trackage beyond our normal Division-to-Miller-Creek territory (including the Carrizo Gorge), formal recognition of the alliance relationship with Carrizo Gorge Railway, and freight movement over the Desert Line.

In that festive spirit, please take note of the Santa Claus trains and the two special Christmas trains noted elsewhere in this issue. Those who are not specifically giving the gift of crewing on the Saturday, December 16 evening Community Christmas Train should still plan to join us aboard that colorful tradition . . . to meet and share good cheer with our Campo neighbors and with other members of the Museum. Bring the family.

I wish the happiest of holidays to all of you who are the working heart of the Museum! We've had some troubled times over the last few months, but the coming year offers great promise for increased resources and for making significant strides forward on our mission. Let's focus on pulling together and working with one another to extend our knowledge and joy of the rails to our visitors in 2001.

***** Christmas Train 2001 - Uniting Two Nations *****

The 3-Kings Christmas Train 2001 will be our fourth year of running a train and bringing gifts to thousands of children from in and around the City of Tecate.

The Christmas Train is scheduled to depart from Campo, U.S.A. to Tecate, Mexico on January 7, 2001 in celebration of the Day of the Kings. The traditional day for the giving of gifts in Mexico. Once again, we will have the much needed cooperation of the Tecate Mayor's Office, the Police Department and DIF, which is the social service depart for greater Tecate.

From now until January 7, 2001 we have lots of work to do. Volunteers will be needed to make five thousand gift bags. Donations to purchase toys and school supplies in bulk will be accepted, as well as toys. The gift bags to be packed are for infants up to age two. Boy's gift bags and girl's gift bags up to age twelve. The gift bags will typically have a modest toy, pens, pencils and other school supplies, candy and a coloring book. Five thousand children eagerly anticipate the arrival of the Christmas Train. Should you wish to a part of this event and volunteer or donate, please contact the San Diego Railroad Museum business office at 595-3030.

***** From the Training Officer ***** *Jim Baker*

ANNUAL RULE REVIEW CLASSES

As noted in the last two issues of the HotScoop, in accordance with our FRA-approved training program, 2001 is a "third year," meaning that instead of a two-hour class, followed by a test, we need to have six hours of classroom time, followed by a test.

Based on the input I received regarding preferences for class times & dates, I've come up with the following schedule:

Two 3-hour "A" sessions and two 3-hour "B" sessions will be taught. You must take one "A" and one "B" session.

The "A" sessions will be:

- 1) Tuesday Jan. 9; 7 to 10 PM at Solar Turbines Learning Center.
- 2) Jan. 13, from 9:00 until noon at the crew lounge in the Campo car barn.

The "B" sessions will be:

- 1) Monday Jan. 15; 7 to 10 PM at Solar Turbines Learning Center.
- 2) Jan. 13, from 1:00 until 4:00 PM at the crew lounge in the Campo car barn.

Remember that ALL CERTIFIED CREW MEMBERS must take the review class. AFTER taking both sessions of the class, the written test must be taken. The written test must be passed before the end of February to continue operating (or taken prior to operating, if taken after the end of Feb). Allow 2 hours to take the test.

Test Schedule:

- 1) Wednesday Jan. 24; 7 to 10 PM at Solar Turbines Learning Center.
- 2) Jan. 13, from 4:00 until 8:00 PM at the crew lounge in the Campo car barn
- 3) Jan. 14, from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM at the crew lounge in the Campo car barn

If you can't make any of the above test times, see Mike Edwards to take the test. Note that I am having surgery on Jan. 31, and will be unavailable for 10 days to 2 weeks after that date. If you have any questions, contact the museum office.

BRAKEMAN CLASS

A new brakeman class is underway, with 9 students. Be looking for some new faces around the train during switching at Campo and Miller Creek. I'm still looking for an engineer to help out with the class on Dec. 9.

RULE OF THE MONTH

"Rule 7.1.1 Separating Equipment for Any Reason

"Make sure you separate cars and engines at least 50 feet and equipment is stopped before stepping or crossing between equipment."

This applies to going between cars to adjust or open a knuckle, etc., and when leaving separate cuts of cars on the same track. If you are leaving separate cuts of cars on the same track, such as when making up a Tecate train and a Miller Creek train on the main track, leave at least 50 feet between the two cuts. A full car length would be even better.

***** Way-side sign project completed! ***** *Jim Lundquist*

This past weekend, I was able to finish the quick little project I started two years ago! Originally, I was going to put up a sign at Sport Curve to honor my late dog. I noticed that the Miller Creek sign needed repainting - one thing led to another - it grew and grew as a project.

With a lot of help from members and friends, and encouragement from everyone, here's what's finished:

Tunnel 3 - new sign for new tunnel	Lindero - new sign
Tunnel 4 - renewed sign	Division - new sign
Dog Patch - new sign	SD&A sign on bridge at SR-94 xing
MP 61 - new sign	MP 62 - new sign
Chicken Ranch - new sign	MP 63 - new sign painted on rock
MP 64 - new sign	MP 65 - new sign
Yard Limit west of Campo	crossing sign for west of SR-94
SD&A sign on crossing gates at SR-94	crossing sign for east of SR-94
MP 66 - new sign	Railroad Museum - new sign
Campo Junction - renewed sign	crossing sign for east of SR-94
MP 67 - new sign	Barrett - renewed sign
Yard Limit - reinstalled renewed sign	crossing sign for east SR-94
MP 68 - new sign	MP 69 - new sign
Brown Dog - renewed sign	MP 70 - new sign
Sport Curve - new sign	MP 71 - new sign
Clover Flat - renewed sign	MP 72 - new sign
Miller Creek - renewed sign	MP 73 - new sign
Miller Creek yard limit-renewed sign	MP 74 - new sign
All switch stands painted and numbered on main and yard	
SD&A sign for crossing gates at other SR-94 crossing	
Track numbers, inside and out, for tracks 2,3,5,6,12,13 & 14	

Once again, thanks to everyone who donated the redwood poles, painted the signs, helped dig the holes, welded the plates, transported me trackside...everything, especially the encouragement.

Just when I was wrapping this project up, a member came up to me today and said, "You know that westbound La Posta whistle board is falling over" and yesterday "The derail sign rotted off". So, maybe after a break of way-side signs, I'll address those sometime later.

***** My Heroes ***** *Randy Houk*

Our crew for Saturday the 25th of November did not include any trainmen. As he has many times, Roger Challberg told me that he would probably be available to take a walking tour and/or ride the train if I needed him. As conductor for the day I thanked him for his generous offer, and would let him know. Allan Dillane then approached me and said that he had a group of friends riding the first train, and wondered if we needed a trainman. We had hit the jackpot! Of course I said that we'd love to have him ride with us in that capacity. He even had his trainman uniform with him, and did his usual marvelous job talking with our 90 passengers on 2/3 AND giving the tour! Roger arrived at the depot in time for departure of 4/5, and did his usual wonderful job with our 130 passengers, including the walking tour!

Allan and Roger, thank you very much. You helped the museum fulfill its mission!

***** RPO car restoration ***** *Ted Kornweibel*

The RPO car restoration is nearly at the point of interior painting. Our goal is to reach that milestone in Jan. 2001. But to reach this goal, we need some extra hands.

Our prep work now is mostly detail sanding: feathering, getting into corners, sanding pipes; some using mechanical sanders, other light hand sanding. We have respirators and masks, so we work in a safe environment. This is work that anyone--man, woman, teenager--can accomplish. In addition, there are windows to be painted and no ladder work. No skill is required for either sanding or painting.

So won't you give us the "gift" of a day's work, or even half a day? You will get a great deal of satisfaction and know that your labor has helped bring the car to completion. Our workdays are Wednesdays (superintended by Frank Stites) and Saturday (by Ted Kornweibel). We will be working nearly every weekend through the holidays, and at least some Wednesdays. Please call Frank at (619) 461-1480, or Ted at (619) 461-0098. If transportation is a problem, we may be able to take you out with us. **One final benefit: the great fellowship.** On Saturdays we bring lunches and enjoy good conversation, etc., in the crew lounge in the car barn. Wednesday workers go to the Campo Senior Center for a great and inexpensive meal.

I hope to see some new faces soon.

***** Christmas in La Mesa ***** *Roy Pickering*

Hayrides, strolling minstrels, carolers, and a large number of choral and orchestral groups are all part of the Eleventh Annual Christmas in the Village to be held on Friday December 8, Saturday December 9 and Friday December 15, Saturday December 16 beginning at 6:00 p.m. During these four evenings, La Mesa Boulevard from Fourth Street to Acacia Avenue will be transformed into a pedestrian promenade where families are invited to sample a variety of holiday goodies as they stroll among the quaint shops and craft booths that will adorn the Village.

Reminiscent of European Christmas Markets which have been the holiday gathering place in numerous cities and villages throughout England and the Continent, The Christmas in the Village in La Mesa will feature lots of holiday music and entertainment from a more relaxed era. The San Diego East County Chamber of Commerce and the La Mesa Village Merchant's Association are co-coordinators of the event.

A convenient way to attend the event is to ride the Trolley to the La Mesa Boulevard Station, which is right in the center of the Christmas Village Festival. For general information, contact John Hesterman at (619) 465-7700. For information about booths or becoming a vendor, contact Richard Felix at (619) 462-3000.

***** Financials Through October ***** *Rich Borstadt*

AGED DEBTS (as of October 31, 2000)

Current	1-30	31-60	61-90	>90	Total
\$1752	8,655	188	2,061	71,816	84,473

INCOME (Year-to-Date): \$279,951

Source	%	Source	%
MOW Income	23.0	Membership Dues	5.4
Campo Operation	24.7	Events	4.8
SD&A/T&T Excursion	13.2	Donations - Restricted	5.9
Production/Rental	8.4	Donations - Unrestricted	3.1
Desert Line Alliance	6.6	Grants and Awards	1.9
Other	3.0		

EXPENSE (Year-to-Date): \$267,554

Area	%
General Administrative	31
Railroad Operations Division	53
Museum Services Division	16

***** Web page update ***** Randy Houk

I have added new photos of brakeman Tom Gray and speeder operator Darren Apedaile at <http://www.sdrm.org/gallery/people/>. I also spiffed up the roster page at <http://www.sdrm.org/roster/>. If you have a photo that you think should be on our web page, whether it's a volunteer I don't have represented or some piece of history that belongs there please send it to me! Also, if you're receiving this via U.S. Mail and have recently gotten **E-mail**, please send an email to hotscoop@sdrm.org so we can add you to the 'members' list. We save postage that way!

***** Year 2000/2001 Dates of Note *****

	December	January	February	March
Staff meeting (1900 at Solar)	4	8	5	5
Campo to Tecate	2,16	6,13,27	3,17,24	3,10,24
School Train	19			
Brunch Train	3	7	25	25
Dinner Train	9	20	10	17
Brakeman class	2,9			
Board meeting (1830 at Solar)		23	27	27
Museum Services meeting (1900 at Solar)		31	28	28
Deadline for HS articles	28	28	28	28

***** Article Submissions *****

Please submit articles in pure text (.txt) or MS Word (.doc) format.
E-mail to hotscoop@sdrm.org is preferred. Send address changes to the editor.

*****PHONE NUMBERS and e-mail*****

Web page: <http://www.sdrm.org>

SDRM ADMINISTRATION

		@sdrm.org
Business Office, Rich Borstadt	(619) 595-3032	office
Business Office Fax	(619) 595-3034	
Museum Phone (La Mesa Depot)	(619) 697-7762	
Report Editor, Marna Hartjen	(760) 489-1353	report
HotScoop Editor, Randy Houk	(858) 672-0111	hotscoop
La Mesa Depot	(619) 697-7762	
Campo Depot	(619) 478-9937	
Campo Car Shop	(619) 478-9451	
Campo Caretaker, Thomas Lee Braginton	(619) 478-9344	

DEPARTMENT HEADS

		@sdrm.org
Executive Director, Rich Borstadt	(619) 294-9321	borstadt
Director of SD&A Railway, Mike Edwards	(619) 417-8970	edwards
Director of Campo Complex, Jim Polloreno	(619) 590-2892	polloreno
Research, Bruce Semelsberger	(619) 264-7282	
Library, vacant		
Operations, Mike Edwards	(619) 417-8970	edwards
Safety, vacant		
Restoration, Ted Kornweibel	(619) 461-0098	kornweibel
Mechanical, Darren Apedaile	(619) 589-1966	apedaile
Steam, Dwight Koller	(619) 478-9348	koller
Diesel, Darren Apedaile	(619) 589-1966	apedaile
Training, Jim Baker	(619) 670-7441	baker
Trainmen/Guides, Bob Schussler	(619) 698-1458	schusslerb
La Mesa Depot, Jim Polloreno	(619) 590-2892	polloreno
Facilities, vacant		
Volunteer Coordinator, Steve Kostelak	(619) 498-0925	kostelak