

Hot



Scoop

HotScoop Shovel Logo by Larry Rose

A publication dedicated to San Diego Railroad Museum volunteers

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MUSEUM NEWS

VOL XIII NO VI

***** Spring Festival a Success ***** *Dick Pennick, Steering Committee Chairman*

As a first-time event, the Museum's recent SPRING FESTIVAL & OLD-TIME DAYS at Campo over the 2-day Cinco de Mayo weekend May 5 - 6th was a rousing success from all accounts, despite some unfortunate snafus which included among other things the absence of our steam locomotive No. 2353.

Attendance for the two-day affair totaled 1182 adults and 115 children (not counting children under 5, admitted at no charge) for a grand total of 1297 paying visitors. The under-5 kids probably brought the total count to 1350 - 1400.

The new temporary event parking lot provided on the adjacent Bangs property east of the Depot parking lot was just large enough to accommodate all of the visitors' cars (approximately 150 spaces total).

There was a total of 34 commercial paid exhibitors and 20 non-profit and governmental exhibits, which were provided free space, for a grand total of 54 exhibitors, not a bad total for a first-time event and a heavy-competition weekend! Much of the success of this portion of the event is the result of the hard work and personal effort by my Booths Committee chairman, Bob Schussler and his wife Sandy, who are both also train crew members on the Museum's Demonstration Train. Since the Schussler's home phone and e-mail address appeared on the advertising flyers, they also fielded hundreds of phone calls about booth space, the event, the Museum etc., etc. They claimed that, during the final two weeks before the event, the phone never stopped ringing!

Although a final financial accounting of the event is not yet complete, preliminary results suggest we did better than break even, possibly substantially better. General Admission charges, in addition to charges for the various train activities offered, were kept intentionally reasonable to encourage maximum participation from the general public as well as exhibitors, and make it truly a family activity. Even the event name and the advertising downplayed the railroad aspects and accentuated the "fun for the entire family" idea. We tried to encourage general public interest, not just railroad buffs, and I think we succeeded in this effort.

Some of the train events were decidedly more popular than others, and at least one was a "first" for our Museum. Reported low ridership on the motorcars from the Depot to the Truck Museum may have been due to unfamiliarity of the public with what a "motorcar" was. And since the motorcar operated on the Main Line, it was often partly or completely hidden by other displays or train movements on the House Track (the closest of the three tracks to the Depot). A photo would have helped.

Probably the most popular train event, and the most lucrative from a revenue standpoint, was the opportunity to pilot our 1959 ElectroMotive Division GP-9E (ex-St. Louis Southwestern Railway) 124-ton diesel-electric locomotive No. 3873 along approximately 0.6 miles of the Museum's House Track and "Museum Main". Most of the 30-minute slots were filled both days, and several Museum members took advantage of the special member's rate to take a shot at the throttle. Special thanks to Randy Houk and Michael Reneau for supervising the budding "engineers", and to brakemen Dave Houk, Ken Kahan and Ansara Gilbert. The brakemen handled the thankless task of guiding the engine safely up and down the track all day.

Each "engineer" was given a traditional striped engineer's cap and a certificate of achievement. Both County Supervisor Dianne Jacob and State Assemblywoman Charlene Zettel took turns at the throttle and Senator Jim Batten's District Director Frank DeLima also gave it a try (Sen. Batten was unable to attend). Each of the political representatives presented the Museum with a commemorative certificate or proclamation. The County Board of Supervisors proclaimed May 1, 2001 as "SAN DIEGO RAILROAD MUSEUM DAY"!

The Miller Creek Demonstration Train was operated on its usual schedule, and the Museum provided our Santa Maria Valley Railroad 9-passenger Railbus No. 9 to the Mt. Empire Historical Society for a nominal sum as a gesture of good will. They operated short passenger shuttles from the Depot to the old Gaskill Brothers Stone Store Museum just west of the Hy. 94 crossing, as a fund-raiser for the Historical Society. 50 passengers availed themselves of this unique opportunity.

Rich & Jo Pope came all the way down from Apple Valley to provide and operate their speeder and trailers, and we'll have to do a better job next year on the ridership.

On Saturday evening, May 5th, the Museum had offered the local Mt. Empire Jr.-Sr. High School the opportunity to run a "Full-Moon Hayride Train" from Campo to Miller Creek as a fund-raiser for the school band program. The kids were hoping to raise enough money from this event to pay for a charter bus to Knott's Berry Farm this summer. The word is that they accomplished this goal.

This hayride train was another "first" for the Museum, and we may elect to run some of these ourselves on selected summer evenings, schedule permitting. The consist for this unique train was Diesel #3873, one of the ex-Lackawanna coaches, our generator-equipped baggage car, the open-air "Fallbrook" car with baled straw inside, and member Dan Marnell's restored ex-Southern Pacific Railroad caboose No. 1061 bringing up the rear, complete with a pair of genuine kerosene marker lamps. I was fortunate to be the engineer on this special train, and it was a real treat to look back after dark and see those old "hayburner" lamps flickering at the end of the train!

The school sold 10 seats in this caboose at extra fare. The original plan was to outfit one or more of our flatcars with railings and baled straw, for a truly "under the stars" trip. But the school advisors were unable to mobilize the students to complete the railings in time for the event.

Some key advertising was provided for this event, most notably a full-page illustrated article on the Museum and the event in the May issue of SUNSET Magazine, and two items in the April issue of AAA's WESTWAYS Magazine, which listed the Museum as one of the "eight great railroad museums" in the State. A calendar entry on the event appeared in the May issue.

Although probably not a definitive list, articles were noted in San Diego Home/Garden Magazine, The Reader newspaper, San Diego Union-Tribune, Alpine News Monthly, Alpine Sun, Old California Gazette newspaper, and the Mira Mesa/Scripps Ranch Sentinel.

Except for a free PSA by Channel 39 and possibly several local radio stations, there was no local TV coverage either before or after the event that I am aware of, in spite of strenuous efforts by member Dave Johnson and me. We have a real problem here, for any of our activities at Campo, and there appears to be no easy answer. Distance from metro San Diego, where all of the major TV stations are located, seems to be the big problem.

In spite of the coverage we did get, as well as several articles and appeals for help in HOT SCOOP and our general-membership newsletter REPORT over the past four or five months, there were still some members who claimed they had not heard about the event! And there were fewer still who accepted my repeated invitation to get involved with the planning. God knows we could have used another 20 or 30 warm bodies! Hopefully, next year's chairman will have better luck than I did motivating more of our membership.

In addition to the approximately 19 hard-working Museum members that made up my Steering Committee and labored most of a year to plan and stage this event, there are several members and others who stand out above the rest because of their extraordinary commitment. Here's my "atta boy" list:

Sandy & Bob Schussler: An amazing job performed by this husband-wife team to organize and implement the exhibitor coordination task.

Jim Polloreno: the Museum's Campo site manager. Hundreds of volunteer hours spent developing supporting site infrastructure, sprucing up the grounds, and converting an old bunkhouse trailer into a sparkling display building complete with wall-to-wall carpeting and a built-in video system.

Mike Edwards: the Museum's Operations Superintendent. "Tell me what you need and I'll make it happen" was the credo of this hard-working young man who not only attended nearly every Steering Committee meeting in spite of his busy schedule, but who successfully orchestrated the bewildering array of train movements during the 2-day Festival (after spending most of Friday night making up the required trains!).

Dennis Busch: a professional advertising consultant who came to us by way of one of our evening Dinner Trains and a tip from Trustee/Car Steward Jim Friedlan. Dennis is responsible for developing all of the copyrighted artwork used for the Festival T-shirts, souvenir program and other promotional activities as a pro bono contribution to the Museum.

Alan Alvarez & Mike Santos: both Museum Trustees. Without their professional expertise and detailed coordination, the Festival security program would not have been possible. Thanks to these gentlemen and their team of volunteer law-enforcement professionals, a security presence was provided continuously from late Friday afternoon through Sunday, May 6th. In addition, special portable radio units were provided to key ground staff during the event.

Doug Hovland: Museum Trustee. Thanks to his efforts and personal donations, the event had adequate electrical power, and the main stage had a shade canopy.

Don Getz: Museum Trustee, retired from the construction industry and able to operate practically anything that moves (including Diesel locomotives). Without his many punishing hours on bulldozers and skiploaders to prepare the event parking lot and perform other clean-up work at the site, the event would not have been possible.

Paula Strong & Walt Richards: With the help of Activities/Events Sub-Committee Chairman Ann McVeagh, Paula and Walt expertly assembled the musical acts that performed continuously during the Festival, the essential "glue" that helped hold the event together, and also provided the sound mixing and Master of Ceremonies duties.

Larry Plaster: Site Manager for Father Joe's PromiseLand Ranch juvenile rehab facility in Campo. An extraordinarily helpful gentleman. All of the tables and chairs, as well as the large tent we used for the main ticket/souvenir booth were provided free of charge by Larry and his organization, including delivery, setup and removal. In spite of the unfortunate wind loss of three smaller booths he had delivered and set up on May 2nd, he honored his original commitment to the Museum by driving all the way to San Diego to retrieve a replacement structure and helping to set it up at Campo in time for the event.

Others who provided invaluable assistance or offers of help included: **Tony Neff**, President of the Mt. Empire Campo Kiwanis; **Tom Hargraves**, County Maintenance Supervisor, Campo; **Jim Ferguson**, local contractor and equipment operator; **Judy Shaplin**, Executive Director of Southern Health Services, Campo; **Gary Sweetwood** and **Matt Adams** of Carriso Gorge Ry., Inc.; **Mike Huffaker**, manager of Freedom Ranch adult rehab facility; **Chief Steve VanHeertum**, Campo Fire Dept., and Jim Polloreno's father, whose sign business provided signs and banners for the event at greatly reduced prices.

To all of these wonderful people and others I've overlooked, and to all of the folks who helped on the ground, in the booths and on the trains, I cannot say enough in praise of your efforts. It would not have been possible without your unselfish and dedicated effort.

Which brings us to next year: now that we have our first SPRING FESTIVAL under our belt, it would seem a shame to waste the momentum by not beginning the planning for 2002. A chairman needs to be found that is willing to commit the time and energy to put the event on. It is absolutely a team effort, and so much new ground has been plowed this year, next year's event should be much easier to pull off. And I will help transition the new chairman into the job as needed. Give it some thought! Let's look forward to an even bigger and better SPRING FESTIVAL next year! And we should have a steam engine!

***** Hazmat Update ***** *Jack M. O'Lexey* Superintendent of Environmental Affairs

On May 14th we had our annual Hazmat inspection. We suspect that a 15-page letter trying to block the use of the Museum site for a Sprint cell phone tower hastened this inspection. **Jim Polloreno** got a copy of the letter and said it was from the man who is getting paid for other towers located on his mountain south of the museum.

Inspector Mary Lou White from Environmental Health wrote us up for 8 violations in February 2000 and several were repeat violations. Most were due to improper paperwork. Mary Lou returned April 14, 2000 and we had taken care of everything on the first inspection report.

In January I provided training at a staff meeting, and wrote articles for the Hot Scoop. I had both of these documents in the HAZMAT folder. The other thing we did not have for the inspection last year was a Hazmat Map I made later in the year during my Landscape design class. I knew how to make a site plan and get it blue printed and reduced. It has all the proper labels and the MSDS 800 number on it in case of an accident. You can go to the phone and find the number to get help.

We were told that since we did so well on the follow-up she almost did not come out. Mary Lou had not read the 15-page report, but was not disappointed when she came Thursday May 14th. We were written up for only one problem. Someone had brought two square 5-gallon cans of a liquid with no label and I could not smell what was in the can. Now we must have it taken away as a hazardous waste, and how hazardous it may or may not be will determine the cost.

Some people are still not cleaning up contaminated soil. If contaminated soil is put into a bucket and left sitting outside, rain will fill up the bucket and spill some of the waste oil onto the ground. Had **Arnold Hunsberger** not come along last Saturday with his truck and his strong back we would have been written up for buckets of contaminated soil. I can't lift them; I'm the Superintendent of Environmental affairs, not the **clean up person**.

The Steam team had 8 or so buckets for catching oil with an oil separator drum. The buckets sat under the diesel tank all winter and generated 80 gallons of waste oil and water. They have been removed and will be stored inside the Steam team boxcar, or next time they will be removed from the property by Asbury and we could use the money from 2353 to pay for their disposal. We also have two buckets of oil or grease soaked waste our Steam team needs to take care of. Mary Lou has said it is OK to burn this in 2353 since it is used to start the locomotive, we just need to use bigger wads. **Dwight Koller** has agreed to do this, too.

Coffee cans with a small amount of oil were found this winter full of water and needed separation. Several 5-gallon cans stacked at the south end of the carbarn were unnecessary, too. We now have an almost full box of contaminated soil to get picked up; the box has been in the visitor's center out of the rain.

*In the future to save the museum money we **MUST** stop bringing cans of oil, fluids and liquids to the museum because you or a friend thinks we can use it sometime or another.*

Somebody brought in over 20 drums of 9250 oil. It's not a hazard but it exceeds the amount we are allowed to store on the property under our permit. If we don't have to get rid of it for a long time we will be billed \$120 more each year until the oil is used up. Last year we paid \$550, and now it will be \$670. 9250 oil cannot be used in most of our engines because they require ZINC in the oil per **Geoff Scheuerman, Gary Sweetwood, and Mike Reading**. So don't bring anything in a can or drums without contacting me. If I don't know the answer I will find out how much we can store. That does not mean you can bring it until I find out, either.

We have some other areas that need better cleanup and I can do it without help. We were lucky this time around. We have two more fluids that could cost us more to keep these quantities. They are not hazardous and even though stored properly we could be charged more on our yearly permit. In the future we need to be more careful and we will discuss some other problems at staff!

Thanks to the following people who have helped: **Tom Walker, Fred Carnathan, Arnold Hunsberger, Allan Dillane, Josh O'Brien, Kevin Boyce, Jim Polloreno, Rich Warner, Ted Kornwieble and Darren Apedaile**. Sorry if I have forgotten someone.

***** Community Service on the San Diego & Arizona Railroad ***** *Dave Houk*

(Ed. Note: Dave wrote this article for his high school community service requirement)

I did my community service with the San Diego Railroad Museum. The facility is located in Campo CA, only a few miles from Mexico. The museum is a non-profit organization and is all run by volunteers. Everyone from the trainmen who talk to the passengers and make them comfortable, to the engineers who run the train, they all volunteer their time as well as I do. I am the youngest qualified brakeman ever at the San Diego Railroad Museum.

First I will tell you how I got started. When I was around the age of eight my Dad bought me a model train set, the one that would only go in a circle. As weeks went by my Dad added on to it and the track got larger. Eventually I was no longer allowed to play with it. As my Dad's interest in trains grew, he did a little research and found out about the museum. We went up one weekend and rode the train. We were hooked!

My father went through a little bit of training and became a trainman. We would go up almost every weekend, my Dad would do his duties while I helped in the gift shop dusting and cleaning. Years passed and my Dad rose through the ranks, Trainman, Brakeman, Engineer and then Conductor. I, too, changed jobs. I sold snacks on the train, and at one point I ran the gift shop. When I was fifteen a man named Mike Edwards, a brakeman, asked if I wanted to help him and my dad in the rail yard. So after that he would take me along with him and he would teach me how to be a brakeman. At seventeen, I took the classes and passed my test in only seven training runs. The Qualification Board checked my records, and on my eighteenth birthday I became the youngest qualified brakeman.

I know you are tired of me talking about my past and you are wondering, "What exactly does a Brakeman do?" Well, I'll tell you. A Brakeman is in charge of all movements of the train, such as which way the train goes and how far. We also check all brake shoes (like brake pads on a car), hand brakes (like the emergency brake for a car), air hoses and gaskets. The brakemen are in charge of coupling cars together and making sure that the brakes will work by performing brake tests and air tests. When the brakemen are in the cab while the train is moving, they become the engineer's eyes looking for anything on the tracks or anything that might run in front of the engine or get in the way. Now you may have a little more of an idea on what the Brakeman does.

A typical day for me starts at about 7:00 am. I report to the office where I pick up my switch keys and radio. I get my orders from the yardmaster; he will tell me what engine we will run and what cars we are going to take. He will also tell me what track to get them from. After the engineer starts the engine we do a quick brake test. I check to see if he can set and release his brakes. We do it twice; once with the train brake (sets the brakes on the cars) and the independent (which sets the engine's brake alone). Once that is done we go out and get the consist. Once I have connected all the cars together we do another brake test. This time I have to check all of the cars and see if the brakes have set on each one. The engineer does a leakage test while I inspect the "set". If there is more than 5 pounds of brakepipe leakage in 1 minute he will tell me, usually on the radio I carry. In that case I need to look to find where the air is leaking, then fix it. It's usually a gladhand gasket that leaks. I carry some spares so I can replace defective ones. When the leakage test is complete I call for a release, and the engineer then releases the train brakes. Sometimes these signals are done over the radio, and sometimes with hand signals if the engineer and I can see each other. I then check the brakes on each car to make sure that the piston on each cylinder has gone back in. This tells me that the brake shoes are not tight against the wheels so the train can now move. I then look at the air gauge on the last car to make sure that the pressure is restored back to the running value of 110 pounds. I remove the gauge and connect the conductor's hose. This hose has a whistle and a valve that allows the brakeman or conductor to stop the train when we're backing up. I also put a red flag on the coupler for daylight operation. If it's going to be dark I'll put a flashing red light there for extra visibility.

When that is completed, we take the whole consist and bring it down to the depot where we will load the passengers. The whole crew meets and the Conductor holds a safety meeting, in which we distribute fire duties and any other instructions that they might have for us. When we have the first boarding call I climb up into the cab and wait for departure. When we leave I get to sit back and watch the tracks for anything. When we get to La Posta Rd, I get out and flag the crossing. Back in the cab I relax and enjoy the scenery. At Miller Creek, which is the turning point of the trip, I close the air and pull the pin to separate the locomotive. After that we pull away and I throw the switch to the passing track. I then bring the locomotive down the track passing the passengers. I get to hang off and wave. When we get to the end of that track, another switch is thrown and we head back to hook up to the consist. I then bring the locomotive in and hook it up. I lace in the air and we do another brake test. When it's all passed then we head back to the depot. Again I sit back and watch. Back at the depot we unload the passengers and get the train ready to leave one more time. We go and have some lunch and we push off once again at 2:30 pm. When the second trip is over the yardmaster will tell me of other switching that I may have to do. When the switching is all done or there is none to do we put the engine back and shut her down. I check back in the keys and radio, sign out and GO HOME!

I have been a brakeman for a year now and I hope that I will be able to continue my duties. I have never realized how the railroad was operated nor had much respect for it until I started to volunteer at the museum. Now it is amazing to know how much this country depends on the railroads. I wouldn't work for one as a career due to the long hours and physical work, but it sure is fun to go up on some weekends to work on the rails with good friends. I hope you come out and support us.

See you on the rails!

***** Museum Financial Report *****

Financial report not received by press time.

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

New this month is a roster category for support equipment. I have the famous Bill Schneider write-ups on our two railcranes, along with a photo of each machine. I have photos of some of our other machines such as the Santa Fe bridge crane, yellow forklift and rubber-tired crane, but don't have any written history for them. Any help in this regard would be appreciated so I can include them, too.

Don't forget that our web page has a link for Volunteer Services. You can see old issues of the Hot Scoop and a link to the Code of Federal Regulations. The username is "**volunteer**" and the password is "**2353**".

If you're receiving this via U.S. Mail but have gotten **E-mail**, please send an email to hotscoop@sdrm.org so we can make you a 'member'. We save postage that way!

***** Year 2001 Dates of Note *****

	June	July	August
Staff meeting (1900 at Solar)	4	2	6
Campo to Tecate	9,23,30	7,21,28	4,11,25
Steam Train	23,24	-	-
School Train	19	17	-
Brunch Train	17	-	-
Dinner Train	2	-	-
Wine Train	9	-	-
Board meeting (1830 at Solar)	28	26	23
Museum Services meeting (1900 at Solar)	27	25	29
Deadline for HS articles	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*****

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