

SD&AE Celebrates 50th Year



JOHN D. SPRECKELS is seen in the center of this photo of the spike-driving ceremony. The crowd consisted of the first 580 San Diegans to buy tickets at \$7.50 each.

-Historical Collection, Title Ins. & Trust Co.

On November 15, 1919, San Diego financier John D. Spreckles drove the golden spike which signified the completion of the San Diego & Arizona (Eastern) railroad and connected San Diego with the Southern Pacific and points east. The railroad, which took over 12 years to complete, remains to this day one of the engineering marvels of the nation. A complete history of the construction of the "Impossible Railroad" appears in the November, 1969 issue of Pacific News under the byline of museum member Bob DiGiorgio. To help celebrate the anniversary of the golden spike we're reprinting here a few of the articles which appeared in the San Diego newspapers when the rail link east was completed.

San Diego Union, November 10, 1919

TICKETS FOR DRIVING CEREMONY SELLING RAPIDLY

Step lively and avoid the rush! Tickets for the golden spike-driving in the Carisso Gorge to mark the actual physical completion of the San Diego & Arizona Railway were selling fast yesterday at the Chamber of Commerce celebration headquarters, 101 Broadway, and those who want to make the trip next Saturday had better hurry.

The big special train will leave San Diego for the gorge at 7:45 a.m. and will return to San Diego at 6:00 the same evening. Tickets for the round trip, to be had at 101 Broadway, Spreckles building, are \$7.50 each. They include lunch, which will be served by the Committee at Jacumba.

San Diego Evening Tribune, November 15, 1919

SIX HUNDRED JOYOUS SAN DIEGANS SEE LAST LINK IN LINE JOINED

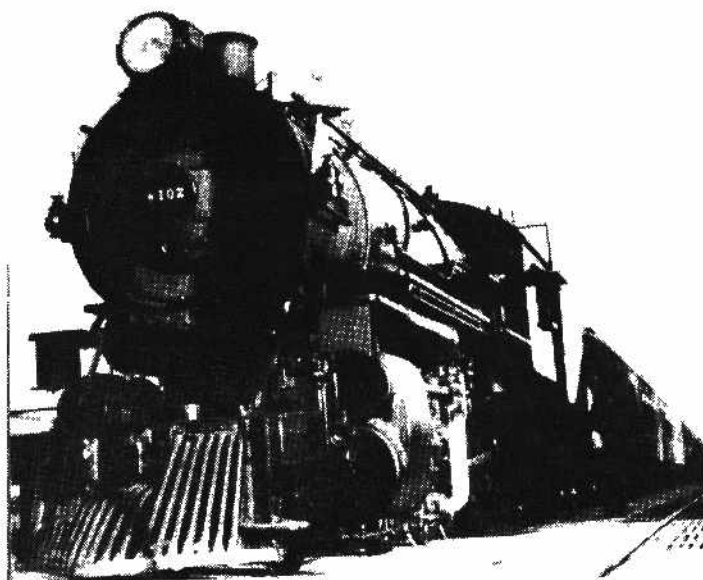
"Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here," played the steam calliope attachment of the San Diego & Arizona locomotive this morning, and the whole city heard the music through the crisp morning air.

Then someone shouted, "Com' on, we're going out to nail this transcontinental railroad in place," and the calliope played "Merrily We Roll Along," while the wheels turned and the 10-coach San Diego & Arizona excursion train pulled out from Union Depot for the golden spike driving ceremony.

President John D. Spreckles stood in the rear of his private car "Coronado" at the end of the vanishing train, looking out upon the crowd left behind at the station. This afternoon, in Carisso gorge, he lifted a workman's maul and drove home the golden spike that finished construction of his railroad.

"Last Spike Driven, San Diego and Arizona Railway Co. Carisso Gorge, Nov. 15, 1919" read the inscription on one side of the golden spike, and on the reverse is "Spike Driven by Mr. John D. Spreckles, President."

Nearly 600 passengers were aboard the train, it was estimated. Belated rush for tickets yesterday afternoon sent the sales to 580, and an extra coach was provided.



THE GOLDEN SPIKE SPECIAL was pulled by Consolidation #102. The three highest-pitched whistles of the "steam calliope attachment" can be seen on top of the cab.

-Historical Collection, Title Ins. & Trust Co.

S.D.&A. BEGINS OPERATIONS TODAY WITH BIG CELEBRATION SAN DIEGO REALIZES DREAM

Now all together—three cheers for the S.D.&A. and for John D. Spreckles, the man who made it possible.

Marking the turning point in the city's long struggle for commercial importance and assuring the rapid development of the harbor and its environs, the new San Diego and Arizona railway, San Diego's direct transcontinental line to the east, will be placed in operation today.

Practically every able-bodied man, woman, and child in the Harbor City is expected to turn out to witness the arrival of the first train and to view the great parade that will immediately follow. The Committee expects everyone to throw dignity to the four winds and literally dance with joy when the blowing of whistles, the ringing of bells, the firing of cannons and snort of the big locomotive engines announce that San Diego is at last the terminus of a through railroad from away back yonder.

HONOR TO THE BUILDER

Today is John D. Spreckles day—a day set aside in honor of the man whose perseverance and supreme confidence, which he backed with all the financial power at his command, have, after years of untiring effort, provided for San Diego the fulfillment of its most cherished dream. He is expected to be at the throttle of the engine when train #1 comes rolling up to the station.

PROGRAM FOR OPENING DAY OF CELEBRATION

JOHN D. SPRECKLES DAY, DECEMBER 1

- 1:30-2 p.m. Band Concert, union station, by Tommasino's exposition band.
- 2 p.m. Arrival of first train over San Diego & Arizona Railway with John D. Spreckles, Governor Campbell of Arizona, Governor Larrasola of New Mexico and Governor Cantu of Lower California, Mexico and other distinguished guests, together with a delegation of leading citizens of the great Imperial Valley, Arizona, and New Mexico.
- 2:15 p.m. Parade, union station to Balboa Park.
- 3-4:30 p.m. Formal exercises, Spreckles organ pavilion, Balboa Park.
- 3-5 p.m. Open house and reception, Women's board, California building, Balboa Park.
- 7:30 (sharp) -9:30 p.m. Banquet in honor of John D. Spreckles, governors and other distinguished guests, Hotel del Coronado.
- 9:30 p.m. Reception and ball, Hotel del Coronado.
- 8:30 p.m. Informal dancing at leading San Diego hotels.
- 8:30 p.m. Street dancing.

San Diego Evening Tribune, December 1, 1919

SAN DIEGO & ARIZONA PASSENGER SERVICE INAUGURATED TODAY

San Diego & Arizona railway passenger service was inaugurated today on a schedule of one train a day each way between San Diego and El Centro. The first regular train to pass over the road was that which left Union depot here at 7:15 this morning.

Leaving time for the regular daily from Imperial Valley is from Calexico at 2:15 p.m. and El Centro at 2:45 p.m.

The really first train was that of yesterday, which carried President John D. Spreckles and members of the Celebration Committee to El Centro, to there welcome the throng of guests who are to arrive on the special train of two sections this afternoon.

MR. JOHN D. SPRECKLES TAKES PARTY TO EL CENTRO ON FIRST SPECIAL TRAIN

The first through train from San Diego to Imperial Valley—a passenger train—went eastward, leaving here at 10 a.m. Sunday (Nov. 30—ed.) and arriving at El Centro at 7 o'clock at night. The trail-blazer special was a private train, really, and it bore President John D. Spreckles and 60 of his invited guests.

Because it was not travelling on a schedule, and because a large number of the guests on board were railroad officials who were directly interested in the newly completed railway, the special train of nine coaches went slowly. Through Carriso Gorge, the marvel land of the line, it barely crept along, for every passenger on board was keenly interested in the mammoth engineering task that has so lately been completed.

The special train entered Carriso Gorge as the sun was falling low. The light was still strong enough to show the craggy, rocky mountains in their natural colors of mauve, tan and maroon. The many tunnels, bridges, rock cuts and mammoth fills on the roadbed were subject to close inspection and much comment.

Before entering Carriso Gorge, and after leaving it, the special train travelled at full speed most of the way, slowing down only at points of particular interest. Long stretches of roadway traversed at high speed had been constructed and ballasted for a long time. "Rides like the New York Central," was the comment of one of the visiting railroad officials.

HELP YOUR MUSEUM

As a result of the request in the October Report \$19.08 was received for the General Fund and \$32.00 for U.P. Car #576. Regular dues amounting to \$50.00 were received along with \$24.00 in contributing dues. All figures were as of October 31, 1969. Donors were the following: Louise Leesman, Terry Durkin, Vernon Mardock Jr., Andrew Proctor, and Rindge Shima. We're very grateful to those who have helped. Can you help this time? As of October 31st we had \$615.83 in the treasury, but we have \$1650.00 in outstanding loans. The general fund has a balance of \$148.95 (overdrawn) while the Car #576 Fund has \$764.78. There were no contributions to the Report Fund. The Report Fund donations would be used to improve the Report (more pages, more pictures, etc.), and in December to finance a new information brochure showing all the Museum's equipment. There were no contributions to the Line Truck and Traction Fund. Restoration of this truck is in progress and about \$20.00 has been spent so far. Things are improving but we are a long way from having a black cash balance. Please send your donations and dues to the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum, Post Office Box 12096, San Diego, California 92112. Make checks payable to P.S.R.M.A., Inc. All donations are State and Federal income tax deductible.

U.P. COACH EXCURSION CANCELLED

The fantrip to Los Angeles on December 6, 1969, has been cancelled. One reason was for lack of batteries to assure lights in the car at night while the train was in stations on the return trip. Another reason was the necessity to get a new air brake inspection at the cost of \$120.00. Air brake inspections are good for 15 months and then must be renewed. The Board postponed the trip until early next year. Help pay for the batteries and the air brake inspection by donating to the Car #576 fund and, of course, supporting the next excursion with the car.

southwest corner

by John Hathaway

This month we're going to take a quick tour of a few of the more active locales for trainwatching in the Southern California areas. All of these locations are within half a day's drive from San Diego and make good one day trips. Some of them are in fairly scenic areas.

COLTON: This major Southern Pacific yard is located just south of San Bernardino on Highway 395. It is here the Southern Pacific rail mainline east out of Los Angeles crosses Santa Fe's Third District line between LA and San Bernardino, and here also the Espee cutoff between Palmdale and Colton terminates. You can follow the Espee tracks east out of Colton to more scenic areas and watch the fairly rapid progression of trains. The yard and mainline pass directly under 395.

SAN BERNARDINO: Here Santa Fe's Third and Second Districts from LA come together. From the Santa Fe passenger depot here you can see that railroad's large engine repair facilities. Union Pacific trackage out of LA joins the Santa Fe line here for the trip over the rugged Cajon Mountains on joint trackage.

CAJON PASS: Espee's Colton-Palmdale cutoff and the Santa Fe-UP mainline both run through Cajon Pass out of Los Angeles. Out of San Bernardino the tracks can be followed by taking the Mount Vernon Avenue off ramp at the north end of the city and getting on Cajon Valley Road, which follows the tracks as far as the small settlement of Devore. After returning to Interstate 15 at Devore, you can rejoin the tracks at the town of Cajon. Take the Highway 138 off ramp, but instead of heading west on 138 turn east and follow Summit Valley Road. You can make your way via a paved road to the small railroad settlement of Summit located at the crest of Cajon Pass. Here both lines are within yards of each other and offer almost continuous activity for the railfan. If you're the adventurous type, there is a labyrinth of dirt service and fire roads throughout the entire area which go into isolated, and scenic, sections of both lines as they pass through the high desert area. You can also follow the Summit Valley Road to the flat area surrounding the desert community of Hesperia before returning to the freeway. Here you can see Santa Fe-UP trains picking up a good clip across the flatlands. The Espee route north of Summit turns westwardly towards Palmdale and is fairly inaccessible.

BARSTOW: A major division point on the Santa Fe as well as the site of a major locomotive terminus.

Santa Fe's Oakland route through the valley and the LA division come together at Barstow. If you're a diesel-electric fan, Barstow is the place. The huge repair facilities are constantly servicing all types, and any new equipment acquired by Santa Fe is seen almost immediately in Barstow.

TEHACHAPI MOUNTAINS: The rugged Tehachapis offer the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe, which share trackage through them, even more of a challenge than the Cajons. One result of the steep grades through this scenic, and very active, area is the famous Tehachapi Loop, where the mainline loops over itself in order to gain elevation. The loop can be reached from the offramp to Keene on Highway 58 following the paved county road about a mile back into the mountains. A roadside plaque commemorates the engineering feat.

All of these areas offer busy, heavy mainline railroading. For those of you more interested in large, active yards, Los Angeles is a good area to explore. We haven't had a chance to go looking around the LA area lately, but when we do, we'll let you know what's happening railroad-wise in a future edition of Southwest Corner.

MISCELLANEA - A CORNER TO COLLECT TIDBITS

We plan in December to have only the Information Brochure instead of the Report. There may be a small ditto insert with late news.

Don't forget the Shay loco steamup on December 31 and January 1.

In future Report editions we'll have details of the January 18 installation banquet in the January issue, a feature traction article by your editor in February, and a full-length article by Jerry Windle on Northern California steam railroading in the near future. John Hathaway will be continuing his "Southwest Corner" reports, and of course our other regular features will still be here. Remember, feature articles by any member are always welcome. Part of the function of the Report is allowing members to share their common interests. If you've got an interesting insight into any facet of railroading write the editor, Thomas W. Matson, 4282 Taos Drive, San Diego, California 92117, or phone him at (714) 273-8951.

Save February 19, March 5 and 19, and April 2, 1970 for the PSRMA Film Festival which Chop Kerr is managing. Four outstanding films ranging from the 1920's through the 1960's will be featured and all feature and railroad angle.

PSRMA ACQUIRES THREE FREIGHT CARS

PSRMA was donated three freight cars during the week of November 3, 1969. North American Car Corporation donated its MCAX #3024 outside trussed wooden box car. The car is freshly painted a dark tuscan red, was built in June 1941, and can carry 41 tons of cargo. The car was completely renovated and has an air brake test of 9-9-69 which will allow it to be interchanged until December 1970. The car has internal dimensions as follows: width 9'2"; height 10'3"; and length 40'6". Dick Pennick made the arrangements to obtain the car.

General American Transportation Corporation donated two tank cars. Both cars are pressure type tank cars with the capability of carrying slightly more than 10,000 gallons apiece. Both cars had a brake test of 11-69, so they will be in interline condition until February 1971. The numbers of the cars are GATX #79923 and #65648. The cars were built during the 1920's. Both cars are freshly painted black. Terry Durkin made the arrangements to obtain these two new additions to the Museum's rolling stock collection.

All three cars are located near our steam locomotives at Crosby Street and Harbor Drive. The two tank cars will be used to store fuel and water for our steam locomotives as it will probably be much more economical to buy water and fuel in large quantities and store it for future use. The box car will be used to store Museum property and be able to move freight for the Museum should the occasion arise. Also the box car may be used as a temporary passenger car for Shay loco steamups.

PSRMA is very grateful for the donation of the box car and two tank cars, and we are especially thankful for their outstanding condition upon delivery. All three cars look like they are brand new! Suitable recognition of the donors will be placed on the cars concerned in the near future and the donors will be mentioned in future publications and brochures of PSRMA.

ROBERTS HEALTH IMPROVING

Floyd Mike Roberts is home improving after a string of serious operations. If you still have not dropped him a card or note please do. His address is 2227 Polk Avenue, San Diego, California 92104. Blood donations in his name would still be appreciated.

1970 OFFICERS ELECTED

PSRMA elected its 1970 officers at the October 19 General Meeting. Elected president was Dick Pennick with 22 votes and no opposition. Elected vice-president was Dave Parkinson with 13 votes while Terry Durkin received 9 votes. Secretary Karen Lindquist was elected with 22 votes and no opposition. Our treasurer, Dave Hobson, won with 22 votes and no opposition. H. C. Kerr won the directorship with 11 votes while Tom Matson received 8 votes and Wally Barber received 2 votes. Since Pennick will remain as president Eric Sanders will hold onto the position of chairman of the board for another year. Filling out the 1970 Board of Directors will be Bob DiGiorgio who has another year as director at large and John Hathaway, presently serving as Advisory Board representative to the Board. Hathaway will be reconsidered for the same post in the near future.

Officers may only serve for a maximum of two years in one position. Perhaps next year you will consider running for one of the offices so that all offices may have competing candidates.

LINE TRUCK RIDES AGAIN

Our ex-San Diego Electric Railway line truck, a 1922 or 1923 White, is running again, and surprisingly well. The old four cylinder motor was found to be in excellent condition, and only the most minor repairs were needed to get it purring again. Each work party is now highlighted by a wild ride around the field behind Bob DiGiorgio's place.

Work has begun on preserving and restoring the wood body, but so far attendance at the work parties has been too poor to get much done. Please come out and help. A concentrated effort is needed to protect the wood before the weather damage becomes more serious, and it's now at the stage where continued weathering will cause rapid deterioration. No mechanical skills are required.....just a willingness to pitch in with paintbrush and scraper. The next work party is November 22 at ten a.m. at DiGiorgio's. Phone him at 448-6161 for more information.

SHAY OPERATION AND WORK PARTY

Due to the smooth running of the Shay at our last operation not much work on it seemed needed, so we've had a vacation from Shay work parties. But with the New Year's operation coming up a work party is called for December 13, starting at ten a.m. Main order of business is cleaning and painting. This is especially important, since it seems the New Year's operation will be public, and we can expect a crowd out to see her. It has been two years since her black has been painted, and she's getting to look a little shabby.

The New Year's Shay operation, now an annual event, is scheduled as usual. A working agreement with Santa Fe to use the parking lot adjoining the spur seems to have been worked out, so it looks like we'll be able to invite the general public. Arrangements to use the track up to Dewey street crossing appear promising, and if they go through we'll probably run our whole "freight train" consisting of our new box car and two tank cars. So the operation this year should be a lot more interesting and all members, of course, are urged to attend.

MEMBERS ARE RENEWING

John Hathaway reports the following Regular members have renewed, or just joined us, for 1970: Donald Carr, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Hadley, Alan Hill, Andrew Proctor, and John Swanson.

John also reports we have the following Contributing members aboard for next year: David Armstrong, Charles Briar, John Cranston, Peter Duncan, Arthur Gomez, Ed Herfter, Mrs. Louise Leesman, H.W. Satriek, Thomas Sandlin, Rindge Shima, John Weberg, Arthur Wilson, Frank Wisner, and Mrs. Ben Woody.

PSRMA CALENDAR

DECEMBER

- 6 - TRACTION COMMITTEE MEETING, at Tom Matson's, 7:00 p.m.
- 7 - LOCOS OPEN, Crosby and Harbor, 1-4 p.m., hosted by Swanson.
- 13 - SHAY LOCO WORK PARTY, Crosby and Harbor with DiGiorgio, 10:00 a.m.
- 14 - LOCOS OPEN, Crosby and Harbor, 1-4 p.m., hosted by Hobson.
- 21 - LOCOS OPEN, Crosby and Harbor, 1-4 p.m., hosted by Geyer.
- 25 - MERRY CHRISTMAS!
- 28 - LOCOS OPEN, Crosby and Harbor, 1-4 p.m., hosted by Iyerla.
- 31 - NEW YEAR'S EVE SHAY LOCO STEAMUP, Crosby and Harbor, all invited.