PACIFIC SOUTHWEST RAILWAY MUSEUM ASSOC. INC.

Jan. '78 **REPORT** No. 142

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION of the PACIFIC SOUTHWEST RAILWAY MUSEUM ASSOCIATION, Inc.

Christian N. Brown, Nov. 19, 1886 – Jan. 7, 1978

On January 7th, just before noon, a pioneer San Diego railroad man was called for his final run by the Great Dispatcher in the Sky. C. N. Brown, retired SD&AE locomotive engineer and an esteemed member of PSRMA, passed away in a local hospital after prolonged ill health. He was 91. Although the man is gone, the memory of his accomplishments will remain for many years to come.

Born on a farm in Denmark, "Brownie" emigrated to San Diego in November, 1904 at the age of seventeen. He spent the next nineteen months in the saddle as a ranch hand, herding

cattle all over the flats between Old Town and Point Loma. In 1906, he had had enough of ranching and went to work for a local contractor during which time he helped grade and surface India Street and tear down the old bridge in Brickyard Canyon. Later he went to work for the old Standard Iron Works, which finally went out of business in the 1960's.

In the fall of 1906, Brownie applied for a railroad job with E. A. Hornbeck, General Manager of the San Diego, Cuyamaca and Eastern and the National City and Otay railroads. Hornbeck hired him as a locomotive fireman and assigned him to veteran engineer Guy Roberts for his student trips. At this time, all NC&O engines and most of the cars still had bone-crushing link-and-pin couplings. Brown made many trips out Bonita Valley to La Presa (now part of Spring Valley) and Tia Juana (now San Ysidro) on the road's tiny saddletankers.

After his promotion to the right-hand side in February, 1909, he narrowly escaped death in a switching accident at Chula Vista. By this time, the NC&O had been consolidated with one of the other Spreckels Company lines, the Coronado Railroad, to form the San Diego Southern. A car of sand had been picked up at a sand pit in the Tia Juana Riverbed. At Chula Vista Station, a stop was made to do some switching and pick up several cars of lemons. The heavy carload of sand was set out on the mainline, on a slight grade, and the brakes set. Brownie and his crew then took the engine and an empty gondola car down to the depot to pick up the lemon cars. He had stopped just short of the switch to allow the brakeman to line it for the siding, when a young boy watching nearby yelled at them. Brown swiveled around on the seatbox just in time to see the carload of sand gaining speed down the grade toward them! Evidently the brakeman hadn't set the brakes tightly enough on the heavily loaded car. Brownie and his fireman barely had time to dive to the floor of the cab next to the firebox door before the car collided with the empty wooden gondola. There was a terrific crash and a rending of wood as the gondola's body was ripped from its trucks and catapulted skyward, tearing off the cab roof on the way. When the dust had settled, the gondola body was leaning against the remains of the engine cab and two slightly disheveled enginemen were alive and well! The fireman had suffered only a small cut on the chin from broken window glass.

One of Brownie's first jobs as a fledgling engineer was hauling rock from the quarry at Sweetwater Dam to North Island to build the jetty. He also was accorded the honor of hauling Edward H. Harriman's special train from the Santa Fe interchange at National City over the Coronado Railroad to the Hotel del, where the railroad magnate was to meet with John D. Spreckels regarding financing for construction of the SD&A. Harriman's private secretary gave Brown and each of his trainmen a $5 gold piece as a tip when they arrived.

In 1917, Brownie went to work for the new SD&A which was then blasting its way through the brutal and capricious Carriso Gorge. He served on work trains as well as local runs, operating steam trains and the G.E. gas cars to Lakeside and the race track at Tijuana.

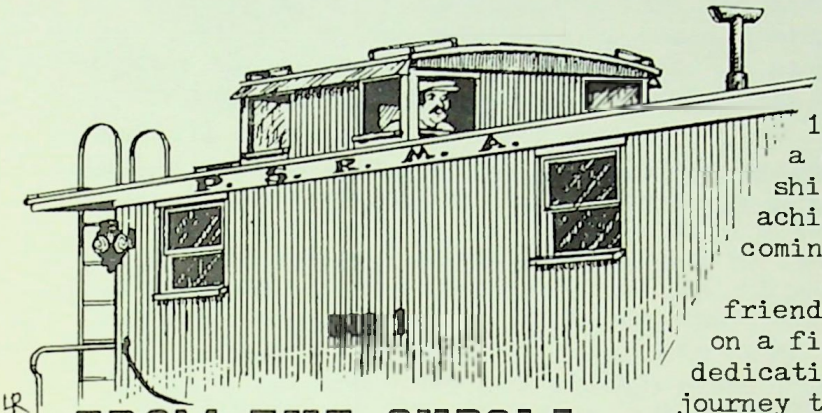
Brownie was at the throttle in early 1932 with a westbound passenger train, winding slowly upgrade through Carriso Gorge. Near Tunnel 15, the maintenance foreman flagged him down to tell him the mountain had started to move, squeezing the tunnel timbers so that only the minimum clearance remained. Brown decided to chance it and proceeded slowly through the twisted bore, the Pullman clearing the damaged timbers by a mere three inches! The next day, the mountain came down taking part of the tunnel with it! After this, the track was realigned to the west and a new, shorter tunnel constructed. A 185 foot high, 633 foot long curved timber trestle was built to carry the new line over Goat Canyon. After the new span was completed, but before the deck planking was in place, Brown and his fireman Ed Pohle were called upon to run their engine light over it as a test. As the steamer crawled out on the bridge, the new timbers creaked and settled under the unaccustomed load, and the absence of planking allowed the two tense enginemen to look down, <u>way</u> down, to the bottom of the rocky ravine almost two hundred feet below. Pohle's hand noticeably trembled as it rested on the firing valve. In a few minutes, it was over.

Brownie went on to pull the final SD&AE passenger train on January 11, 1951, with S.P. class T-32 steam locomotive number 2373 on the point. His fireman on that sad day was E. J. Rankin.

In July, 1955, after forty-nine and a half years of service without a reportable injury, he hung up his Union-made engineers's cap for the last time. In that half-century of railroading, he had worked for no less than five different railroad corporate entities, all in San Diego County.

He will be missed, but so will he be remembered.

Dick Pennick



FROM THE CUPOLA

by H. Chalmers Kerr, Jr., President

Happy New Year and Happy Anniversary! 1978 is PSRMA's fifteenth anniversary and with a new year, new officers and board, full membership participation and involvement, PSRMA will achieve many of its long sought goals during the coming year.

I personally want to thank all members and friends who worked so hard during 1977 to put PSRMA on a firm foundation. Without your commitment and dedication PSRMA would surely have floundered on its journey toward the ultimate goal of a permanent railroad museum for San Diego county.

We can be proud of the past year's accomplishments. Here are some of the highlights: Membership increased 22% breaking the 400 member barrier. Many donations of historic items were received as well as funds to insure the survival of these rare artifacts. The Embarcadero exhibit continued to be a success, thanks to Jo Pressnall and the hard-working staffers. PSRMA had its biggest excursion year ever, including the Freedom Train #4449 run, Santa Barbara, Hearst Castle, 'Frisco Muni and Puerto Penasco trips. The car #1509 loan was retired. We took delivery of, and restored to operational status our diesel switcher, #7485. The Museum work crew made steady progress toward restoring all equipment stored as NAS Miramar, painting three cars and a locomotive. The Museum hosted over fifty groups of children and senior citizens through the Miramar equipment thanks to the hardworking Linda Di Giorgio. We developed a plan for utilizing the SD&AE Railway in eastern San Diego county as a site for our Museum and old-time train operation in the event the line is abandoned or sold. We were encouraged by the steady increase in attendance at our general meetings, averaging sixty persons. Financially, the Museum finished in the black, ending the year with $6,540.51 in the checking account and $2,500.00 in the Museum development fund. It has been a great year!

Unfortunately, 1977 saw a few setbacks to balance the pluses, namely: Vandalism continues to be a problem, but not as serious as in other years. The Liberation Mikado project was terminated as a failure. Forty plus members didn't renew membership. Worst of all, we again failed to locate a permanent Museum home.

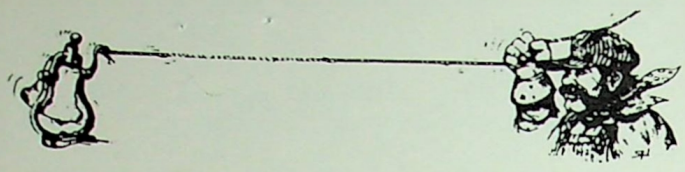
This year PSRMA will continue its active persuit of a site for a public operating museum of railroading in San Diego County. It's going to take an incredible amount of work and dedicated involvement from all of us. Take heart! It can be done! Just look at the wonders we have accomplished in the last fifteen years armed only with enthusiasm.

Each and every member is encouraged to become involved in some aspect of PSRMA activity. Many and varied tasks await your attention. The first step is easy: call me at 291-4787 evenings and say "How can I help?" The Association will be delighted to help you decide where you can make the greatest contribution to the Museum effort.

Monthly director's meetings are open to all members. They are held the first Tuesday of each month in the board room of the San Diego Trust and Savings Bank, downtown. Please attend, your ideas are welcome.

See you all at the annual dinner meeting February fourth!

Honor Roll



JOHN BALDWIN (love that name!) has donated a three chime Nathan air horn that was quickly mounted on our little side-rod diesel by the Museum's eager restoration crew. What a beautiful honk! It makes No. 7485 sound like it weighs 200 tons instead of 45! Thanks, John, No. 7485 needs the attention!

DICK MC INTYRE has been tirelessly welding new steel plates into the sides of the tender of our Feather River Railway Shay No. 3, for the last few months. He also rebuilt one of the mufflers on our diesel switcher. Steel plate is expensive and so is the skilled labor and special tools to do these jobs. Dick is one of the super people necessary to make a great railroad museum, and this kind of donation helps make PSRMA one of the finest such groups in the land.

BILL GUNTHER whipped up a new REPORT boilerplate with the new officers etc. on his wonderous Selectric typewriter just under the deadline for this issue. Thanks, Bill, your work gives our rag real class!

Vandal Issue Sparks Hogger Walkout

by Tanya Rose

According to the December 16, 1977 Evening Tribune, about four hundred Southern Pacific engineers in the Los Angeles area have walked off their jobs. Not only that, but members of the International Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers have set up picket lines at the Van Nuys yard to emphasize their demands for protection on the rails.

Small wonder something like this hasn't happened much, much sooner and all over the country. Veteran engineers claim that the San Diego-Los Angeles run is second only to the Chicago area in vandalism and malicious mischief and, in some yards, personnel refuse to work without police protection around the clock. Union spokesman Gerald Brockett said within the last three months, fifteen to twenty five engineers have suffered eye and back injuries, broken ribs and work related psychological problems due to the vandalism pressure.

Terry Durkin told us what it is like on the Fourth District local in a recent REPORT article. I've heard PSRMA member Gaylen Dyreng tell me essentially the same things about his S.P. El Cajon branch run. Another engineer, Eugene De Rose, who works for Santa Fe on the coast run, told a Tribune reporter of the insanity of playing "chicken" with an approaching train. Close to Del Mar is a narrow bridge. De Rose said that the kids pop their heads up like bowling balls between the ties. "One of these days we'll hit them and make a strike",

An S.P. spokesman said the strike, if effective, could stop all outbound freight traffic from the Los Angeles area. That's about sixty to seventy trains a day. In San Francisco, Amtrak officials said passenger service wouldn't be affected by this strike but I have the feeling such won't be the case in future protests.

Southern Pacific claims it's doing what it can to safeguard its engineers, and said the strike is illegal. B.L.E. spokesman Brockett says his union has been talking with the railroad for months on the issue of safety for its members, urging S.P. to increase its police force only to hear Southern Pacific tell him that they are planning to cut it by ten percent effective this January 1st.

How can you keep your head straight and do your job well when you cope with harassment and danger every day!? Railroaders are fighting back in desperation. When death or injury is just a wheel-turn away, who can blame them? I've stressed before the need for active support of their cause by asking for your letters to various officials. Again I ask for this. Help any way you can, whether it's joining Ed Smith on the Railfan Patrol, letter writing or any other way you can manage. We must make our stand along with these four hundred engineers.

RESTORATION NEWS

by Ken Helm

Bad weather and vacation time has taken its toll over the last month, however, our crew did manage to put together a few Saturdays of work. The Shay continues to receive attention as more of the cab is stripped of paint and primer applied for a smooth finish. The end of the tender has been finished off and the sand-box replaced, both receiving their coats of black paint. This little bit of finish work shows how great the engine is going to look when the refurbishing is complete.

Ex-Santa Fe cafe-observation car #1509 had work done on the interior window sashes, receiving sanding and surface preparation for the off-white finish coat to follow soon. Most of this work was done by good ol' Jack Linn as usual.

Side-rod diesel #7485 has a Nathan 3-chime air horn donated by John Baldwin and all agree it does sound great. "Nick" Nichols did all the drilling and installation. Maybe our crew will get a little respect from now on at the Miramar crossing!

All our equipment was exercised on the 24th. Happily all the brake equipment is still functioning fine and now all the bearings are oiled and greased again.

As a new year starts, it is time to remind ourselves how important the restoration of equipment is to our group. We are a museum and the saving of vanishing and near extinct equipment is our most important function. We have some fine examples of American railroad hardware, but they need help to be preserved. We have a small but very talented and dedicated restoration crew, supported by a growing membership, that has done wonders in 1977. However, the same faces have been showing up all year and fresh "blood" is sorely needed.

Remember, throttle jerking privileges are earned by working on the equipment. All train crews and enginemen rise from the ranks of the restoration crew. Even if you haven't time to participate in this type of museum activity you are still encouraged to come out when you can for a ride and to see how your equipment is being maintained. SEE YOU AT MIRAMAR !

VICTORIA STAFFERS

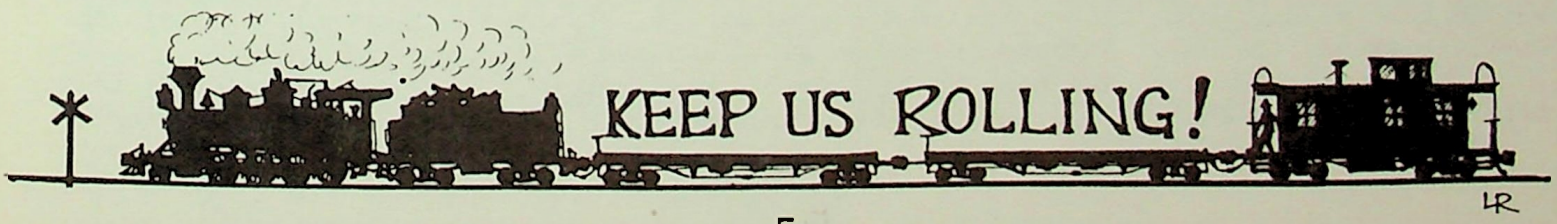
by Larry Rose

Jo Needs help! Don't drop the ball in 1978, gang. Call Jo Pressnall today and reserve a baby sitting date with a grand old rail car. Exhibit staffing is the life blood of the Museum. It is the only way to stay in the public eye and keep those donations rolling in. If you can spare a Saturday or Sunday afternoon to greet visitors on the Victoria, call 435-5022 and Jo will do all she can to arrange the day you want.

The following members carried the load for the month of December:

Ron Milot (a known heavyweight car freak who filled in on last minute notice)
John Pattison (one of PSRMA's youngest members)
Ron Zeiss (a hardworking regular)
"Nick" Nichols (regular restoration crew member)
Ed Smith (Railfan Patrol "ace")
Frank Kearney (he staffed New Year's Day!)
Jim Lundquist (Museum Secretary and restoration crewman)

Coordination of the exhibit staffers is a tough job and Jo did a smashing job in 1977 working by herself to make the museum association visible to the general public. Let's all help make her smile in '78 and give her a call today!



VIEW from the VESTIBULE

by Jim Lundquist

SAN DIEGO TO GET SIXTH TRAIN, MAYBE

Negotiations are underway between Amtrak, Santa Fe and the County of Los Angeles for the "El Camino", an additional train from San Diego to LA and return. A call placed to Doug Ring, assistant in Supervisor Baxter Ward's office, revealed that no contracts have been signed, contrary to the reported news. He stated that hopefully all parties could reach an agreement and a tentative start-up date of February 6th has been assigned. Funding the additional train will be up to the County of Los Angeles and Caltrans. Talk of running the train has been around for years, but up to now, the Santa Fe said that they would not run it. A call to Santa Fe Public Relations brought the response that they had been approached by Amtrak to run an additional Los Angeles-San Diego train and that they would run it provided that it did not have a commuter schedule. When asked if a commuter schedule had a formal definition, Santa Fe said no, but that perhaps a morning arrival and evening departure would be correct terminology.

Perhaps the most newsworthy item on the extra train is the equipment to be run. Several years ago, Los Angeles County, with legislation introduced by County Supervisor Baxter Ward, brought eight cars and had them refurbished. These older cars really shine inside and out and consist of five coaches, two lounges and what I consider the best passenger car ever built, an ex-California Zephyr round-end dome observation. This equipment will be the finest ever to run down the coast and should provide a great trip to and from "America's Finest City".

Schedules so far discussed for the train have it leaving San Diego at 5:45 am and leaving Los Angeles at 5:30 pm. I hope that Amtrak changes their other trains to spread the times out more. May I suggest a catchy schedule like 7, 10, 1, 4, 7, and 10? It's easy to remember and provides service throughout the entire day.

AMTRAK NEWS

Details on the supplimental appropriations of $18 million that I reported last month are now available. Dr. M. D. Monaghan, writing in the CLEARANCE CARD, house organ of the Dallas based Southwest Railroad Historical Society, reports that Representative Gore of Tennessee, a freshman congressman, grabbed the floor on November 30th and announced that a complete route freeze would be implemented on Amtrak, all discontinued trains would be replaced and the $18 million would be made available to keep everything running until the Department of Transportation report was issued in March, 1978. The amendment needed a 2/3 approval vote, and there was little hope of it passing. However, Gore continued to hold the floor, gathering steam as he went. He rode the amendment down to the very end putting it across with a 258 to 138 vote in favor of the measure. During this time, the Chairmen of the House Appropriations Committee, the House Appropriations Subcommittee and House Commerce Subcommittee were working the floor attempting to defeat Gore's motion.

Thanks to Dr. Monaghan for the information. This was quite a victory for passenger trains in this country and credit needs to be given to Congressman Gore. I've written to Congressman Gore and personally thanked him for what he was able to accomplish for passenger trains. I ask that the rest of you passenger train fans write him also. His address is: House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.

On another front, Citizens for Rail California has asked Caltrans to negotiate with the S.P. and A.T.S.F. to let the same Santa Fe crew run the "San Joaquin" into Oakland instead of changing at Port Chicago. This would reduce the costs by 21%.

The City of Anaheim has asked Amtrak to stop trains at the Stadium. This could be a good stop for the "El Camino", but not all Amtrak trains. That would make three stops within nine miles, which is two too many (Santa Ana, Anaheim and Fullerton). Perhaps they should stop all trains at Anaheim and close Santa Ana and Fullerton.

The Southern Pacific has been up to its old tricks again. They are using every tactic available to delay the start up of the new overnight train from Sacramento to San Diego.

It's time that Caltrans used some of their power to get the ball rolling again.

One theory on why Amtrak doesn't act more aggressively in dealing with the railroads was expressed in the November issue of Rail Travel News. The theory holds that there is a "revolving door" climate at Amtrak. This means that highly placed personnel must look to the railroads for employment if they leave Amtrak so they are careful not to offend anyone who might have a position for them later.

MTDB NEWS

The proposed acquisition of the SD&AE has been ruled as appropriate and in line with the CPO plans for transportation by the State Transportation Board on a 4 to 1 vote. MTDB has pledged $850,000 towards the purchase and restoration of the Santa Fe Depot in San Diego. They plan to use the depot as the terminal of their line to the border. General Manager Bob Nelson states that federal funds are not necessary for starting a $40 million light rail transportation system in San Diego.

OTHER TRANSIT NEWS

The North County Transit District (NCTD) recently initiated a study of the possibility of establishing rail service between Oceanside and Escondido. They pledged funds and staff time to examine the AT&SF line through Vista and San Marcos. In San Francisco, the BART trains now run six days a week with the new Saturday Service just started. Two big mergers are now in progress. The Southern Pacific and Seaboard Coast Line are trying to get together and the Burlington Northern and Frisco would also like to combine. The ICC is the final voice in both actions.

RC&BTNGRR

On November 25th, I paid a visit with the owner of the Roaring Camp and Big Trees Narrow Gauge Railroad in Felton, California and learned of the latest plans of this tourist railroad. They have started work on the trestle that was set on fire last summer. Rails have been saved where possible, and the trestle is going to be torn down so that a new one can be built in its place. Their Shay locomotive has had its boiler removed and they are awaiting delivery of a new $60,000 boiler any day. New in camp is a Climax from back East. Plans are to convert it from 4 foot gauge to their gauge, 3 feet, and rework the entire engine. After talking railroading, a ride was in order to renew that great feeling that one gets in the cab of a steam locomotive travelling up 8% grades through giant redwoods. On that day, they had their Heisler steamed up. This was the first time I was able to see one operating, and they are quite impressive. I was able to ride in the cab and I can tell you that the engine jumped and jerked about to make my modest trip seem much longer. This, of course, served to renew my belief that "Steam is where it's at!"

Annual Dinner Feb. 4th

Don't miss this year's annual dinner or you will miss hearing the latest on San Diego area rail transit plans from the head man of the Metropolitan Transit Development Board. MTDB General Manager Bob Nelson will be the guest of honor. Mr. Nelson is the spearhead behind the idea of saving the San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway for use as a transit system starter and locally owned freight hauler. In addition to MTDB's railroad purchase study, Mr. Nelson will have all the latest information on proposed transit equipment and routes for the San Diego area.

Get your dinner reservations in to George Geyer right away if you plan to attend PSRMA's gala February 4th annual bash. A flyer is included in this issue with all the details in case you missed it last month in the Holiday rush.

In addition to Mr. Nelson's informative talk and slide show, there will be a raffle, door prizes and a chance to do some bull shooting with fellow members at our private bar beginning at 6 :00 pm.

Don't miss this bash, folks. It's going to be a lot of fun!

Membership News

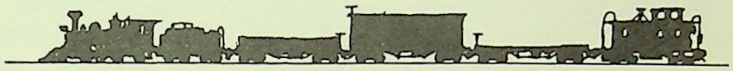
by Tanya Rose

Another year has slipped away so quickly I can hardly believe it. I'm sorry to say we lost Christian Brown this January 7th, and I know you join with me in extending condolences to his wife Willa.

I want to thank all of you for your support of the Museum. As for me, I want to express my appreciation for your thoughtfulness. There were the donations, personal compliments, the chuckles I got when I read how some of the applications were filled out, and the little, quiet touches such as an especially pretty stamp used to seal the envelope. You made all the paperwork worthwhile and many a day brighter with your encouragement.

Just look how we are growing! I am pleased that you are taking advantage of the family membership plan. Welcome to all of you. Here are the latest additions to our ranks:

Katherine L. Ainsworth, Lars Antonsen, Ray Ayers, M. A. Briggs, John R. Carnes, Shirley H. Cook, Donna Crane, Gaylen B. Dyreng, Patrick J. Fowler, Joe Fox, Louise Herold, H. A. Hurry, Frederick A. Kahl, James D. Koegel, Frances Marshall, Tom Miller, John J. Patterson, Charles W. Pettersen, Lonal G. Pierce, Charles S. Rosefeld, Leone Schmuck, Kenneth A. Sherman, Noel G. Speth, Donald & Francie Starchman, Vernon, La Donna & Robert Strong, Edward White, Sally Ann White.



GET IN THE P.S.R.M.A. HABIT!

REPORT

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Membership dues: $12.00 per year regular, $4.00 per year contributing. Family memberships $12.00 per year for head of household plus $2.00 for each family member per year. Lifetime Memberships in PSRMA are available for $300.00. The official telephone number of PSRMA is (714)-280-1781.

The Officers and the Directors of PSRMA, at present, are:

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Larry L. Rose - - - - - - - - Vice President
James J. Lundquist - - - - - - - - Secretary
Brenda Bailey - - - - - - - - - Treasurer
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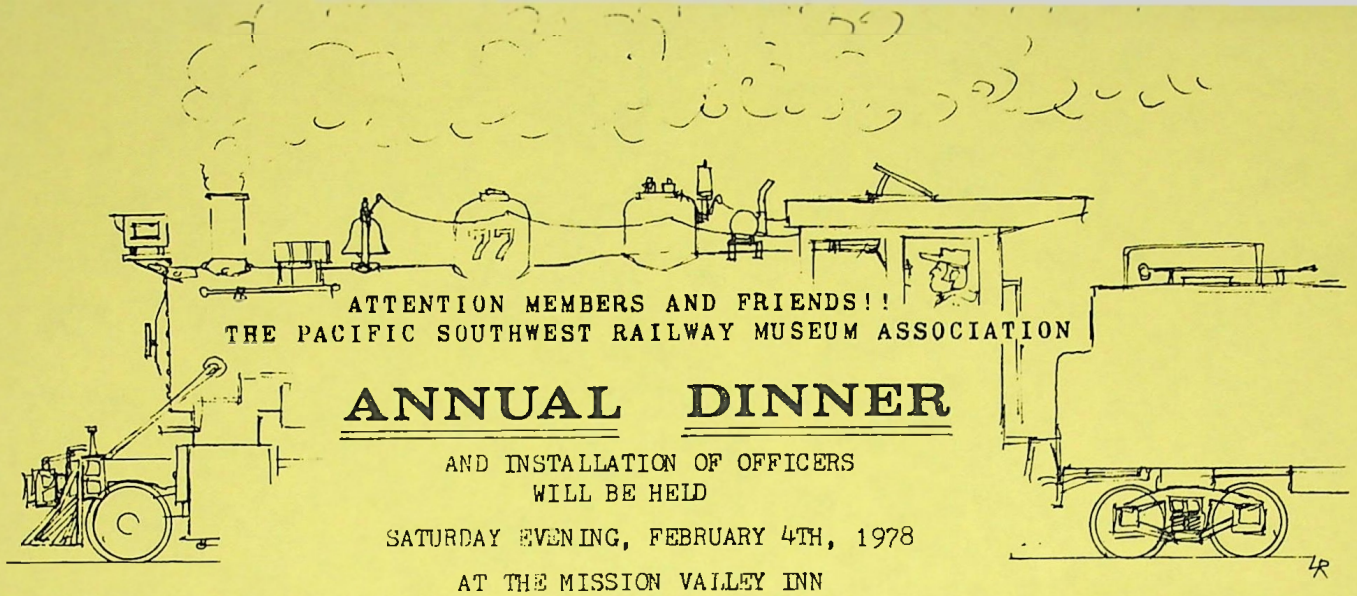


ATTENTION MEMBERS AND FRIENDS!!
THE PACIFIC SOUTHWEST RAILWAY MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

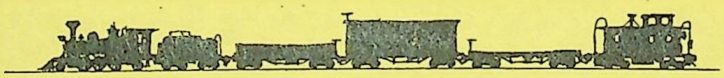
ANNUAL DINNER

AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS
WILL BE HELD

SATURDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 4TH, 1978

AT THE MISSION VALLEY INN
(UPSTAIRS IN THE MISSION ROOM)
875 HOTEL CIRCLE SOUTH IN
MISSION VALLEY

RAIL TRANSIT PLANS FOR SAN DIEGO WILL BE FEATURED IN A PROGRAM PRESENTED BY MR. ROBERT NELSON, GENERAL MANAGER OF THE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT BOARD. THIS INFORMATIVE PRESENTATION WILL INCLUDE A SLIDE SHOW OF TRANSIT EQUIPMENT AND SYSTEMS THAT THE MTDB HAS INVESTIGATED AROUND THE WORLD. MR. NELSON WILL FIELD ALL QUESTIONS ABOUT MASS TRANSIT PLANS AND STUDIES FOR THE SAN DIEGO AREA SO HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON FROM THE MAN IN CHARGE, INCLUDING THE CURRENT STUDY TO USE THE SD&AE AS A FOUNDATION FOR AN ELECTRIC RAIL TRANSIT SYSTEM.



A SEPARATE BAR FOR OUR USE WILL BE OPEN UPSTAIRS FOR NO HOST COCKTAILS AT 6:00.
DINNER WILL BE SERVED AT 7:30.

THERE WILL ALSO BE A RAFFLE OF ITEMS OF RAIL INTEREST. IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO DONATE, NOTIFY GEORGE GEYER OR BARBARANN PARKER AT P.O. BOX 815, LEMON GROVE, CALIFORNIA 92045.

GET RESERVATIONS IN TO GEORGE GEYER AT 4486 KANSAS STREET, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92116. PLEASE INCLUDE A STAMPED SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE WITH THE FORM BELOW.

ANNUAL DINNER RESERVATION

Name(s)_____

Dinner includes char-broiled filet mignon with a baked potato, vegetable and mushrooms, green salad, rolls, beverage and dessert.

Number of guests_____ @ $11.00 each = $_____

Send with s.s.a.e. to ANNUAL DINNER, c/o George Geyer, 4486 Kansas Street, San Diego, California 92116