

Dispatcher

Issue 30 Railway Historical Society of San Diego, California December 10, 1959

END OF AN ERA

AS SEEN BY THE EDITOR

Yearend 1959 marks the "end of an era" for the Railway Historical Society of San Diego, Inc., the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway Company, and the Dispatcher.

No, don't become alarmed - or, heaven forbid, happy! The Society, the SD&AE, and the Dispatcher are not closing down but they are and will be subject to a change in status.

Let's look first at the Society. To do this let us tell you the story of the

PERRIS EXCURSION

"Enjoyed the Perris excursion immensely. Train ride was terrific - old autos and cars very interesting - our crowd very congenial - rail employees friendly and helpful." So commented excursionist Louis J. Haak of San Diego.

The "California Southern Flyer" excursion was an artistic success and a financial flop. 290 persons rode the excursion train which left San Diego at 7:20 a.m. and arrived at Perris at 11:30 a.m., well ahead of schedule.

But unhappily a considerable financial loss was incurred. Society officials could have but did not call for a cancellation and they stated that they did not regret their decision.

Picture stops at the Santa Margarita River, Prado Dam and Box Springs Grade combined with Perris attractions which included inspection of Orange Empire Traction's "trolley museum" and the horseless carriages owned by members of the San Diego and Newport Beach Horseless Carriage Clubs, a visit to a potato packing plant and the serving of the barbecue sponsored by OET and the Nuevo Volunteer Fire Department made for an interesting and obviously enjoyed trip.

Wally Duthie, excursion director, S. M. Sullivan, general agent, and F.L.

(Page two please)

SPECIAL NOTICE - - - -SPECIAL NOTICE

EXCURSION EXTRAORDINARY

A Railway Historical Society of San Diego, Inc. excursion may be run on the now-abandoned portion of the Compania Del Ferrocarril Inter-California, according to Excursion Director, Wally Duthie. Negotiations for the purchase of the line, a Southern Pacific subsidiary, by the Ferrocarril Sonora-Baja California, have been going on for some time. When purchase has been completed and the FSBC takes over, a final passenger train may be operated over the line for members and friends of the Society. FSBC equipment would be used.

It is not known whether the purchase will include the entire operation or only the now-abandoned portion, a 42.4 mile section between Pascualitos and Algodones.

Inter-Cal now operates one freight train and one switching job on the International Line-Pascualitos section. Beyond the latter point the line is intact but service has been discontinued. FSBC will dismantle the abandoned section in order to obtain the rail and use it on its own line.

Duthie stated that the trip is a probability but not a certainty. He urges all interested persons, however, to write him (Wally Duthie) care of the Society, P.O. Box 9351, San Diego 9, Cal. and indicate interest. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope. Give your telephone number. Do not delay. Write now. This notice is official.

Fare will be about \$5 and the train will leave on a Sunday about 10 a.m. Bring a lunch. If the trip is scheduled it'll be on short notice. But it's a must - a trip on an abandoned line using a train from a foreign railroad.

Calvert, City Passenger Agent, arranged for a nine car train which included four unit diesel locomotive #39, baggage-lounge #1300, coaches 3064, 3065 and 3050, snack car #3365, coaches 3132 and 3008, baggage car 3796, and coach 3024. (Santa Fe could not include the observation car as it had been "sideswiped" and repairs were needed.)

Prior to arrival at the Perris station the train had made station stops at Del Mar, Oceanside, San Clemente, Santa Ana and Riverside. School buses provided transportation between the Perris station and the OET trolley museum.

27 pieces of equipment, including many interurbans and street cars, and three car bodies were inspected by the group.

Following a delayed but excellent barbecue the group went by bus to the local potato packing plant for a tour which concluded with the gift to each person of a sack of potatoes courtesy the Perris Chamber of Commerce and the packing plant. Excursionists then boarded the train which had been spotted alongside on the main line.

Homeward bound the special maintained speeds of 75 to 90 plus m.p.h. for many many miles. Because the printed schedule failed to allow time for the crew to deadhead the train back to Los Angeles within the 16-hour law, the train was given rights over most other trains. Leaving Highgrove at 4:30 p.m. the train arrived in San Diego at 7:15 p.m. It is understood the crew had the train back in Los Angeles by 9:45 p.m. - within the 16-hour limit.

Meets included several San Diegans and two freights on the Atwood-Highgrove section, one at Prado outbound and one at Highgrove, inbound. The final meet was with the San Diegan just south of the Rosecrans Street crossing.

Society officials agreed that Wally Duthie had arranged and carried out a fine excursion. They knew, too, that the Society had become "big business" because a heavy financial loss emptied the treasury. It became apparent that a large scale excursion required much advance planning by an efficient excursion committee. Thanks to the excursion director and to Jack Stodelle, who arranged much last minute publicity (even including a Molly Morse interview), the trip was run and 290 persons did go along.

Society officials state that "end

of an era" means from now on more planning for even better excursions.

THE SAN DIEGO AND ARIZONA EASTERN

The "end of an era" is in sight for the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway Co. Passenger equipment now being used on the only remaining passenger service, the Tijuana & Tecate "mixto," is being retired from revenue service. Three Southern Pacific cabooses complete with a minimum number of seats will replace SD&AE combines 174, 175 and 208 (formerly a coach). One caboose is already in service. The combines are the only pieces of equipment still lettered in full with the railroad's identification. The only other revenue car with SD&AE identification is caboose 402 used on the San Diego Roustabout and on this car only the initials are used. Initials are also used on most SD&AE work equipment.

"End Of An Era" for the SD&AE means that all revenue trains have lost their short line identification. Now, it's Southern Pacific.

END OF AN ERA FOR THE DISPATCHER

Dispatcher officially goes quarterly in 1960 with the distribution every three months of a combined feature and news issue. Subscription rate will be \$1 per year. Actual page output will be relatively unchanged from the current year.

Under Corky Thomson's editorship the revived and thriving Newsletter serves as an adequate house organ for the Society. The Dispatcher is free now to place an emphasis on feature and current news material.

The first quarterly will feature a SD&AE roster of motive power and passenger and freight equipment. The second quarterly will feature the Sonora-Baja California Railroad and will probably be distributed on the March 20 FSBC excursion train.

SAN DIEGO AREA NEWS SUMMARY

Hearings are scheduled in December on Santa Fe's petition to close Miramar and Carlsbad. Encinitas closing request has been withdrawn.

Adams Avenue bridge over Ward Road will be razed. Originally a street car bridge was constructed by the San Diego Electric Railway Co. in 1911. Later an automobile section was added. In 1930

the city rebuilt the two bridges as one.
The first passenger train to operate into National City since 1935 ran on Sep. 30 as an Advertising & Sales Club Special. Jack Stodelle, who arranged the event, invited RMSofSD officers to participate. A brochure (see page 4) was prepared by the Dispatcher.

The train used the south lead to travel to the harborside track of the 10th Ave. terminal. Passengers on the three car train disembarked at the Administration Building, listened to a brief talk, walked through a transit shed, and boarded the train which was by then waiting on the other side of the shed.

After traveling to the Y in National City the Santa Fe special was turned and returned direct to San Diego. A freight train occupied the main line to the National City station building and the Special did not travel that track.

Since 1935 only military and circus trains have operated on Santa Fe track south of the Union Station and even these trains have not operated into National City.

On Nov. 6 an extra ran over the SD&AE to El Cajon.

Flax is going by rail from the Imperial Valley to the bulk loading facility at 10th Avenue Terminal.

Latest word is that National Gypsum will truck raw gypsum from the deposits to the planned facility on the SD&AE at Coyote Wells.

AT&SF and UP have been advertising passenger service in the newspapers.

A San Diego group has been authorized to offer a twice daily harbor excursion service from Fishermens Landing on Point Loma. PUC approval is yet to be obtained. Last regular service from Point Loma was the ferry operated by the Star & Crescent Boat Co. Vessel would be a 55-motor vessel accomodating 125 passengers. It would compete with the long established Star & Crescent excursion boat operating from Market St. Pier.

LOS ANGELES AREA

Beginning Dec. 14 Angels Flight Railway will charge 40 rides for \$1. instead of previous 30 rides for \$.50. Patronage is declining due to razing of many buildings in the Bunker Hill area.

Pacific Electric has signed a 90 day extension for LAMTA to continue trackage rights on the Long Beach Line. Lightweight cars may yet be used on line.

THE DISPATCHER

30-3

Published quarterly as an official publication of the Railway Historical Society of San Diego, Inc. Eric Sanders, editor. Address: 7861 Normal Ave., La Mesa, Calif.

An official study committee has recommended that Union Station become a railroad-bus-helicopter terminal. Included as tenants would be Greyhound, Continental and LAMTA (except the LB line). The above recommendation is being studied by Los Angeles city officials.

LAMTA's Watts line gave way to buses on November 2. A Bay Area special operated on the line Sunday, November 1.

LAMTA's consulting engineers have heard many proposals for monorail.

LAMTA has turned down takeover of San Bernardino local bus operation.

LAMTA's interurban car 1503 brakes failed while coming off the ramp. Car left the track at the turn.

All 28 PCC cars (Pacific Electric) have gone to Buenos Aires.

Union Pacific's E. San Pedro station has been razed. The City of Las Vegas continues in daily operation.

OTHER SOUTHLAND, ARIZONA, BAJA CALIF. NEWS

Santa Fe seeks to close Highland & Ludlow. Santa Maria Valley has taken delivery of a 700hp GE "Universal."

Joint SP-AT&SF San Joaquin timetable has been issued. Covers LA-SD, too.

With the completion of the present project the entire United States Gypsum line at Plaster City will be 90# rail.

"California City Express" ran on SP as a real estate special to Calif. City on Nov. 22.

A second shelter is being built at the Mexicali station of the FSBC.

For first time in 25 years the Magma Arizona closed down. Now unionized.

A Rotary Club special ran on the Apache Railroad on Labor Day Weekend from McNary to Big Lake. Consist included an FM switcher, six flats, four AT&SF coaches and the Apache RR "picture window" caboose. 850 rode the train.

AT&SF and SP are busy adding industrial spurs at Phoenix... Iron King Mine at the end of the Prescott & Eastern (Santa Fe) at Humboldt is still shipping a few cars... Brace of 2400hp. road switchers observed working at Flagstaff. (Thanks to Guthrie, Strapac, Calbert, Copeland and DeVol for news items. We'll do better by you next time. Thanks!)

WHERE THE SANTA FE BEGAN - IN CALIFORNIA
by Richard V. Dodge

People used to come to Southern California for their health. Frank Kimball was one of them. The Kimball Brothers soon bought the Rancho de la Nación and subdivided the northwest corner into a townsite, named NATIONAL CITY. Then they subscribed 17,000 acres to induce the backers of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad to make National City its Pacific Coast Terminus.

The California Southern Rail Road was organized in 1880 to build from National City north to the San Luis Rey River, through Temecula Canyon to San Bernardino and on to a junction with the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad. The latter was preparing to build across New Mexico and Arizona.

All materials had to be shipped to National City by boat. Rails, track fittings and most of the steam locomotives and cars came in sailing vessels around Cape Horn. Ties were brought down from the north.

225 acres had been set aside for terminal purposes, for shops, a roundhouse, wharves, yards, warehouses, etc. Such facilities were built in 1881 and the station, still in service, in 1882. A creosoting plant was established to treat bridge timbers, piling and ties.

The main line was constructed to the present Oceanside in 1881; to Colton, junction with the Southern Pacific, in 1882; and to San Bernardino in 1883. Floods and the Southern Pacific hindered the extension through Cajon Pass until 1885. The last spike was driven on November 9, through service from and to Kansas City began on the 15th and, for a short time, National City really was the Pacific Coast Terminus of the now great Santa Fe Route.

A rate war followed, setting the stage for the fabulous Land Boom in Southern California, which reached its crest in August 1887. During the fateful period of subsidence and reaction, the California Southern and the California Central Railway, which had built the branch lines forming the Southern California network, were consolidated, for economy, into the Southern California Railway in 1889. The shops were transferred to San Bernardino, the company's headquarters were moved to Los Angeles and the creosoting works was shut down.

The 1890's were years of near-stagnation and slow recovery. The panic of 1893 brought financial failure to the A. T. & S. F. RR., and the present corporation, The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Company emerged.

The chief industries of National City during the period were: citrus fruit packing; an olive oil factory; a parlor match factory, the only one on the coast (Some may remember the non-parlor variety in general use - "California Stinkers"); an ore reduction plant; lumber and brick yards, feed mills, manufacturers of farm implements, and wagons, water pipe and wire goods; also bottled Coronado mineral water, claimed to equal Wisconsin's Waukesha in medicinal properties.

The Southern California Railway continued to function until it was "sold" to The A. T. & S. F. Ry. in 1906.

Passenger train service was operated through to National City, usually two trains each way a day. When the San Diego & Arizona Railway was built, train service was reduced to one combination baggage and passenger car between San Diego and National City, but the substantial growth of the San Diego territory began. The combo. was operated until about 1935. Creosoting operations were resumed in 1924 and continued through 1950.

World War II brought great industrial growth which is still continuing at an ever increasing pace. This is resulting in vast growths of freight handling facilities needed in the San Diego area, including National City and Chula Vista.

Editor's Note: The above story, written by the Historian of the Railway Historical Society of San Diego, Inc., was prepared for members of the Advertising & Sales Club of San Diego on the occasion of the inspection - BY SANTA FE RAIL - of the growing industrial area of National City. This sheet was prepared by the staff of the Dispatcher, official Society publication. The special Santa Fe San Diego-National City excursion date was Sep. 30, 1959.

FAN TRIP ON THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC & VENTURA COUNTY RY.

Sun., Nov. 22, 1959

by Dick Pennick

30-5

Gathered in the Glendale depot early Sunday morning were about 250 fans from all reaches of California, most of whom were characteristically ornamented with several pounds of camera gear, timetables, union caps, etc.

Along about 8 a.m., the southbound Lark from San Francisco glided to a stop along the asphalt platform to unload several dozen passengers, and was soon on its way to the Union Station.

Soon four dark grey passenger units were tugging at our special six car train of non-streamlined, heavyweight cars, and we all settled back to enjoy the trip north to Oxnard over the Santa Susanna Mts. Five minutes out of Glendale, our train went in the hole for No. 99 North, the Oakland Daylight.

Some of the more familiar faces noticed on the train were John Hungerford, Barney Root, Bob Day (Pioneer Mill R.R.), Ward Kimball (Grizzly Flats R.R.), Francis Guido (Western Railroader), and a few of the fellows from Orange Empire at Perris.

About 10:30 a.m., as advertised, our special pulled into Oxnard and the connection with our target for the day, the Ventura County Ry. V.C.'s 2-spot, a stubby 2-6-2, was still down at the enginehouse amidst the ruins of the sugar refinery, which is being dismantled. From the train, however, only her exhaust could be seen curling up from the piles of mill scrap.

After a few last minute camera checks, we disembarked for pictures of the arrival of the steamer and the transfer of our cars to the short-line trackage.

As the aged Walschaert-geared Prairie chuffed across East 5th St. towards the interchange, townspeople looked on amazed and astonished. Comments such as: "Oh, lookie! An old engine!" and "Where did they ever find that thing?" were heard emanating from the crowd. The truth is, the engine has been housed but a few blocks from the center of town for more than 15 years!

After posing with V.C.'s little G.E. Diesel No. 1, 2-spot coupled to our train, and with an assist from the Diesel at the rear, we were underway. The first few miles of our route, called the East Line, ran due south and took us practically through the backyards of the homes bordering both sides. Back fences were dotted with curious heads. Leaving the City Limits, the right-of-way was bordered on both sides with cultivated fields and stretches of Eucalyptus windbreaks. Several photo stops later, we were traveling due west towards the tiny seaside village of Port Hueneme (Pron. Wy-nee-mee). Here, yards away from the end-of-track bumper at the packing plant, the villagers reacted to the occurrence of a steam-powered passenger train identically as did the Oxnard folks, except on a smaller scale. One girl resident felt the occasion called for a press coverage, so she took it upon herself to call the Press-Courier in Oxnard.

Following our return to Oxnard from the first leg of the trip, many participants enjoyed the fine cuisine offered by the renowned Colonial House restaurant.

The afternoon's schedule called for a trip over the West Line to Camp Roseau, a Navy training and distribution center at the harbor at Port Hueneme. This branch crosses U.S. 101 (Oxnard Blvd.) right smack in the center of town, and if you don't think our train caused a sensation at that point, you are sadly in error. Our train, incidentally, traversed this branch without the assistance of the diesel. Consequently, many fans were rewarded with pictures of spinning drivers after photo stops.

At the Camp, a large yard was located, and several Navy ships were at mooring in the harbor. While in the confines of the Camp, picture taking was restricted to the TRAIN ONLY. Our return to Oxnard was equally as eventful as the trip out, possibly more so, as No. 2 was running backwards at the head of the train. As a result the vestibule nearest the engine was jammed, and I mean jammed, with people. Fans upon fans upon fans were leaning, hanging, and squeezing out of the single ves-

tibule door to get shots of the rods and valve gear in motion. This writer made arrangements with a fellow at the bottom of the pile to exchange positions at intervals, to our mutual satisfaction. It was a miracle that we didn't lose someone along the right-of-way.

Those people who had been attracted by our train on the way down had swelled their numbers two-fold by the time we returned. Also, by this time, the motorcading contingent had elongated itself into a rubber-tired snake stretching far down the highway. It was covered on all sides with hundreds of glass "eyes" which were trained in but one direction. This trip was without doubt one of historic significance in the annals of steam-powered railfan excursions. It was a trip which many steam and short-line enthusiasts had dreamed of for years.

The Belle of the Ball, V.C. Ry. Co. No. 2, was completed by Baldwin in May, 1922 (No. 55415) as a wood-burner, and was purchased by V. C. in 1943 from the Cascade Timber Co., National, Wash., as their No. 127. When the engine was brought to the V. C. Ry., shopmen converted her to oil fuel and pried off the numerals "1" and "7" from her number plate, leaving her with the number "2", as V.C. already had No. 1, a long-gaited, capped-stacked Baldwin Mogul, and No. 3, a Hall-Scott combo. motor. No. 2 was last overhauled in 1958, and shopmen spent three days preparing her for the trip. When new, she popped at 200 lbs. but now, with a few years under her boiler straps, she pops at 175 and operates at 160.

On board No. 2, with a hand on the firing valve, was V.C.'s Master Mechanic, Bob Nelson, a veteran of 20 years with the short-line. The gloved hand on the throttle belonged to Henry "Hank" Hammer, who has enjoyed the last 23 years on the V. C. and who, during the trip, exhibited every evidence of that enjoyment.

Mr. Nelson's former assistant, Bill Sorenson, who passed away in retirement at his home in Montalvo in 1957, was also a 20 year veteran with V.C. He once worked with 3' gauge equipment on the D&RG in Colorado.

On the demise of the American Crystal Sugar Co. refinery at Oxnard, a group of far-sighted local businessmen purchased the Ventura County Ry. as a step in the long-term industrial development of that portion of Ventura County.

At 4:30 p.m., No. 2 posed for photographers for the last time before return-

ing to its hibernation in the corrugated iron shed it calls home.

At 4:45 p.m., a trainload of weary but happy people rolled out onto the mainline, bound for Glendale and home.

MORE NEWS ITEMS

Here is a list of freight trains in the Los Angeles metropolitan area currently operating on the Santa Fe:

2nd Dst. Local - LA-Pasadena-San Berdo
Night Steel - LA-Pasadena-Fontana
Los Angeles-Atwood turn
Fullerton - San Bernardino
El Toro - Fullerton (from Fullerton)
Freight 135-136 LA - SD /no
SBX (two trains NB SD to San Bernardi
SDX, (two trains SB to San Diego
19 pool jobs - LA - San Bernardino
also

San Diego area: Local freight now out of Oceanside serves El Toro to Pacific Beach

From the Interchange we learn that the Elsinore Depot was originally at Arlington while the Arlington station was originally at Elsinore Junction. Lakeview Bath House (now the "Chimes") served as the temporary Elsinore depot.

New publication: Randolph L. Kulp, History of Mack Rail Motor Cars and Locomotives. Sounds interesting. Lehigh Vy. NRHS, 602 St. John St. Allentown, Penna. Only \$1.50. Many interesting lines,

Real good steam shots in the 1960 Pacific Railway Journal Calendar. Have one - it's real nice. \$1.50 from P.O. Box 91, San Marino, Calif. Also same price for an alternate Interurban picture calendar. Both for \$2.75

Braeme E. Gigas suggests: "PGE-Frontier Train," Satevepost., Nov. 7.

FINAL MEMO

Don't forget to send in your tentative reservation to Wally Duthie, P.O. Box 9351, San Diego 9, for the "probable" final passenger train trip on the Inter-California. Don't send money, but do send a stamped self-addressed envelope, and add your phone number. You'll be contacted if the trip comes through.

And, again, plan to do that casual easy-does-it trip on the Ferrocarril Sonora-Baja California on March 20. Have a pleasant off-beat rail trip and help the Society recover from the loss on the Peris trip. On both of the above trips the train will probably leave Mexicali about 10 a.m. and return around 4 p.m. (Sunday).