

Dispatcher

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ISSUE 36

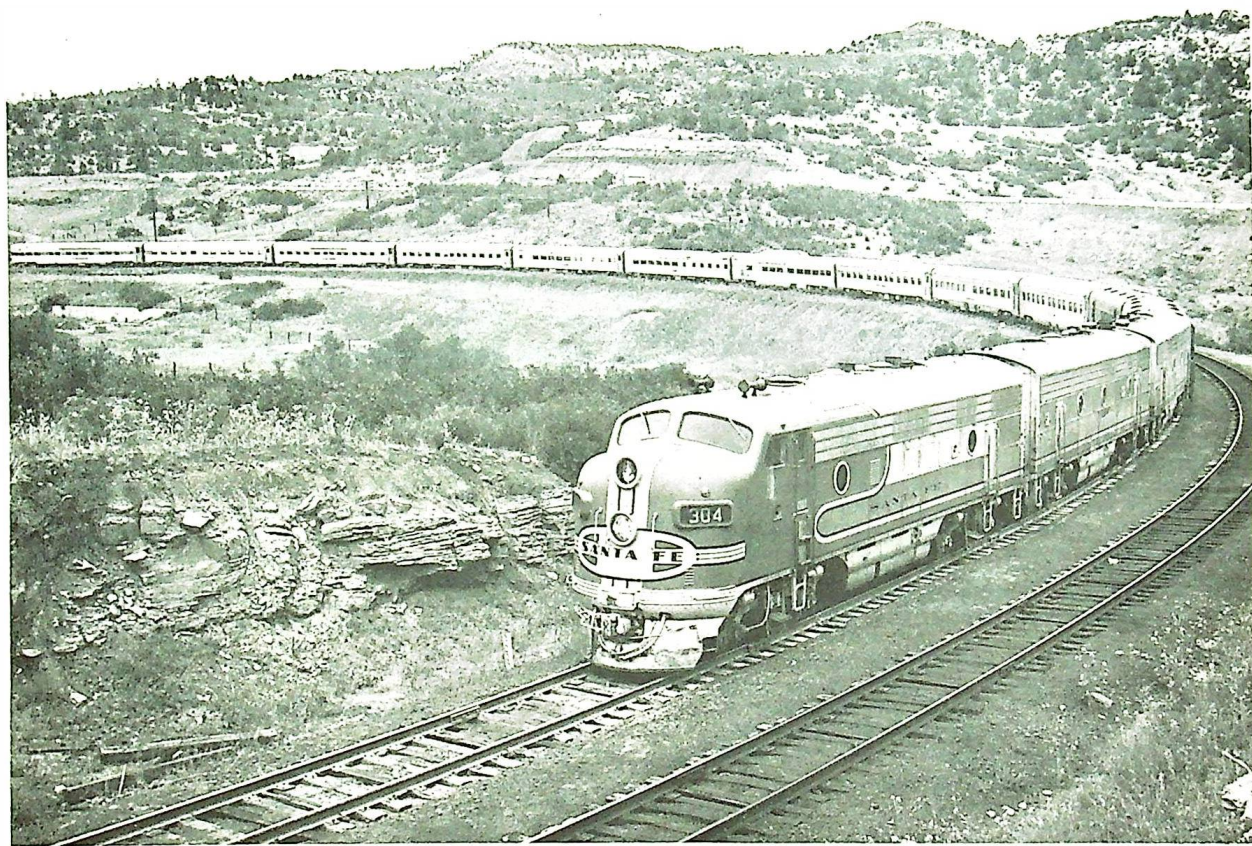
RAILWAY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIF.

APRIL 23, 1961

ON YOUR WAY TO THE ORANGE SHOW

by Richard V. Dodge



Santa Fe's "Super Chief" daily streamliner between Chicago and Los Angeles ascends the grade near the old Dick Wooton Ranch at Wooton, Colorado.
(Santa Fe Railway photograph by Frank E. Meitz)

The birthplace of the Santa Fe Route in California is just five and one-half miles south of San Diego, where you begin your train ride to enjoy the attractions of the Orange Show of 1961 in San Bernardino.

It was back in 1880 in a sprawling little town called National City. A subsidiary of the original parent company, Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad, was organized and was named California Southern Railroad Company. Tracklaying in the main line began in mid-1881, down by the "depot" site in National City. The steamship wharf at the foot of Fifth Avenue (it was Street then) in San Diego was reached at the end of the month.

Originally the distances in miles were measured from

National City. The practice has now been reversed to begin at Barstow, following the route via San Bernardino, Pasadena and Los Angeles. San Diego is Mile Post (MP) 267.5

As you start your journey, your train follows practically the survey adopted in 1881, through Old Town, Morena and into Rose Canyon. But, my! How the scenery has changed!

In recent years many improvements have been made in the alignment beginning in Rose Canyon and continuing north. These changes consist in replacing trestles with fills, eliminating sharp curves, easing grades, protecting against washouts, installing signals, traffic con-

trols, automatic train stops, etc.

The first noticeable change is in the lower part of the Canyon where the abandoned roadbed can be seen on your right, facing in the direction of travel.

- MP 257 From Elvira there is a grade reaching a maximum of over 2% before arriving at the summit at Miramar. The station was first called Alpine, then it was renamed Linda Vista. The elevation is 377 feet above sea level. The descent to
- MP 253 Sorrento, is even a little steeper with sharper curves. This section has always been a bottleneck. In the early days, freight trains usually had to "double the hill". That is the train would be cut in two, first taking the head section up to the top. Then the engine would cut off and return to haul up the rear end. A tunnel has been promised at intervals ever since 1889.
- MP 244 Del Mar is reached. From north of Sorrento into Del Mar the route was changed to follow the Pacific Ocean up on the bluffs in 1910. Traces of the old grade can be seen on the side of the hills to the right as you ascend. Just north of Del Mar are the County Fair Grounds on the right. If you look, at the proper instant, you can catch a glimpse of the Railway Historical Society of San Diego's exhibit, San Diego & Arizona Eastern steam locomotive number 104 and John D. Spreckels' private car.
- MP 238.1 Encinitas
- MP 229.3 Carlsbad
- MP 227.2 Escondido Junction. Here a branch built by the California Central Railway, successor to San Diego Central Railway, takes off to Escondido, to the right.
- MP 226.2 Oceanside. At first the location was known as San Luis Rey. The California Southern reached the settlement at the end of 1881.
- MP 224.1 Fallbrook Junction was named Los Angeles Junction in 1888. Here you leave the California Southern, which headed east over the present Fallbrook Branch about ten miles, then continued up the Santa Margarita River, through Temecula Canyon, Elsinore, Perris, Colton, San Bernardino to Barstow.

You will now travel over track for which the original alignment was planned by the San Bernardino & San Diego Railway but which was built by the California Central Railway south from Santa Ana to San Juan Capistrano in 1887 and to Fallbrook Junction in 1888. When completed it was known as the Surf Line.

- MP 197.2 San Juan Capistrano
- MP 175.5 Santa Ana From Santa Ana north to Redondo Junction, the line was planned by Riverside, Santa Ana & Los Angeles Railway. From Orange to Santa Ana was built by the California Central Railway in 1887.
- MP 172.6 Orange, which is the junction point with the track from San Bernardino via Riverside and Atwood, on the right.
- MP 165 Until 1910 Fullerton was a way station. Now it is the main junction with the line from San Bernardino, via Riverside and Atwood.

Fullerton is the end point of the Fourth District of the Los Angeles Division of The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Company, over which you have traveled from San Diego. From here to Los Angeles you will ride over the western section of the Third District. The line was built in 1888 from Orange to Redondo Junction by California Central Railway, as successor to Riverside, Santa Ana & Los Angeles Railway.

- MP 143.2 Redondo Junction. Originally it was called Ballona Junction. The California Central Railway built the track from Downey Avenue, along the Los Angeles River to the junction and continued west to Inglewood and Port Ballona in 1887. This stretch was planned by the Los Angeles & Santa Monica Railway.
- MP 141.1 Los Angeles. La Grande Station was located across the yard tracks on the left just south of the First Street viaduct. It served as the Santa Fe station from around 1890 to 1939.
- MP 140.1 Mission Tower. Operators in the tower control the junction switches to the leads to the Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal, to the left, which was opened in 1939, 0.8 miles. Trackage north to Pasadena and east to San Bernardino form the Second District.
- MP 139.4 This was the location of Downey Avenue Station. From here to Duarte, approximately 19 miles, the train will roll over tracks which were originally constructed by a steam interurban road. This was the Los Angeles & San Gabriel Valley Railroad Company, which began operating in 1885 to Pasadena and in 1886 to Duarte. The latter company was purchased by the Santa Fe interests in January 1887.
- MP 131.7 Pasadena
- MP 121 Duarte. A subsidiary, named San Bernardino & Los Angeles Railway Company, was formed and it built the connection from San Bernardino to Duarte. While the track was finished by April 25, 1887, completing the Second District, through service was delayed until May 31.
- MP 106.7 Pomona
- MP 88.8 Fontana. This is the highest point reached on today's trip, altitude 1,245 feet.
- MP 81.3 San Bernardino, altitude 1,077 feet. San Bernardino was on the main line of the California Southern Railroad via Temecula Canyon. The first train reached the town on September 13, 1883, 130.2 miles from National City.

You will note the imposing and spacious station. From 1883 to 1886, the "depot" was a box car body. By the end of that year, a large two-story wooden building was erected. It was destroyed by fire in 1916. The present structure was completed in 1916. It contained one of those fine Harvey Houses which made the Santa Fe famous for excellent food, when the overland trains tarried 25 minutes for meals.

The large Shops are on the left.

ORANGE SHOWS

San Bernardino and vicinity were and still are renowned for the production of high quality citrus fruits.

As early as 1889 a Citrus Fair was held in San Bernardino and there was also one in Los Angeles, with reduced rates on the trains.

In 1892, an "Orange Show" was staged in the new Pavilion in Pioneer Park in San Bernardino. Attractively designed display frames and structures were put together and were solidly faced with oranges and/or lemons and may be Pomelos (grapefruit). The tradition was established.

HOMeward BOUND

- MP 0.0 San Bernardino. Leaving the Fountain City or the Garden City, as it was sometimes designated, your train glides over the eastern end of the Third District. The mileages are measured from that point. You are on the original main line of the California Southern Railroad, going south, as far as Highgrove.
- MP 2.9 Colton Station. The old depot was located south of the crossing with the Southern Pacific and was reached August 14, 1882. The Southern Pacific Railroad, at that time, prevented the

laying of the necessary crossing by devious legal means and by keeping "monster" steam locomotives moving back and forth when attempts were made to install the frog. Finally a Court Order authorized the California Southern to cross and proceed to San Bernardino.

- MP 6.7 Highgrove. Formerly named East Riverside and Citrus Junction. Your train will turn west, leaving the California Southern line.

The track from here to Arlington was built by the Riverside, Santa Ana & Los Angeles Railway Company. It was opened to

- MP 9.8 Riverside in 1885. Local train service between San Bernardino and Riverside began January 1, 1886.
MP 16 Arlington. The branch was extended this far by March 15, 1886.

The various construction companies, which were laying out and preparing to build branch or feeder lines, were merged into the California Central Railway Company in June 1887.

West from here and down to Orange, the California Central Railway built the track, which was opened through in September 1887.

- MP 24.1 Corona, formerly known as South Riverside.
MP 40.6 Atwood, first called Richfield. This is far as you will go on the Third District. As previously mentioned, the connection between Atwood and Fullerton was not constructed until 1910.

- MP 0.0 Atwood. Now you will turn south over the present Olive District.

- MP 2.4 Olive

- MP 5.8 Orange, which is also MP 172.6. From this junction point, you will retrace your "up" route.

- MP 267.5 Rails to the Silver Gate, San Diego and home.

Richard V. Dodge
February 27, 1961

For added information

Issue 29: Perris And Its Railroad
(California Southern story)

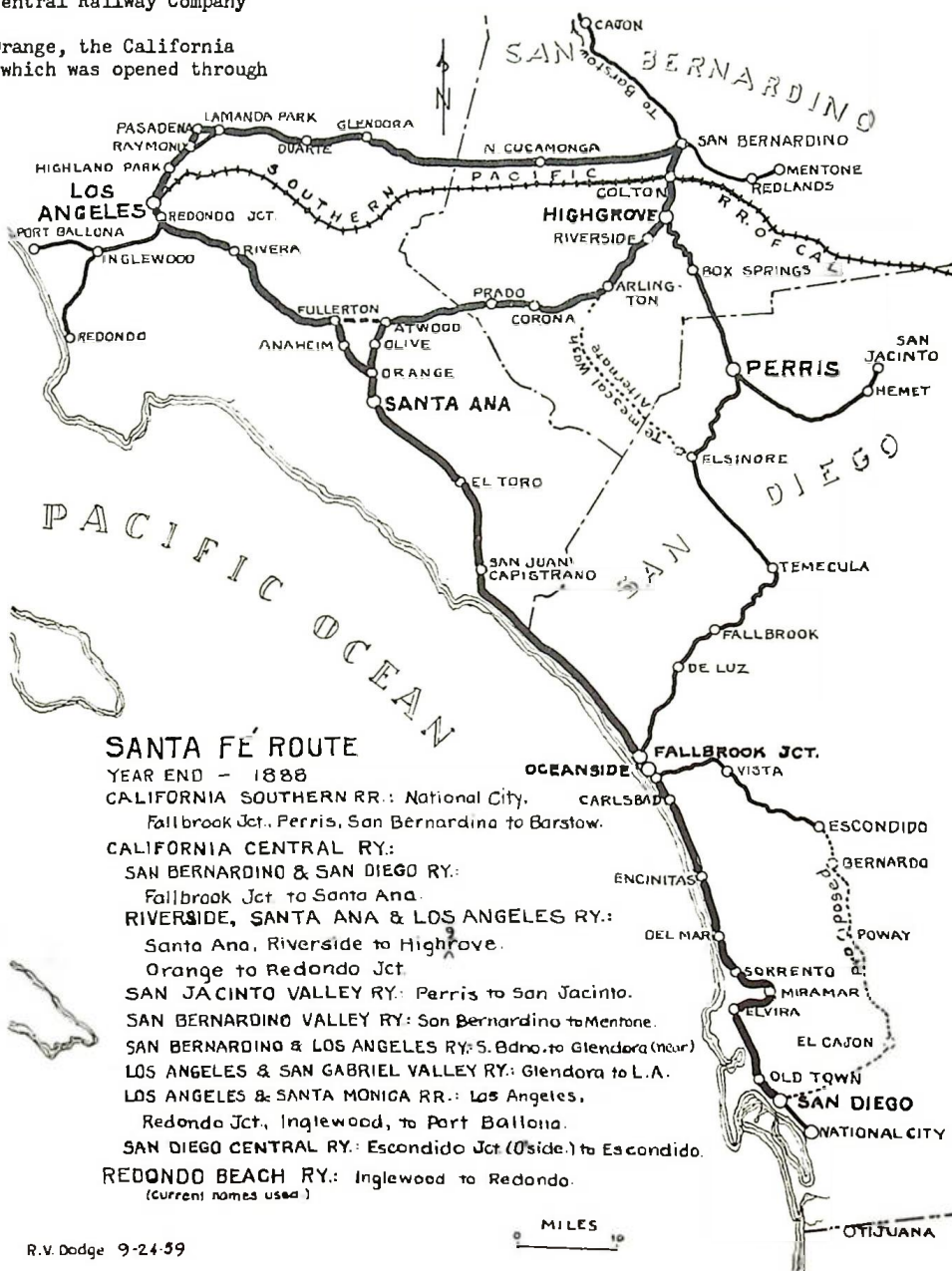
Issue 33: Salt Lake Route
(San Pedro, L.A. & Salt Lake - the Union Pacific)

Each issue: 25¢ from
Dispatcher
7861 Normal Avenue
La Mesa, California

also available on this train
in the snack car.

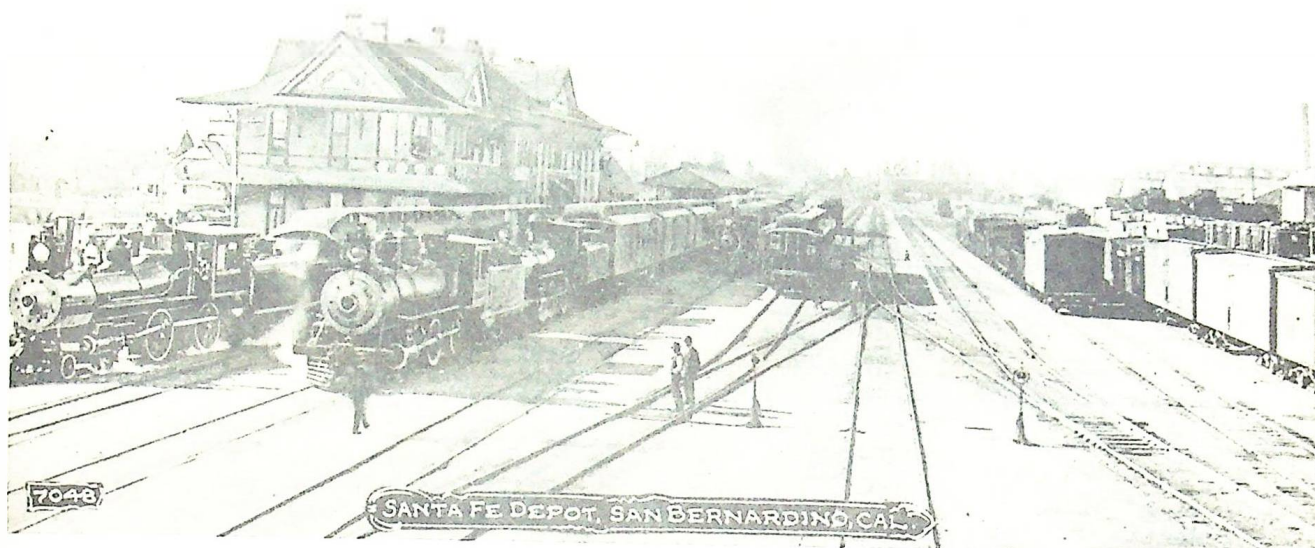


Santa Fe locomotive 972, 2-10-2 (Santa Fe type) at Corona, Calif., April 11, 1948 (Eric Sanders)

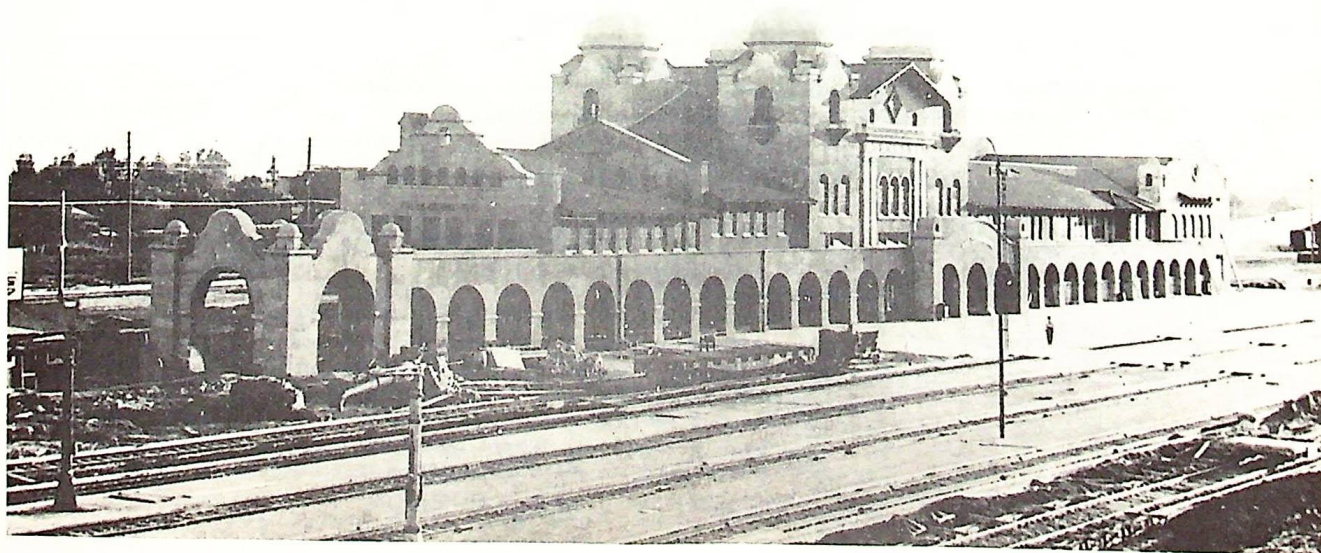


Oceanside
from South
Pacific
Hotel

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Santa Fe depot, San Bernardino, Calif., 1894-7. Built by Cal. Southern R.R., 1886; destroyed by fire 1916. Upstairs: telegraphers, dispatchers, Superintendent. Downstairs: baggage, ticket office, waiting room, Harvey Dining Room. S.Cal.Ry. No.21, left. Also So. Cal. Ry. 67. (W.B. Garner picture)



Present San Bernardino depot just before completion in 1918. (W. B. Garner picture collection)

NEWS REVIEW

SAN DIEGO RAILWAY MUSEUM GROUP FORMED

An operating railway museum will be built in the San Diego area if a new organization, the San Diego County Railway Museum, is able to realize its goals. The museum group was organized recently for the purpose of acquiring land and constructing track and other facilities.

Lyle Judd, president, states that the group seeks to cooperate with the Railway Historical Society of San Diego in museum activity and hopes to expedite the purchase of land and the construction of needed facilities. Judd stated that individuals and groups who own railroad equipment will be invited to use museum property. Museum itself plans to acquire equipment.

Museum members all belong to RHSofSD.

Judd visualizes a "San Diego Travel Town" which will house exhibits as well as an operating railroad. Property sought would be a strip of land for the "main line" and a rectangular area which would serve as a center of operations.

Officers of the new organization are: Lyle Judd, president; Eric Sanders, secretary; and Charles Gerdes, treasurer. Also present were: Al Diamond, Douglas Duncan, Terry Durkin, Wally Duthie, Jack Stodelle, Mrs. Marie Judd, Corky Thomson, Mrs. Barbara Thomson, and Bill Wootan. Eddie Junghans has indicated interest. Others are expected to attend the first regular meeting scheduled for May 21.

Judd stated that because of the impromptu arrangements made for the meeting many interested people may have been overlooked. He will be happy to hear from them.

The Museum group plans to incorporate as a non-profit organization which will make its facilities available for educational purposes.

Immediate goal is to acquire suitable property.

An operating museum is not a unique institution. The Orange Empire Trolley Museum at Perris on U.S. 395 has operating track for its collection of 40 or more interurbans and street cars, including RHSofSD's own San Francisco Municipal Railway street car 171. The Bay Area Electric Railroad Association in Northern California is about to start construction

of a trolley museum at Rio Vista. [P. 5]
In Los Angeles the city-owned Travel Town houses stationary equipment and a narrow gauge steam operation.

Museums abound in the East.

Judd stated that the group is considering lightweight steam and diesel-electric and trolley operation. The Railway Historical Society of San Diego owns two street cars and a narrow gauge "inspection car. Several individuals own car bodies which might someday become operating equipment. Another San Diego group is seeking to purchase (and then make available on lease) a heavyweight Pullman.

Dues are \$1 a month (or \$10 per year payable only in July). Initiation fee for the time being is \$5. Application for membership should be made to Charles Gerdes, 10642 Garden Way, Spring Valley, Calif.

SOCIETY NEWS NOTES

1961 membership is almost 150 ... Mrs. Gladys Umbarger is the new recording secretary ... "The Big Boys," the new Union Pacific film, was shown at the April meeting ... Tommy Mann is again scheduling work parties at the Del Mar exhibit ... Bill Morrison continues to head the reconstruction work on 54 ... Mann also planned for the visits of the Boy Scouts and the Trailer Group at Del Mar ... some weeks ago a RHSofSD work party did maintenance work on 171 at Perris - and then operated the car. Corky Thomson is continuing to produce the Newsletter - send him news items ... President Dick Pennick has just returned from Mexico and its many rail attractions ... Wally Duthie "confides" that he is thinking about a November Sonora-Baja California excursion to - please note - El Doctor. And he has given thought to excursions on the Sierra RR and on Los Angeles street car lines.

CABLE CAR ISSUE PLANNED

Dispatcher is considering publication of a San Diego Cable Car Story issue. Dick Dodge is working on a story and the editor is working on production problems. This means that Issue 37 may be much delayed. Remember we guarantee the issues if not the dates.

Issue 37 would come in booklet form with a format slightly larger than Western Railroader. Subscribers would receive it as a regular issue. Individual copies will sell for \$.50.

The staff hopes for larger sales and perhaps some distribution commercially.

RAILROAD NEWS ROUNDUP

The SD&AE El Cajon branch line is coming out of obscurity. With more industrial sidings and with new grade crossings, more parallel roads, and industrial and shopping centers being built along the right-of-way, the branch line is being viewed by more people and train schedules might be stepped up.

SD&AE on March 22 began work on the extension of the El Cajon branch. Line will run just west of Marshall until it crosses under US 80- State 67 when it crosses to the east side of the same street. After it is one block north of Fletcher Parkway it will turn west on Fesler Street and then into Montgomery-Ward warehouse property. Later the line will go east and then north to Gillespie Field.

In La Mesa a temporary realignment has placed track around location of highway overhead pier construction at the intersection of El Cajon, Baltimore and the new 80 Freeway. Track will be restored in original location. However, the old La Mesa industrial tract siding has gone and is now located on a new paved area to the north. Team track is more adequate than it was. Alongside Fletcher Parkway east of Jackson and north of the Grossmont Center are two new sidings for a beer distributor and a building supply house. Another beer distributor may also locate there.

Cars were stored recently on a portion of the Coronado Belt Line track just south of the Santa Fe National City yard.

SD&AE's 1.18 mile Third Avenue track in Chula Vista was used for the last time on December 16, 1960, when, after a Chamber of Commerce ceremony (planned by Bill Crews) at 3rd and K, the train headed north with approximately 40 passengers loaded on to two cabooses. Carl M. Eichlaub, superintendent, outlined the history of the track. Stodelle, Dodge and Sanders spoke for the Society. Old timer Edgar Boal, whose father and grandfather both headed the Land & Town Co., was present as were Mrs. Carrie Skinner, Mrs. Emily King, Mrs. Leo Christy, Mrs. Adeline Lawton and Mr. & Mrs. Ernest Campbell

THE DISPATCHER

A feature and news publication issued quarterly as an official publication of the Railway Historical Society of San Diego, Inc., Richard Pennick, president.

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who remembered the railroad at the turn of the century. Railroad officials Willard Keller, K. D. Frye and J. L. Greene were present. Train crew included Ed Pohle, engineer; Dallas Keever, fireman; Fred Johnson, conductor; Glenn K. Rose and Douglas Bogue, brakemen. Train consist included locomotives 5101-5119, a reefer (probably from the uptown MCD), two flats of rail removed from the sidings, a SP caboose and SD&AE caboose 402. Third Avenue was loaded with onlookers as the train proceeded north. Chula Vista Star News, the San Diego Union and the San Diego Independent covered the event.

Track on Cleveland Avenue, National City, belonging to Santa Fe is now out of service. Many new spurs and track extensions have been placed in service in the National City industrial tract. National City yard, just south of the station, has been enlarged.

Golden Gates, like the San Diegans, now carry cars "every which way." Costs are being cut wherever possible.

Santa Fe's new 44-mile relocation between East Williams and Crookton, Arizona, went into service at 8 a.m. M.S.T., December 19, 1960. First trains were #7 westward and #8 eastward. (Western Railroader)

Commonwealth Ave. underpass is to be constructed in Fullerton. AT&SF, UP, the city and the state will divide cost.

Construction is expected to begin early next month on Santa Fe Railway's line change between Abra and Skull Valley, Ariz., on its main route to Phoenix. The final route selected for this line change will involve the construction of approximately 38 miles of track and the project is estimated to cost about \$3.5 million. Plans call for completion of the line by October.

Subscribers' copies of this issue will contain the final word on closedown of the "red cars" plus some general news items.

Five block section of Electric Avenue in La Jolla in August 1960 became part of La Jolla Hermosa Avenue. Electric Avenue was part of San Diego Electric Railway's No. 16 La Jolla interurban. Ex-La Jolla Hermosa station building now houses a church.

Class 2 SDERY car bodies at Morena Lake are 160, 168, 172, 175, 187, 201, 206, 220 and 224. (Duncan). Classes 1 and 2 car bodies in Old Town back of the State Highway San Diego maintenance yard are being moved to Tijuana for housing purposes.

Ferrocarril Inter-California is now a local switcher railroad with trackage extending from Linea Internacional in Mexicali to Pascualitos. (Let's make that: Compania del Ferrocarril Inter-California!) Between Pascualitos and Algodones the line is no more. Gone are the rail, ties, many structures and removable portions of bridges. Much ballast has also been removed. Reportedly the Ferrocarril Sonora-Baja California took the rail while a salvage concern took many of the structures. A couple of sheds and the Paradones station remain. (Dispatcher did not check the line northeast of Paradones.) Inter-Cal's line was part of SP-SDAE's "San Diego Short Line" route between San Diego and Yuma. Two trains, a switch turn at Mexicali and the Packard-Pascualitos freight, remain. General office is in partial use.

Two Pullman cars, one Ferrocarril Sonora-Baja California owned, were noted on a recent southbound train. On August 1, 1960 an additional heavyweight Pullman was placed on the "Mexicali" (Fdelp-FSBC through train) between Guadalajara and Empalme (Guaymas). Aim was to free more accommodations for through passengers. On September 12 five sleepers were sold by Southern Pacific to the Pacific Railroad. Specifications are: 10 sections, one drawing room, two compartments, 1926 "Lake" series cars. Typical "Mexicali" consist observed below Benjamin Hill during normal traffic period included a mail car, baggage (?), two Pullmans, one diner, two first class and eight second class cars. Additional Pullman equipment has also been purchased by the FSBC. (Note: George Kottke forwarded exact data but it isn't handy at the moment. Kottke also notes the following: For information about fares and schedules write a week or so ahead of trip time to Señor Antonio Bently Tellez, Agencia Comercial, F. C. Sonora-Baja California, Madero y Melgar, Mexicali, B. Cfa., Mexico. Uptown office is on right hand side just past the border gate in Mexicali. If you write give George Kottke's name as reference.)

The Finlay family, North Hollywood, now owns an operating private car, "La Marguerita de Oro." Santa Fe sold the car for \$10,000 and helped with restoration. Car was formerly cafe-observation #1512. It was retired from the Topeka branch in 1949 and then stored at Cleburne, Texas.

Santa Fe has offered to donate the Carlsbad depot to the City of Carlsbad which would lease the building to the Chamber of Commerce which in turn would provide space for museum, art gallery and model railroad installations.

Southern Pacific's West Coast (Sacramento-Los Angeles) and Eldorado (Sacramento-Oakland) made last runs on December 7. (Western Railroader)

Union Pacific's City of St. Louis is now transferring San Francisco cars at Ogden to the City of San Francisco not the San Francisco Overland, except at holiday times. Del Monte on January 4 began operating "in conjunction with" regular commute trains 126 and 139 between San Francisco and San Jose. Overland Limited (usually three cars) and other SP trains ran to 24 cars during the Christmas holidays. (R&LHS)

Ventura station staff has shrunk from twelve employees to five, while Oxnard staff has been growing. Ventura freight billings are now handled out of Oxnard. SP recently announced that the Daylight may try an experimental summer stop at Oxnard. In recent years Camarillo, Moorpark, Saticoy, Piru, and Carpinteria have closed. Rumors are that Santa Susana, Fillmore, Santa Paula and perhaps Ventura will close. State PUC is checking SP's plans to increase coach seating from 50 to 58. (LATimes)

The Los Angeles Board of Public Utilities and Transportation in December announced a study of train-automobile accidents in the San Fernando Valley. Goal is the reduction of train speeds. Burbank now enforces a 25 mph speed limit. (LATimes)

Critical Fresno crossings are Tulare, Kern and Divisadero Sts. and also Fresno

and Belmont underpasses. Traffic delay is the area of concern. Automatic crossing gates and four flashing light signals will be installed at the Ave. I grade crossing over SP tracks in Lancaster.

Union Pacific's San Diego office is now manned by a staff of three. Ira V. Helmick is district agent.

Union Pacific on December 4, 1960 discontinued the "City of Las Vegas" because of lack of patronage. City of St. Louis was not consolidated with the City of L.A.

Pacific Electric has filed to abandon 1.64 miles of its Los Angeles-San Pedro line and 1.67 miles of Long Beach-Wilmington line, both in the southwest portion of Wilmington. Parallel SP track will be used. (Western Railroader)

San Pedro station was razed in February. Although station has been serving bus passengers, the Railway Express Agency moved out in 1958 soon after closedown of rail passenger service. Upstairs lounge for trainmen has not been used recently. (LAT)

Pacific Electric's Arrowhead Springs line closed down Wednesday, August 31, when the last daily train brought down the usual load from Arrowhead Puritas Waters, Inc. Trucks will take over. Last train consist was: SP diesel 4606 and one tank car GATX 21759. Line was built in 1907 as a trolley car line. (SC-R&LHS)

Venice Blvd. between Shell Ave. to Pacific Ave. will be widened. Former PE right-of-way will be utilized. Track between Huntington Beach and Newport is to be abandoned as will some track north of Huntington Beach.

3,500' of new track of the Harbor Belt Line Railroad was dedicated April 12. Trackage which runs along Harbor Blvd. will serve the new \$15M American President Lines Pier and the Outer Harbor area. (LAT)

Trona Railway has added a fourth diesel locomotive #53, formerly SP 5249, 1600 hp., 6 traction motor, 6 axle, C-C, rd. switcher, Baldwin 1951. (WR)

Southwest Portland Cement Co. at Victorville is about to scrap its Mojave Northern Railroad equipment. The steam locomotives?

Salt Lake, Garfield & Western has been sold to Utah Dept. of Highways. Resort was donated to the State of Utah in 1958 and passenger service ended. Present freight is salt and equipment for Utah Power & Light and Municipal Airport. An open air passenger car will be given to Pioneer Museum, (WR-Highway Magazine)

Western Pacific's Budd railcars made their last runs on October 2, 1960. New diesel engine maintenance facility is being built just north of the Stockton roundhouse. 135 x 327-foot structure has a 14-unit capacity. (WP Mileposts)

Dispatcher recommends to readers a subscription to the Railroad Club of New Mexico Newsletter. Publication features histories of New Mexico railroads and current news. April issue featured the Dawson Railway and also the Alamogordo and Sacramento Mountain Railway. Well written, complete and informative. Send for a sample copy, write the Dispatcher or send a \$1.50 subscription for twelve monthly issues to Henry E. Bender, Jr., 2737 Graceland Drive, N. E., Albuquerque, New Mexico. If you plan on some rail exploration in person or in research in the New Mexico area, the Newsletter will be invaluable.

Speaking of Newsletters! A \$2.50 RHSofSD membership brings you the RHSofSD Newsletter as well as the Dispatcher. Barbara & Corky Thomson are the editors of an informative publication carrying news of the Society, excursions here and elsewhere and some general railroad news.

Dispatcher is considering the publication of a summary-type bulletin which would carry general transit news, particularly of the San Diego area. We're thinking of bus and airline and maritime news which we'd like to "record for posterity." If anyone is interested in an occasional issue of Transport news at 5¢ per copy write us. Heresy? Well, perhaps. But yesterday's trolley lines are today's bus lines, and today's bus lines are tomorrow's ? lines. Report, published occasionally by the Dispatcher, carries museum news. Also 5¢.

I rode the front platform of the two-car train. We were scheduled to leave at 3:45 a.m., but were a bit late due to the tumult. The platform was pretty crowded with mostly railfans. Our train was on the middle track. On the leftmost track stood the two car railfan special, due to be the very last one, with the black flags and horns blowing. On the right track stood a two-car train headed by the green car. This train was supposed to handle the overflow crowd from our train, making it the last special. It left right after us.

The motorman and a supervisor finally arrived. The whistlecord and cablights had already been stolen, so the gauges had to be checked by the light of a match. We finally got things settled and started off under much hollering and horn blasting. Over the trestle we ran a barrage of torpedos that lasted half-way down San Pedro St. Even though the platform was very crowded, nobody said much as the car ground its way down the dark streets. The whine of the motor rang with uncertainty through the city streets and gained in volume and tone as we reached the four-track private right-of-way. Here the motorman opened her up to about 55 m.p.h. so that the wind just whistled through the cracks in the cab.

Everyone stared ahead at the onrushing track. A few times we stopped for a passenger, suddenly surprised to see a crowded two-car train early in the morning. They were unaware that this was the final run on Huntington's great empire. The supervisor took over and made a couple of stops, which were a bit tight and evoked some glances from the packed crowd.

Finally we reached the single track roadbed, and the usual fog. The danger of meeting an oncoming car was very slim, the last northbound train having passed here two hours ago. Still, we proceeded with caution, experiencing the eerie sensation of not seeing more than 20 yards ahead. Finally we reached the paved streets of Long Beach which has regressed now into a village. We met some new nightmare-liners coming the other way - progress. In the cab there now reigned a heated condemnation of the policies of transit companies, large corporations, and busification.

We reached the depot - no flags, no bands, just a handful of PE devotees waiting there. Police cars engaged in their usual antics on city streets, keeping railfans off the street. We continued to Morgan Yard - the last stop. People mournfully disembarked and stood around in little groups or drifted off into the darkness.

Soon the special arrived, with the usual hornblowing and bell ringing. Then the railfan group with lights out and black flags. I left then and walked back on the tracks, to catch the next Dreamliner back to L.A. at 5:05 a.m. A burning flare lay on the tracks, spluttering. It went out. With it - PE. A wire car went by, popping torpedos as it went along. Then - nothing. Not even the wires hummed. Only the rails still gave evidence of some sort of rail activity. And soon they, too, will be paved over, rusted, or removed.

Detlev Weide (1416 Colby, LA 25) wrote the above for Member Bill Wooton

We watched the last regularly-scheduled run leave Morgan Yard at 1:55 a.m. Many chose to ride this instead of ERHA-SC's last car excursion which left about 20 minutes later. The excursion cars were 1502 and 1519. They were chalked up with various slogans and carried the black flags used on the last run of the San Pedro line: Motorman was R. G. Kirkpatrick, and the conductors were J. C. Boswell and R. A. Beebe. The special "escort" included Chief Special Agent Shafer.

As we left Long Beach, I read aloud the rules for the trip from the "switch-points bulletin": "Use of signalling equipment (whistles, bells, torpedos, etc.) is strictly prohibited. This is not a Fourth of July party." But these words could not be heard over the noise of whistles, gongs, bells and torpedos. We made a fairly fast run to LA, even though two motors had been shorted out by railfans who wanted as long a ride as possible. Being the last train into 6th & Main we were greeted by a few hundred railfans and the constant whistle-blowing grew so loud that the special agents finally had to dump the air in all cars.

After a half an hour of frenzied picture taking, the last scheduled train (1525 & 1522) left at 3:45 a.m. with 136 people, including two drunks singing "I've been working on the railroad." It passed over the viaduct with the customary roar of torpedos. Two other cars left five minutes later. This run was only for crewmen,

their families and friends. Only the ERHA-SC trip was left. It left on Track 4 at 4: ? a.m. with enough noise to make sure that everyone in LA knew the last Red Car was leaving Main Street Station and would never return.

Although LMTA hatred ran high, people tried to enjoy the ride while they had a chance. Many exchanged the latest railfan news, wondered what they were going to do after abandonment, and squinted to get a last glimpse of the line's "scenery" in the darkness. At Watts we passed a northbound "Nightmareliner", for buses and the cars ran together on the same line for about an hour. In Long Beach residents and railfans lined the street by the station to meet the last car. After everyone got off at Morgan (at approximately 4:45 a.m. and after a little encouragement from special agents) a few dozen fusees were put in the middle of the tracks and plenty of torpedos on the tracks. When the train left, it was completely hidden in a cloud of smoke, reappeared momentarily, and then disappeared into the darkness. Just then the tower car (probably 9223 B.W.) which has followed us from Watts, appeared, received the same treatment, and then followed the last car to Fairbanks Yard.

Written for Bill Wootan by Riley Gordinier, Altadena, Calif.

EDITOR'S NOTE: One thing sure! LAMTA officials and special agents will be happy to get railfans - the juice variety - out of their hair. But, of course, there are still the city cars and perhaps there'll be more last runs! As he typed the above stories the editor couldn't help but recall his two last rides on the San Diego Electric Railway - the final passenger run with 446 doing the honors and the final final run when 026 completed its work in Balboa Park and then headed up Park Boulevard to become the last car to ever run on the system and the last car to enter the car barn.

Long Beach and Compton petitioned the PUC to require PE to continue to make its tracks available to LAMTA. PUC did that and also "urged" LAMTA to keep the cars running at least until PUC rendered its final decision. LAMTA chose to proceed with abandonment giving as one reason the need to carry out the once-delayed "shakeup." LAMTA stated that employees had already made commitments based on their new assignments.

On Saturday, April 8, the final day of service (last trains ran during the early morning hours of April 9), all trains were two-car trains. By mid-morning standing loads were not uncommon. At Main Street it became necessary for dispatchers to request that "all unauthorized persons leave the station platform." Regular commuters were joined by railfans and employees and folk who just wanted to take one last ride. (The editor and his family chose to ride one of the daytime trains rather than the "specials").

In the morning the Bay Area Electric Railroad Association members chartered car 1706 for one round trip. A second round trip was run with green and cream 1543. Group had ample opportunity for pictures as there were meets with freight trains (UP and PE) and narrow gauge PCC street cars. Pacific Railroad Society ran its 25th Anniversary Special as planned.

Dispatcher contributor Allen Copeland visited Fairbanks Yard at 9 a.m. on April 9 and found many cars with their trolleys up. Seats on most cars had been reversed as though the cars would soon be heading for Los Angeles. All was quiet and apparently the power was off. Nearby many Dreamliners were noted in the bus area.

According to KNX Los Angeles radio news three "blimps" have been sold to a salvage concern.

In Issues 37 and 38 we'll forget about the PE. Issue 37 will relate the story of San Diego's Cable Cars. Issue 38 will deal with the California Southern or Ajo or United States Gypsum. We're not sure.

And we'll try to catch up on general news.

Thanks, folks, for your many kind comments. We have so little time. If we owe you a letter or a back issue, please remind us. We try - but time is limited.

THIRD AVENUE TRACK BECOMES HISTORY

Freight trains and automobiles do not belong together - especially when they share space on a busy city street. This fact combined with the closing down of a lemon packing plant and the relocation of a vegetable packing plant brought about abandonment of Chula Vista's famed Third Avenue track.

Steam passenger and freight trains, electric interurban cars, city-type street cars, and modern diesel freight trains have at various times rumbled along Third Avenue. The route itself dates back to 1887 when the first South Bay Railroad was built.

The National City and Otay Railway Company, organized by the Land & Town Company on December 27, 1886, began operating trains from San Diego to National City on June 14, 1887. Service was initiated to Chula Vista on June 26, to Otay on October 2, to Oneonta on December 4, and via a branch to Tia Juana (U.S.) on May 20, 1888. Thus many South Bay communities were linked together by the now long gone "steam dummy" trains.

A "steam dummy" is a small locomotive shrouded so that it resembles an ordinary passenger coach or horse car. (One musn't scare the horses, you know!) This type train with a locomotive and trailer or trailers was in reality a steam street car. In time, however, the "dummies" gave way to the more orthodox steam locomotive. Traffic between San Diego and National City in the early years reached a peak of 64 daily trains. Passengers included folk bound for the suburbs, the "wet" town of San Diego (National City was "dry"), the spectacular Sweetwater Gorge and the International Border.

Entry into Chula Vista was from the northeast. From approximately Terrace and 24th Streets in National City the line extended from and down the bluffs, across a bridge built over the Sweetwater River, and up a cut in the south bank of the river to the residential district north and east of downtown Chula Vista. (The roadbed is still visible on both sides of the valley.) The route was then via 2nd to E to 3rd and then a few blocks south on 3rd to the Chula Vista station located in what is now the parkway in the business section.

Prior to July 1, 1906 the John D. and Adolph Spreckels interests had acquired control of the NC&O. Electrification of the San Diego-Chula Vista section was decided upon and the company proceeded with the construction of overhead and the installation of other necessary facilities. Four passenger coaches, purchased from the Coronado Railroad Company, were rebuilt in the NC&O shops at 24th Street and Cleveland into modern electric interurban cars. Additional cars were purchased later from the Niles Car Company and some trailers were acquired second hand. On December 1, 1907 the golden trams took over the passenger runs between San Diego, National City and Chula Vista. In the beginning a shuttle car connected Chula Vista with National City. Only the trains to Tia Juana, the mixed train up the Sweetwater Valley and the freights continued to be steam powered.

The National City & Otay Railway Company was merged on July 1, 1908 with the Coronado Railroad Company to form the San Diego Southern Railway Co. By September 1908 interurban cars ran "through" to Chula Vista. Except for an occasional freight and the Sweetwater Valley train, on February, 1909, all steam trains were routed west of Chula Vista via the Coronado Belt Line to all southern points instead of over the Third Avenue track. A new depot replaced the original Chula Vista depot. In October 1909 electric interurban service was extended out Third Avenue to Otay.

The San Diego Southern became the San Diego & South Eastern Railway Co. on March 20, 1912 when the South Bay line was merged with the San Diego & Cuyamaca Railway Co. This latter line ran to La Mesa, El Cajon, Santee, Lakeside and Foster.

The floods came in 1916. On January 22 bridges south of National City were washed out. Most service was discontinued. Additional damage was sustained and all service ceased. On January 31, however, train operation was restored between San Diego and National City but all other service was permanently suspended. One exception was a passenger run from National City over SD&A tracks to the Hercules Powder Plant, the building still in use out by the waterfront.

Damage losses and Competition from jitney buses hastened the end of the SD&SE. Upon the order of the State Railroad Commission, the San Diego Electric Railway Co. was authorized to operate its street cars over SD&SE track into National City. Because it also had jitney bus problems the SDEry temporarily discontinued service and the SD&SE interurban cars went back into service. However, in July SDEry again ran cars on the line. Cars used were the famous center-entrance "Exposition Cars" purchased by the company prior to the 1915-16 Exposition. Cars were frequently run in two car trains. Chula Vista service was resumed but a different routing was used. By order of the Commission the San Diego & South Eastern rebuilt the Coronado Belt Line from National City and then constructed new track from the Belt Line up F Street to the Third Avenue track in Chula Vista. SDEry was granted trackage rights and the cars were run through to 3rd and K Sts. The old route from the Terrace District to northeast Chula Vista was abandoned as was track south of K and the Sweetwater Valley track.

On October 1, 1917 the San Diego & South Eastern Railway Company itself was purchased by the San Diego & Arizona Railway Co. SDEry was again granted trackage rights but the SD&A operated its own freight trains over the "Chula Vista branch." By this time the SD&A had built its main line through Palm City to the border so the SD&SE track south of C.V. was abandoned. The SD&A, however, did continue operation on the old Coronado Belt Line.

San Diego Electric's Chula Vista cars carried the route sign "CV". Cars operated on Fifth Street and Broadway in downtown San Diego.

Last cars operated to Chula Vista at midnight on April 30, 1925. Lack of patronage caused the abandonment. Third Avenue track remained as SD&A's Chula Vista freight line and has remained so to this day. In 1919 the SD&A built a new station - the one which was removed to Harborside in 1958. On January 9, 1930 the last South Bay electric line closed down when SDEry abandoned service to National City.

SD&A became the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway Company in 1933 when Southern Pacific acquired Spreckels' half interest, thus obtaining complete ownership. Down on the mainline (east side of US 101) the company continued to offer daily passenger and freight service. The Roustabout also continued to run twice a week on the Coronado Belt Line (west side of US 101). In 1951 mainline passenger service was discontinued and diesel power displaced steam power. In 1960 the freight trains continue to roll and they are longer than ever. Chula Vista branch line service will continue. Only the Third Avenue track is being abandoned.

REFERENCES: Middlebrook, R. P. and Best, Gerald, "The San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway Company," Bulletin 71, The Railway & Locomotive Historical Society. The Dispatcher, Issues 6, 11 and 19; Dispatcher library files. Additional San Diego County railroad information is available in the Dispatcher, quarterly publication of the Railway Historical Society of San Diego, Inc. \$1 per year from 8689 La Mar St., Spring Valley, Calif. Also from: Dodge, Richard V., 'Rails Of the Silver Gate, Pacific Railway Journal, San Marino, Calif. This volume available at the Serra Historical Museum, Whistle Stop, Umbargers Model Railroads. Or order same at your local bookstore. \$10.

This brochure was prepared for the "pulling of the spike" ceremony marking the close of service on the Third Avenue track in Chula Vista, Calif. of the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway Co. Ceremony was sponsored by the Chula Vista Chamber of Commerce on Third Avenue, Friday, December 16, 1960. This page will also be included in Issue 35 of the Dispatcher.