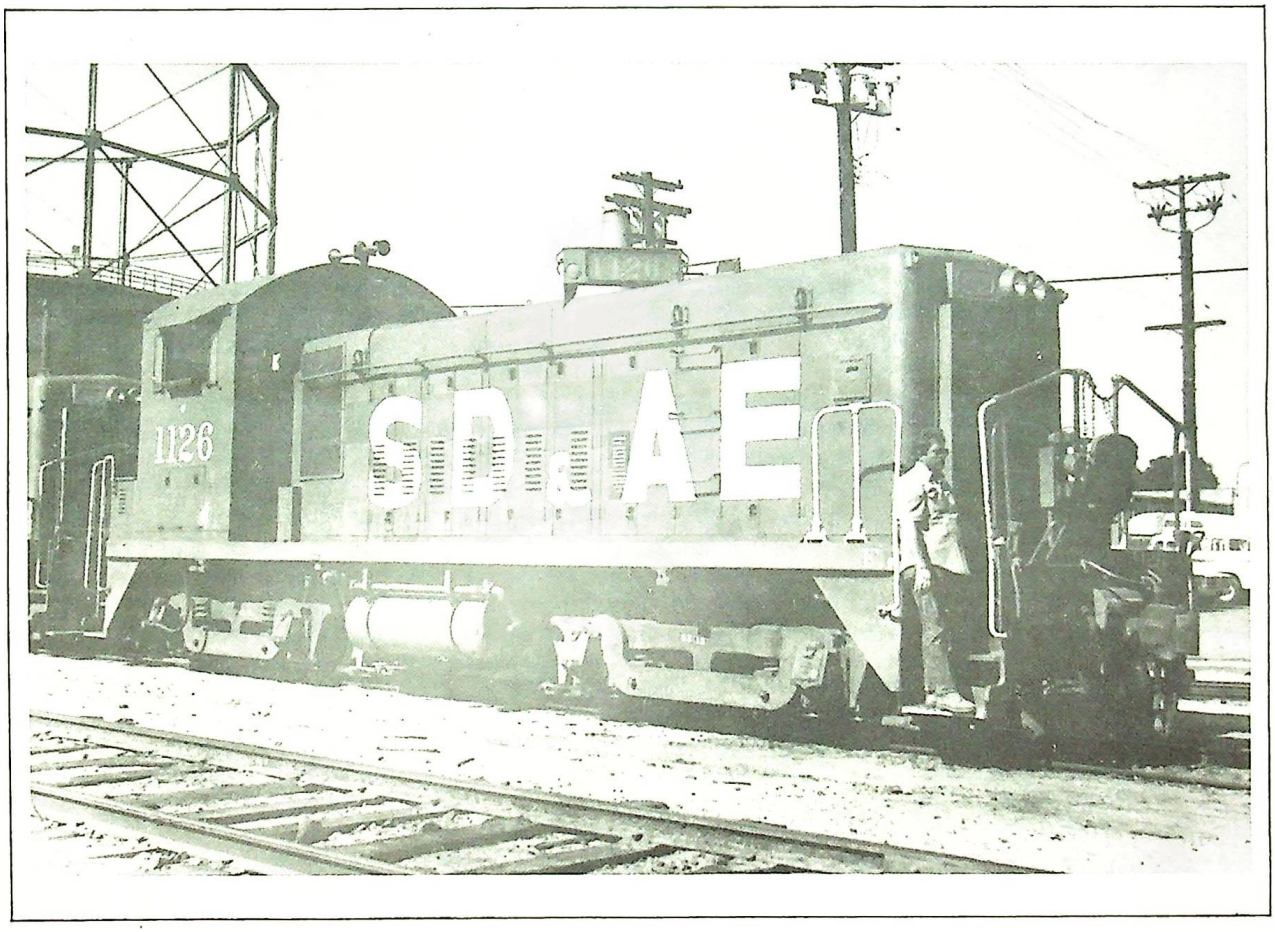
Nov. Dec.'79 **REPORT** No. 162

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



A "NEW" SHORT LINE IN TOWN

The photo above, by museum Secretary Eric Sanders, shows the first diesel locomotive ever lettered for the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Ry. This ex-Southern Pacific SW-8 switcher was rolled out November 1st for a brief ceremony involving an oversized check presented to MTDB officials by an S.P. vice president to mark the end of Southern Pacific railroading in San Diego.

Kyle Railways, Inc., the new contract shortline operator, bought all of the SW-8 switchers that S.P. was using on the line. Only #1126 has been lettered for the S.D. & A.E. so far with a simple red band through the S.P. lettering and new block letters over the original S.P. grey paint.

(New Short Line...continued from page 1)

A new paint scheme will probably not appear for some time, as the new operator is trying to pinch every penny. An example of this can be seen on the El Cajon branch which Kyle is operating with only one engine, something that S.P. never did as far as anyone can recall.

MTDB got a lot of railroad for only 18 million bucks, and will start constructing the first phase of San Diego's light rail electric transit system in the very near future. With another tight fuel situation on the horizon, pressure is already mounting to begin serious planning for extending the new transit system out the El Cajon branch (with a stop at P.S.R.M.A.'s La Mesa Depot!) Much of MTDB's 16 mile downtown to the Mexican border rail line is now out to bid and work on the flood damaged Carriso Gorge line in east San Diego County is expected to start soon.

Many members have expressed an interest in the history of San Diego's celebrated shortline which was built well after the end of the nation's great railroad building era. The total milage of U.S. railroads peaked in 1916 and then rapidly began to decline. The S.D.&.A. was not completed 'till 1919. The story of this "impossible railroad" will be carried in REPORT with Part 1 starting in this issue. The late Richard V. Dodge wrote the article originally for the "Dispatcher", a San Diego area railfan publication created and edited by Eric Sanders back in the 50's. A full roster of locomotives will also be in a future issue.

FROM THE CUPOLA

by H. Chalmers Kerr, Jr., President

FAREWELL - On 31 December, 1979, I will have completed a four year stint as president. I have served P.S.R.M.A. as president for eight of the past nine years and leave the job with mixed emotions, that is, proud at having seen so many important improvements in P.S.R.M.A., but also frustrated in not having accomplished much more.

When I first became president in 1971, P.S.R.M.A. had reached a crisis situation; land was unavailable for a museum, membership was declining, equipment storage locations were evaporating, money was in short supply, and the membership was apathetic. A nadir had been reached. What a difference today! Membership has risen from about 125 in 1971 to over 660 in December, 1979 (doubling in the past three years). Temporary storage is now available for our equipment (although space is almost full). The membership is very active and attendance at meetings is up. A permanent home is almost assured. Major activities such as the La Mesa Depot Museum, The Embarcadero exhibit, #1509 excursions and restoration projects have provided an outlet for our many talented and hard working volunteers. Our public image is greatly strengthened and no small part of this is the direct result of the Railfan Patrol. No matter what your talent or interest is, P.S.R.M.A. has a job to fit your capabilities and desires. Money, however, is always in short supply (as it always will be), available income is falling behind our current and projected financial needs. A major goal for 1980 will fundraising. On the balance, I can honestly say that P.S.R.M.A. is strong and healthy, in much better condition than it was nine or even four years ago.

I wish to thank all current and past officers, directors, administrative staffers, volunteers and members for your support, help and constructive criticism during my tenure as president. Without each of you, P.S.R.M.A. wouldn't have progressed as far as it has. During 1980, I will serve as Chairman of the Board of Directors and I pledge my support to our new president, Jim Lundquist. I invite you all to do likewise.

Here is hoping that 1980 will see P.S.R.M.A. turning the first spadeful of earth at our permanent museum home in Campo and let's all work toward that goal with vim and vigor! A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to the P.S.R.M.A. family of members and friends!

SANTA FE EXHIBIT COMING TO TOWN

There will be a Santa Fe P.R. exhibit in an 85' headend car open to the public between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. December 16-17 at the downtown depot. The exhibit is to feature rail memorabilia and the latest Santa Fe industry information.

INDUSTRIAL ARCHEOLOGY
(Restoration News)

by Ken Helm

The shorter days of winter have meant that the restoration crew has had to work at a more feverish rate than ever to meet our restoration goals for 1979. As is usually the case, a few projects have fallen behind schedule, but 1979 has been a tremendous success anyway. This is the year that ex-Santa Fe #1509, a five year project, culminated in our first piece of equipment on the high iron. As well as being a beautiful car and a great ride in its own right, this car represents a psychological leap forward for the entire museum as well as a personal victory for the restoration crew. It's action like seeing an unaware railfan jump three feet straight into the air as #1509 glides by, or seeing a Santa Fe PR man burn up a whole role of film on just the exterior of the car that make all the busted knuckles and paint in the hair worth while.

Here's a quick update of the progress made this last month on our equipment. Victoria is currently receiving the bulk of our attention at Miramar. This month, all exterior rust spots (fairly minor) have been ground down, sandblasted and doped up with red lead paint. After some minor flaws are removed, the entire outside of the car is to be wet sanded and painted in Pullman green. The sanding is now about one-fourth finished. Major portions of the undercarriage have been stripped by Norm Hill's crew, who will not be denied! The rear door frame, damaged by vandals, has been repaired and rekeyed by Nick Nichols. (Note: The wood used for this repair was black walnut personally cut by Nick in Lima, Ohio in 1937.) Aside from these projects, plans are now in progress for overhaul of the steam boiler, coupler change and other details before the car is up for trips. Car #1509 is being detailed for our trip to Las Vegas with slack adjusters, coupler suspension, and brass fans receiving attention. Our Army kitchen car has been washed and stripped inside and now awaits a fresh paint job. Jack Linn has finished rebuilding the plumbing in the crew shower. Finally, we have received a steam cleaner as a donation, and Knud Antonsen is currently servicing all the valves.

1979 was a great year for restoration; let's hope 1980 will bring ever accelerating projects to completion. The "faithful": H.A. Hurry, Norm Hill, David Black, Nick Nichols, John Ashman, Larry Rose, Dave Coster, Bob Martin, Jim Lundquist, Russ Sargeant, Ken Helm, Bill Barbour, Dick Mc Intyre, Knud Antonsen, Paul Horky, Bill Attaway, and, of course, Good Ol' Jack Linn, thank you for your support in the year past, and hope for its continuance in the year to come.

Excursion News

by L. Rose

For everyone that missed our special one car charter trip to Benjamin Hill last year, take note! Arrangements are now being made with the Sonora-Baja California Railway for a 10 section 6 bedroom Pullman sleeper for an excursion in February. This trip is not recommended for daisy pickers because there is nothing in Benjamin Hill except the junction with the F.C.P. line to Nogales and the shops and yards of the S.B.C.Ry. It is a must trip, however, for the hardcore railfan. Railway equipment not seen for decades on American railroads is in daily use there on the many freight and passenger trains that pass through.

The excursion features a ten hour day in Railfan Heaven sandwiched between a 22 hour round trip on a beautifully maintained vintage sleeper. The fare last year was under fifty dollars, cheap for over 1,000 kilometers of first class train travel and a fascinating tour of the S.B.C. shop facilities. If you want to go, get in touch with Eric Sanders NOW!469-1288, 7861 Normal St., La Mesa, CA 92041. Space is limited, first come, first served.

For the less fanatical fan there is a more leisurely excursion being planned by Eric sponsored by the La Mesa Historical Society. This excursion features a bus trip to the Mission Inn in Riverside with a stop at the Orange Empire Railway Museum in Perris. The Perris museum is a first class show featuring many operating electric locomotives, trolleys and vintage railcars. Again, get in touch with Eric for all the details This trip is tentatively set for late January.

THE IMPOSSIBLE RAILROAD
The S.D. & A.E. Story

by the late Richard V. Dodge
(reprinted from the "Dispatcher" June, 1956 edited by Eric Sanders)

Nature never intended that a railroad should be built through magnificent Carriso Gorge. When surveys were being made for the San Diego and Arizona Railway, it was called the "impossible railroad" by several reputable engineers. But the S.D.&A.E. meandered the length of the Gorge by a tortuous route.

Ever since the Mexican War, the hue and cry had been for a direct rail line to the east, first from military necessity, then to develop the Port of San Diego. Even when the California Southern Rail Road, now Santa Fe, was built, 1881 to 1885, no direct line was achieved and when the Santa Fe management moved the offices to Los Angeles and the shops from National City to San Bernardino, making San Diego's bought and paid for railroad nothing but a branch line, promotions for a direct line again sprang up. None was brought into fruition. So, in 1906, there was no hope of ever financing a road, though some $40,000 had been raised for surveys and rights-of-way for a proposed route named San Diego & Eastern Railway.

Imagine the shock, the surprise and then renewed confidence of the people of San Diego when the San Diego Union of December 14, 1906 displayed the almost incredible headlines: RAILROAD FROM SAN DIEGO TO YUMA IS NOW ASSURED. Named San Diego and Arizona Railway. Line Will Be Built and Owned By Spreckels Interests.

The San Diego and Arizona Railway Company had been incorporated secretly in June by John D. Spreckels, his brother Adolph B., they being the sons of Claus, the Sugar King of San Francisco; John D., Jr.; William Clayton and Harry L. Titus.

All subscribers to the San Diego & Eastern fund were reimbursed in full. Colossal condemnation proceedings were started to obtain rights-of-way and land for stations, yards and other facilities. Surveys were begun and over 1,000 miles of lines were run.

Eventually it became known that the originator of the road was none other than Edward B. Harriman, the canny wizard of the railroad world, who was in control of the Union Pacific Railroad, the Southern Pacific Company and other lines.

Harriman had become familiar with fertile Imperial Valley when the President of the United States of America, Theodore Roosevelt, pleaded for him and the Southern Pacific to stop the rampaging Colorado River, which had broken through its bank and was flooding the below sea level areas of the recently developed Valley. By giving rock trains right over all all others, the herculean task of dumping rock into the break faster than the swirling waters could carry it away was finally accomplished. Harriman had then visualized the advantages of a direct railroad to tidewater in San Diego. So he joined forces with J. D. and A. B. Spreckels to actually build the line.

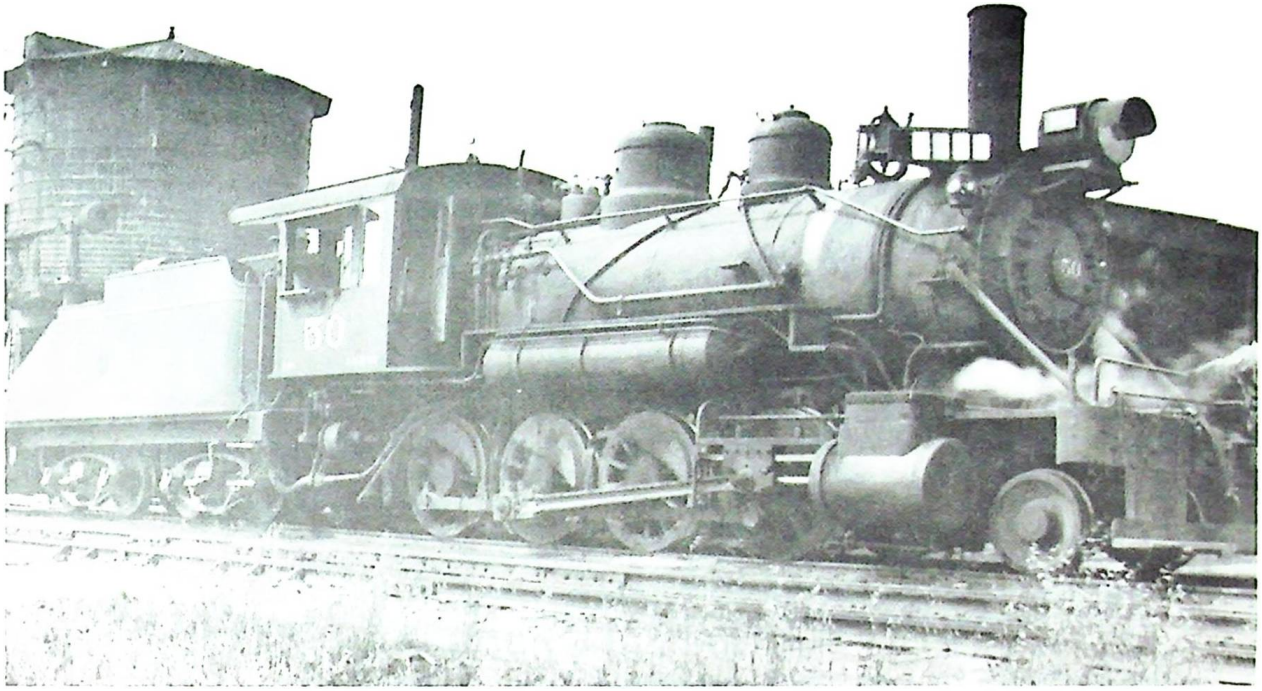
The history of the San Diego and Arizona is a narrative of one calamity after another. Ground breaking ceremonies were held on September 7, 1907, near the foot of 28th Street in San Diego. The first preliminary grading contract was let.

Calamity No. 1: The country was then plunged into a short but severe depression. Money for construction was almost impossible to obtain. Work was hindered.

The first grading was started in January 1908 and work continued on the surveys. Two All-American routes via Dulzura and one through Lower California (now generally known as Baja California), Mexico, were pronounced practical. Detailed estimates showed the costs of the All-American route to be the higher. John D. went to Mexico City and obtained the concessions required from the Mexican Government.

By 1909 conditions were improved. Robert Sherer & Sons Company was awarded the actual grading contracts from San Diego to the border and through Baja California to Tecate, including the boring of two tunnels near the location of the present Rodriguez Dam.

The first locomotive, No. 1, a six-wheeled switch engine built at Pittsburgh, and some rolling stock were received. Rail laying was scheduled to commence and everything was looking up when:



S.D.&.A.E. #50 was the regular locomotive on the El Cajon Branch when Eric Sanders took this picture in 1948 near the downtown engine house. The tall stacked 2-8-0 was built by the Baldwin Works in 1911 and scrapped in 1951.

Calamity No. 2 struck. E. H. Harriman passed on in September 1909. His successor in the control of the Southern Pacific did not conform with Harriman's policies. The contract with the Spreckels Brothers was cancelled. The Southern Pacific would advance no more funds. This was a staggering blow to John D. He admitted that Harriman had been furnishing the money and he had been spending it. Now he would have to raise the needed capital single handed. This he determined to do.

Rails were laid to the Mexican border in February 1910. The road's first passengers were carried into Mexico on a big excursion to Tijuana Hot Springs (Agua Caliente) on July 29. There a commemorative tablet was presented to John D. by a representative of the Chamber of Commerce. The bridge across the Tijuana River was completed by the end of the year.

Then came Calamity No. 3. A rash of revolutions broke out in 1911 in Mexico. All Mexican laborers left the job. But, in June, the insurrectionists surrendered and work could be resumed.

The second locomotive, consolidation type No. 50, built by Baldwin, had been delivered in February. Track was laid to Valle Redondo, 36 miles from San Diego, that year, elevation 766 feet.

El Centro, 49 feet below sea level, was designated as the eastern terminus, instead of Yuma. The portion of the Holton Interurban Railway's track from El Centro to Seeley would be taken over. Contracts had been let for construction to a point five miles west from Seeley and regular train service was inaugurated over the completed sections. E.J.

Kallright, of the Southern Pacific, was appointed to the position of Chief Engineer.

Calamity number 4 should have been the knock-out punch, but John D.'s indomitable courage and grim determination were unconquerable. In February 1912, the Southern Pacific instituted a suit versus the J.D. & A.B. Spreckels Company to recover nearly three million dollars, the amount of funds already advanced. John D. fought this action through the courts and the suit was dismissed in 1916, compelling the Southern Pacific to retain its interests in the railroad.

The ten miles of bow knots and double horseshoe curves, gaining altitude out of Redondo through an undeveloped country, much of the construction being through solid granite, slowed progress. The feature of this section is that nearly all the ten mile stretch can be seen from Redondo. The ruling grade eastbound is 1.4%.

The Spreckels interests had purchased the San Diego, Cuyamaca & Eastern Railway with its line from San Diego through La Mesa, El Cajon and Lakeside to Foster in 1909. The company was reorganized as the San Diego & Cuyamaca Railway. In March 1912, that road and the San Diego Southern Railway were consolidated into the San Diego & Southeastern Railway. The San Diego Southern Railway had been formed in 1908, merging the Coronado Railroad with the National City & Otay Railway, which latter John D. had previously purchased.

By the end of 1913, the rail front was about eight miles west of Tecate at an elevation approximately 1,500 feet. On the Eastern Division, Coyote Wells, elevation 272 feet and 26 miles west of El Centro, was reached in April 1914. Regular trains were running from El Centro to Dixieland, 19 miles. Passenger service to Tecate, 52.3 miles from San Diego, elevation 1,685 feet, was begun in September, 1914.

Next came Catastrophe Number 5, with the declarations of war in Europe, starting what developed into World War One. There was no money available for railroad construction projects. But, someway, John D. kept the work going. Political relations with the Republic of Mexico became strained. Some troops were landed at Veracruz. As there was a serious risk of war, all American citizens were ordered out of Mexico. However, Mexican foremen carried on the construction work nobly until the disputes were settled.

The Santa Fe Railway was then building its present station in San Diego. Negotiations were concluded for use of the new facilities, making it a Union Station, with the San Diego & Arizona paying a pro-rata of the costs. This arrangement replaced the plans for building an individual depot at Market and India Streets.

It had been the hope that the San Diego & Arizona would be completed in time for the opening of the Panama California Exposition in Balboa Park on January 1, 1915, but there was a long way to go on that date.

In January, two consolidation locomotives were delivered, bearing numbers 101 and 102. They had been built by the American Locomotive Company in Schenectady in 1914. Passenger coaches and baggage cars were received from the Pullman Company's shops.

Railroad building in the country was now at a standstill, except on the San Diego & Arizona. The Sherer Company was awarded the contract for the grading to Campo, including the boring of tunnels numbers 3 and 4. The latter was expected to become a tourist attraction as the international boundary line is crossed in the tunnel.

Mother Nature dealt the next blow. It was the tremendous devastation by floods in January 1916, augmented by the failure and collapse of Lower Otay Dam on the 27th. The high fill across Otay Valley was swept away, 1,000 feet of fill in Sweetwater Valley was washed out and great damage was done to the new work along Campo Creek. Engine #50 was derailed, turned over onto its left side and sank in the sand and mud in Sweetwater Valley, engineer Wilfley and fireman Schussler having narrow escapes. Train service over temporary tracks was resumed in mid-February.

(continued next month)

Honor Roll

DOUG HARLEY---donated several steam locomotive and air brake engineering manuals dating from the 20's and 30's. Excellent reference for our mechanical people working on Shay #3.

KNUD ANTONSEN---has renewed his membership the last two years with a fat donation thrown in for P.S.R.M.A.'s general operating fund.

CLETE & INEZ RINGLEIN---donated many copies of TRAINS MAGAZINE, some of which date back to the 1940's.

Annual Dinner February 2nd

P.S.R.M.A.'s annual dinner and installation of officers will be held Saturday night, February 2nd at the Hanalei Hotel in Mission Valley (same place as last year). The program is still being set up, so look for all the information in a flyer to be included in the January REPORT.

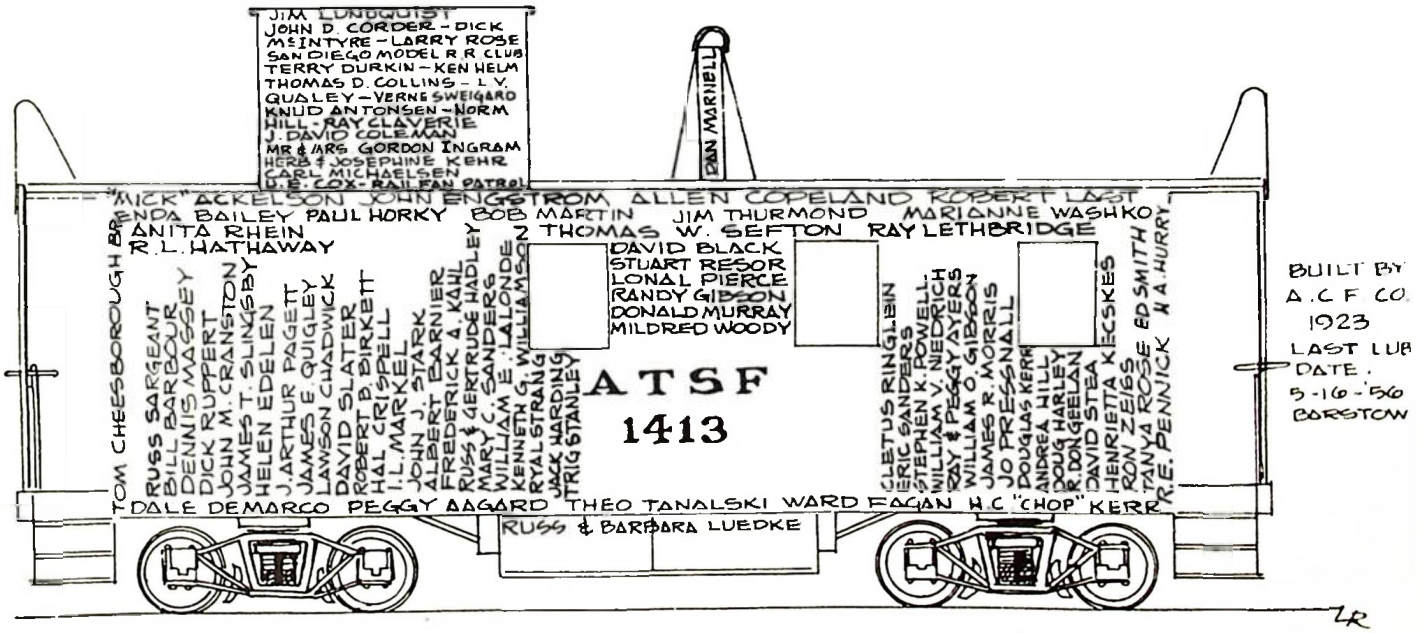
AMTRAK RIDERSHIP SOARS !

The ridership totals for November on the "San Diegans" are up 48% over November of 1978. The one-millionth rider on the local train this year was registered in October, an event that has never occurred before, not even in the good old days on the Santa Fe. Another train is to be added to the schedule in February with a eighth train possible before the end of 1980! Eat your heart out, Brock Adams, wherever you are!

Caboose Fund Nears Goal

Three more hundred dollar donors have piled into the cupola of our caboose silhouette this month. President-elect Jim Lundquist has joined that group, having waited discreetly 'till after the election to make his grandstand play. U.E. Cox, one of the nicest conductors ever to work an Amtrak train, has also joined the "Coop Group" as has the Railfan Patrol. The R. P. got together and scraped up a hundred bucks from among their ranks to get their group title on the brass plaque.

Also climbing aboard with generous donations this month were Mildred Woody, Ray and Peggy Ayers, Stephen K. Powell (our West Bloomfield, Michigan member), William V. Niedrich and R. Don Geelan. Thanks, gang, for helping to make this special fund raiser roll! There is still time for folks to get a 1979 tax deduction if they can get a donation in by December 31st. Everyone should "own a piece of the shack"!



YES! I WANT TO HELP SAVE CABOOSE #1413! PUT MY NAME ON THE "SHACK"!!

My gift of $_____ is ☐ enclosed ☐ Charge to VISA or MASTER CHARGE

MASTER CHARGE/VISA NUMBER ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

MASTER CHARGE BANK NUMBER ☐☐☐☐ Exp. date_____ SIGNATURE:_____

Name:_____ Address_____ Zip_____

Canine Train Buff

BOZEMAN, Montana. (AP)---Four days a week, only minutes before the passenger trains arrive, Duke trots into the railway station, tail awag. It's snack time. He strolls among the passengers, accepts some friendly greetings and some petting, then heads for the dining car and barks for the handout that has become his due.

In the past four years, Duke has become a fixture at the station, almost always waiting, regardless of the weather. To the Amtrak crews he is "the Bozeman beagle." The dining cars always have a tidbit for him. "He always shows up just a few minutes before the train arrives," said a woman baggage handler at the station. "He knows which way the train is heading, too. When it's going west he always trots right to that end of the line and waits."

Duke's owner, Mary Lee Turner, says it was Duke's interest in people that first drew him to the station, which is not far from his home. Then he discovered that dining cars have both people and food, and he has been a faithful train greeter ever since. "He knows the schedule better than I do," Turner said.

Duke also knows the difference between freight trains, which have no dining cars, and passenger trains, which do. He doesn't greet freights. The 9-year-old beagle was something of a hobo in his early days and may have perfected his bumming techniques on excursions around town. "He just traveled," Turner said. "He had a collar with his name on it, and people would find him and bring him home." "He's a bum at heart, Turner said. "He just likes to eat."

(reprinted from the UNION, sent in by Bert & Alex Straw)

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LAS VEGAS on the DESERT WIND

Enjoy traveling in the "grand manner" on ex-Santa Fe Cafe Observation car no. 1509 Saturday the twelfth of January as Pacific Southwest Railway Museum journeys to Las Vegas. Forty lucky people will board #1509 in San Diego at 7:00 am on the 12th of January for a full day of class railroading as we travel first to L.A., then on to Las Vegas via Cajon Pass. We will be climbing Cajon during daylight hours, the first opportunity since the advent of Amtrak. Enroute patrons will be treated to a full breakfast out of San Diego, and an enormous luncheon buffet out of San Bernardino. Our own bar will be open, naturally, serving drinks of your pleasure at a nominal cost. As we glide into Las Vegas at 6:50 pm local time, 5:50 Pacific Time, you'll have a full night of shows, gambling, or whatever to look forward to. At 3:45 am (local time) Sunday the 13th we will again board our private car for the return to San Diego, arriving at 8:20 pm. The fare for this adventure, in the grand manner of travel of the past, is $ 110 roundtrip, per person. This fare includes breakfast and luncheon both going and coming from Las Vegas, but does not include, however, hotel arrangements. Complete information regarding hotels, floor shows, and directions regarding Las Vegas will be included with tickets by return mail.

Don't be left out on this great train riding adventure! Remember you'll be riding our own car through some great railroading country pampered all the way by an attentive staff, with a great evening awaiting you in Las Vegas. All this and a ride into the past for $ 110.

Send in your reservation request immediately to PSRMA, Inc. 3376 Par Drive, La Mesa, CA 92041. Sale of tickets is on a first come, first served basis and please remember there are only 40 seats.

CUT ALONG THIS LINE

****

Send this form to PSRMA, Inc. , 3376 Par Drive, La Mesa, CA 92041. Please enclose check or money order payable to PSRMA, Inc., or complete charge card information below and sign.

PLEASE PRINT

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Please charge my ____ Master Charge ____ Visa

Number _____ Bank # _____

Signature _____

Train fare including two meals each day is $ 110 per person, or $ 100 if boarding at Los Ageles.

_____ fares @ $ 110 each = _____

or

_____ fares @ $ 100 each = _____
(if boarding at L.A.)