

HOT SCOOP

A black and white line drawing of a hand holding a long-handled scoop, scooping a portion of ice cream into a small bowl. The bowl is already filled with several scoops of ice cream. The drawing is framed by decorative scrollwork in the corners.

A publication dedicated to Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association members
May-June 2016





Pacific Southwest Railway
Museum Association, Inc.
www.psrsm.org

Train Operations

PSRM Campo Depot
State Hwy. 94 at Forrest Gate Rd.
Campo, California
619-478-9937
Lat: 32°36.8'N Lon: 116°28.2'W
Open weekends 9 AM to 5 PM
Golden State trains depart at
11:00 AM and 2:30 PM.

La Mesa Depot Museum & Business Office

4695 Nebo Drive,
La Mesa, California, 91941
619-465-psrm (465-7776)
Open Saturdays 1 PM to 4 PM
Other times by appointment

Meetings of the PSRMA Board
of Directors are held on the 3rd
Friday of the month at 6 PM,
Trinity Church, 3902 Kenwood
Drive, Spring Valley, CA 91977

Museum Officers

President: Diana Hyatt
Vice-President: Martin Caestecker
Treasurer: Dave Tomeraasen
Secretary: Robert Smith
Equipment: Ron Hyatt
Facilities: Frank Denison
Museum Services: Jim Lundquist
Operations: Mike Edwards

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Special Events: Diana Hyatt
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Steam Foreman: Jim Baker
Gift Shop Mgr: Heather Wright
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PSRM President Diana Hyatt is presented the Imperial Bird brass plaque by Al Novak.

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The Hot Scoop® is a publication of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum, Inc.

The opinions expressed in the Hot Scoop are those of the individual writer and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association, Inc., or its officers and staff.

Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association Mission Statement:

The Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association, Inc., is dedicated to preserving the physical legacy and the experience of rail transportation. Programs address the historical, social, economic and technical impact of railroading with particular emphasis on railroads of San Diego County and the systems with which they connected in the United States and Mexico.

The Museum is a member of the Association of Tourist Railroads and Railway Museums (ATRRM) and is a non-profit educational corporation. Donations are tax deductible under Sec. 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Submission guidelines: All articles should be limited to no more than three single spaced pages and submitted in Microsoft Word format. Photographs should be in jpg format no larger than 8 x 10 inches at 150 to 240 PPI resolution, but please no cell phone pictures. Send all submissions to hotscoop@psrm.org.

The Hot Scoop is available in color via e-mail. To receive the electronic version in PDF format, reply to hotscoop@psrm.org and include your name, membership number and e-mail address. Note that if you opt for the e-mail version, you will no longer receive the printed copy.

Comments are always welcome. Send your feedback to the Editor at hotscoop@psrm.org.

From the Back Platform

By Diana Hyatt

Reporting on March–April, 2016

As I write this second report of 2016 to our PSRM membership, we are well into the first half of the year! March and April were both very busy months with: the trucking of the Pullman 4-4-2 sleeper Imperial Bird from Commerce, CA, Bunny Trains, first quarter reporting, board meetings, spring cleaning, etc. Please look for my article on the Imperial Bird in this edition of the *Hot Scoop*.

Bunny Trains operated March 19th, 20th and 26th with three trains each day. At three days long, this event is our shortest, but ridership has been on a steady increase since a low of 321 in 2011 to 1,066 riders this year. When compared to our six day 2015 Pumpkin Train of 2,119 riders, it compares favorably. I would like to thank those who helped relocate displays and decorate the Display Building: Martin Caestecker, Alanna Hyatt, Cary Hyatt, Ron Hyatt, Robbie Smith and workampers Andy and Nancy Andretta. Stuffing goodie bags and staffing assistance at the events were Gina Prantil and her daughter Esther, Kelley and Mercedes Weiss, Alanna Hyatt, Aaron Hyatt, Ian Hyatt and myself. The Easter Bunny was once again the guest of honor, handing out filled Easter eggs and posing for pictures.

Annual Dinner and Membership Meeting was held on Thursday, April 14, 2016 at Tom Ham's Lighthouse with a black and white movie theme. Guests were encouraged to dress up as their favorite black and white film character. Baja Railroad's Chief Financial Officer Manuel Hernandez returned as our guest speaker to update our membership on the progress of work and rail traffic in

Mexico. Sr. Hernandez also extended an invitation to the membership to be their guest at BJRR's new 40,000 square foot facility in Garcia, B.C. (that has been built along the railroad mainline and sits directly across from Cemex). This event will be planned for the third quarter of the year and it was agreed that PSRM should make it a fund-raising event. More to come on that soon!

The Annual Dinner is for all PSRM members and their guests, not just volunteers. Furthermore, we make every attempt to continue to keep the cost as low as is feasible; PSRM typically loses money on the annual dinner but your board feels it is a platform where we celebrate all we collectively accomplish within this organization and serves as a medium to present our thanks to individuals who have provided a model for all to follow. In that vein, this year's Railfan of the Year award was presented to Frank Stites. Frank has been a diligent and consistent volunteer for many years; he doesn't ask for thanks and he doesn't complain {too much}, he looks for answers, doesn't make excuses and knows how to use communication at its most effective level. Thank you, Frank, for all you have done and continue to accomplish!

Department and Volunteer Hours Awards were also presented to our valuable volunteers. The recipient of the Administration award went to Heather Wright for her work as our Gift Shop Manager. The Equipment Department award went to our Vice-President, Martin Caestecker, the Facilities Department award went to Jack O'Lexey, the Museum Services Department award went to Dawn Lundquist and the Operations

Department award went to Jim Peterson. (Incidentally, Jim has made it clear that he is willing to go to possibly extreme ends to ensure we don't annul any trains.) Volunteer hours are tracked and tabulated on a monthly basis by Jim Baker and annually he produces a report. I use that report to thank our volunteers, who take the time to fill out the paperwork, at the annual dinner. This year, all in attendance received an additional bar to add to their name tag reflecting the number of hours they volunteered and the year in which those volunteer hours were earned. All those in attendance also received an insulated lunch bag printed with the phrase: More Than Words Can Say You're Appreciated In Every Way. If you have been tracking your hours in 2015 and did not attend the annual dinner, please contact me for your additional hour badge for your name tag.

2017 Annual Dinner date has already been set for Thursday, April 13, 2017 at Tom Ham's Lighthouse. In case you haven't noticed, there is a pattern to the annual dinner dates ever since we celebrated the 50th anniversary of PSRM in 2011. I schedule the dinner for the Thursday closest to April 16th as that is the official anniversary date of the museum. Alanna Hyatt and I will continue with assigning a theme to the dinner; if you have suggestions or would like to help with next year's dinner, please contact me at dhyatt@psrm.org. One thought is a Caddy Shack theme where attendees can arrive dressed in loud-patterned, polyester golf clothing from the 1980's.

Proud Mom Moment: Interest in becoming a qualified and/or certified

operations crew member seems to have passed my oldest son by, but my daughter Alanna, at the age of 16, recently became a qualified motorcar operator. To my knowledge, she should be the youngest female to qualify for motorcar, just as her mother was the first female qualified brakeman for PSRM at the age of 19; seems like it was only last year.

The SDAE First Quarter Reporting and Board of Directors Meeting took place on Tuesday, April 12, 2016. Every quarter PSRM is required to compile quarterly income produced from SDAE property: excursion train income and gift shop sales. This also provides me the opportunity for a performance review. Fortunately, I am happy to report that the first quarter of 2016 has seen a steady increase in both ridership numbers and income. Here is the summary for the first quarter of the past six years:

- 2,380 passengers first quarter 2016; \$40,316
- 2,333 passengers first quarter 2015; \$36,462
- 2,223 passengers first quarter 2014; \$36,566
- 3,081 passengers first quarter 2013; \$20,932
- 3,001 passengers first quarter 2012; \$27,281
- 924 passengers first quarter 2011; \$19,192

In 2012 and 2013 we chose to advertise through Groupon based on our abysmal ridership numbers from previous years. As you can see ridership increased significantly but we were

also finding that many Groupon customers were not spending money or a very minimal amount in the Gift Shop. Fortunately, our ridership levels have slowly increased since the "peak" of 2012 and 2013.

After discussing the potential with our board at the March PSRM Board of Directors meeting, I approached the SDAE board with a request to draft a property lease between SDAE, MTS and PSRM for the Jacumba Depot. The request was received favorably and I hope I will have an update on our progress in the next issue.

The Camp Lockett Interest Group has been meeting monthly for two years. It is comprised of the five non-profit organizations in Campo and was established with the goal of interpreting Camp Lockett history and establishing a central village area. Last June the Rancho Del Campo/Del Rayo boys honor camp was closed by the County of San Diego. CLIG had expressed interest in this property to Supervisor Jacob prior to its closure. Consequently, CLIG was offered all of the County-owned parcels no longer being used within this region of Campo. Free land is a wonderful thing but there are many problems with such a prospect, most particularly: zoning, property tax and the presence of contaminants, waste products and condemnable structures. After months of meetings it was decided that the core of the Rancho Del Campo and Rancho Del Rayo area would be assumed by Mountain Health and Community Services and they will share some facilities with the Mountain Empire School District.

Camp Lockett Event and Equestrian Facility has already received over 100 acres from the County adjacent to their existing facility.

PSRM is expected to receive the remainder of the parcels totaling a little over 100 acres. The most important piece is the 5.65 acres east and adjacent to PSRM property purchased from Larry Bangs and north northwest of the 2 acres owned by the Motor Transport Museum on Sheridan Road. The majority of property PSRM will be receiving is situated on the south side of State Highway 94 and has an average slope of sixty percent. It will be primarily preserved as open space with some hiking trails planned. However, the northeast edge of the property happens to be the site of the original Campo Hotel.

This venture also ties in with the Museum Overlay we are pursuing with the County. Rather than apply for a Major Use Permit, which can run \$100,000-\$200,000 or more and possibly necessitate re-zoning PSRM property, PSRM is proposing a Museum Overlay which would allow our organization and the other four non-profits in Campo the ability to pursue goals which are not necessarily aligned with our current zoning such as campgrounds, a hotel, restaurant, theater, etc. Supervisor Dianne Jacob is aware of the need for the property transfer and the Museum Overlay to closely follow one another in order for the plans of the local non-profits to move forward. Stay tuned for more information on this to follow. ►

New Concrete floor in the Shop Building

By Jim Lundquist, museum Services Director

Thanks to a County of San Diego grant, a part of our dirt floor inside the Shop Building for a portion of track 12 and all of track 13 will be getting a new concrete floor. The work involves shop clean-up, removing the old rail and ties, removing excess dirt and compacting the dirt, digging out for a grade beam under the rails, setting forms and rebar, pouring concrete, installing bolts, relaying the rails, welding on steel flange-ways, pouring a concrete

slab and sealing the concrete. At press time for this *Hot Scoop*, we had completed the tasks up through digging for grade beams. Our thanks go to Robbie Smith for being the boss for the project to date, overseeing the work and working a shovel two days, including a day off from work when the project went long. Assisting Robbie have been Earl Soladay and new member Darrell Preston, plus Ron & Diana Hyatt and family, Glen Rogers, Martin Caestecker and Dick Pennick with Jim and Dawn Lundquist transporting materials and an excavator. Brian Elmore will take over the concrete portion of the job. ►

IN MEMORIAM -- John Albert Ashman (Aug. 8, 1940 - Aug. 9, 2015)

Former PSRMA member, John Ashman, took his final ride to "The Big Rock Candy Mountain" on Sunday, August 9, 2015, at his home in Mena, Arkansas, a day after celebrating his 75th birthday.

John was born August 8, 1940 in Plum, W. Virginia. He joined the Navy in 1957, was a Vietnam veteran and served on nine WestPac cruises in addition to a couple of tours with the West German Navy. He retired in 1989 as a Master Chief Boiler Technician.

John was a real "train nut." His favorite road was the Central Railroad of New Jersey and was often noted wearing a ball cap with the logo of the CNJ. He eventually discovered PSRMA in the fall of 1977, when our organization was temporarily occupying the mile of military track on board Naval Air Station, Miramar (now Marine Corps Air Station, Miramar.) With sons Jeff and Joe, he jumped in on the restoration of our lovable ex-Feather River Railway Shay geared steam locomotive No. 3 (now operating as a coal-burner on the State of West Virginia's all-steam Cass Scenic Railway as No. 11).

He wrote his first by-line for our member newsletter, *REPORT*, that appeared in the April, 1978 issue, reporting on the air station's Public Works Dept. borrowing our 1941 General Electric 45-ton diesel switcher No. 7485 to sub for the base's 44-ton switcher for a few days while it was in the shop. After the

resignation of the museum's late Superintendent, Norman Hill, due to job and family commitments in Orange County, Ashman was appointed to fill the position.

John wasted no time getting comfortable in his new position, although still active duty Navy (the U.S. Navy, and other military disciplines, encourage volunteer involvement by their personnel). Soon, he was making new stainless steel cylinder head covers for the Shay, helped replace the roofs on our 1941 Akron, Canton & Youngstown R.R. single-sheathed wooden boxcar and the Fruit Growers Express refrigerator car. He also helped prepare our 4-bedroom 1926 Pullman "Robert Peary" for service behind Amtrak trains.

When member Norm Hill returned to San Diego in January, 1980, John relinquished his Superintendent position to Hill, and Ashman was appointed PSRMA Vice-President & General Manager. On April 5, 1980, Shay No. 3 was fired up for the first time in 8 years, and Ashman and member Ken Helm and others shared the firing and engineer duties on the air station rail line, pulling cars full of Naval personnel for free. That summer, John and member Robert "Robbie" Smith prepared our two 0-6-0 saddletank switchers (No. 3 & No. 10), long-stored at the Orange Empire Railway Museum in Perris, for painting and re-lettering.

Before being reassigned to the German Navy in 1981, he helped prepare

our 45-ton diesel for temporary service as the shop switcher for the Metropolitan Transit Development Board's new trolley shops at the foot of 12th Street in San Diego. Ashman returned to San Diego in the spring of 1983, in time to join the crew preparing all of our collected museum rolling stock for movement to our new Campo museum site between July and August that year.

On Jan. 1, 1984, John was appointed the museum's Superintendent & Chief Mechanical Officer of the Operations Dept. and was involved in the acquisition of the 80-ton crane used to dismantle our historic old Santa Fe gantry crane in downtown San Diego (now located at Campo.) He supervised the rehabilitation of our Oregon steam logging locomotive, ex-Coos Bay Lumber Co. No. 11 (now being re-restored by the museum's steam group), and was involved in its first operating steam-up since 1962, on Memorial Day weekend in 1984 and the Father's Day barbeque in June, 1984.

In anticipation of PSRMA actually being allowed to operate real trains on a portion of the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway, beginning in January of 1986, John and others put together a series of instructional classes to prepare potential train crew members for their required duties. These classes were offered as a part of the Adult Education program at San Diego High School during the spring of 1985. John retired from the Navy in 1989 and hired out to

SDIV, the contract freight operator on the SD&AE Railway as a transportation specialist. In 2002, John and his wife of 41 years, Roberta Marlene Ashman, packed up and moved to a 33 acre farm in Mena, Arkansas, a small town near the Oklahoma border, 55 miles south of Ft. Smith, on

the Kansas City Southern rail line (which ran past his front yard).

John was also a member of the Scottish Railway Preservation Society, the Kansas City Southern Historical Society and the Ft. Smith Trolley Museum. Over the years, he volunteered as a Little League and softball

coach, Boy Scout leader, and other community causes. He leaves behind his wife, Marlene, his sons Joseph & Jeffrey and daughter Amy King.

(Contributed by Dick Pennick, with help from the Ashman family, Ken Williamson, Dick Ruppert, Jim Lundquist and others). ►

Maintenance of Way

by Glen Rogers, Roadmaster

On Friday, April 1st at 0830 some experienced and some not-so-experienced volunteers arrived for a safety and work briefing prior to beginning work on a problem area on track #12 outside the Car barn. Six weak ties were removed and replaced with new ones and hand-tamped in place. Once the track was spiked down, gauge rods were used to pull in the opposite rail; the gauge had widened from 4' 8½" to 4' 10". With the gauge rods in place and tightened, the gauge was back to 4' 8½" on tangent track and 4' 8¾" through the curve. A broken composition joint bar in the same area of the yard was removed; what makes

this joint bar so difficult to replace is that it is at a transition that joins 60 pound rail to 90 pound rail, a very rare size difference and difficult to align. These tasks required a tremendous individual and group effort. Our crew for the day was Foreman James Caestecker who gave a good deal of the necessary instructions to Ron Myer, Rob Stebbins, Mike and Candy Obetz and myself. A full days hard work from everyone!

The following day, Saturday, Foreman James Caestecker conducted an extensive search, under trees and other piles of things, locating the proper joint bar set: 60 pound to 90 pound. Along with his crew, Mike

and Candy Obetz, Jarod Black, Rob Stebbins and Austin McAdams they were able, with the aid of four track jacks, to wrestle the track and joint bars into place. This was a huge effort by very determined leadership and crew returning track #12 to service.

I would like to thank all our mow volunteer crew members, old hands and new, for tough jobs well done. We recently purchased a truck load of new ties in order to facilitate our ongoing tie replacement in the coming year. We will be calling on interested members to help with track work when we have the CDF fire crews working on the main line and more work in the yard. ►

Museum Services Report

By Jim Lundquist, Museum Services Director

Another busy two months of progress in the Museum Services Department.

On Friday, April 15th, we hosted 210 adults and school children from a school in Alpine. Everyone enjoyed the train ride and the tour through the Display Building. The new signs and Signal Science exhibits were a real hit. On the train were Jim Baker, Glen Rogers, Dawn Lundquist and Jim Lundquist as Docents for the four car train. All of us were in the Display Building also. Many of our visitors were seen hours later totally enjoying our museum. That day, the Union-Tribune newspaper also sent up a photographer and reporter who wrote a glowing article on our Museum which was published on April 19th. If you didn't get a chance to see the article, look it up on the internet. It was very well done and praised the work we have all been doing with our Museum.

In library news, Bruce Semelsberger reports that we have received a number of donations of materials including books, magazines, posters, stock certificates, videos and artifacts. Randy Houk gave us digital copies of several



Roadmaster Glen Rogers acting as docent for the school train.

Frank Denison

videos he shot during events and excursions at PSRM along with a program to view the files and make DVD copies. Bob Underhill obtained for us the 1964 SD&A bridge inspection book from eBay to go with the 1959-1963 set we are supposed to have but can't find since the move from downtown. If anyone knows where it might be, please let me know! Most recently we received the loan of a family scrapbook from members in Oakland, one of whom is a descendant of a member of an SD&A survey party which worked in Campo and in the Gorge between 1909 and 1915. I have scanned all of the railroad photos and am now working on digitally enhancing to remove the effects of fading over a century of storage. When completed, we can compare them with a previously acquired set from another surveyor named Butler Boyd to see if they worked on some of the same projects. We also continue to receive research requests via our newly enhanced web site; some we can provide information and some we just don't have the data. Among recent topics: a Santa Fe spur track in the Los Angeles area (no data), the spout from the water tank at Dos Cabezas (no drawings or other information), the acquisition of SD&A locomotives 24-27 from the Las Vegas & Tonapah Railroad (enough information for a whole article which I plan to write soon and the original California Southern right-of-way through Torrey Pines State Park (some pretty good info on that one also). Speaking of the recent history symposium: Most of the library staff was on hand to accept an award for our collection from the San Diego Congress of History! There will be a write-up in the next issue of the newsletter available on the Congress website. Bruce also made a presentation on the selling of Ocean Beach and the little-known Ocean Beach Railroad at the April 21 meeting of the Ocean Beach Historical Society. We also continue to log in donations to our database, reorganize and shelve books and other documents and transfer corporate records into acid-free storage boxes. Bruce spent a day searching for lost SD&A materials. He discovered that some of the helpers we had in the early days of labeling boxes had mistakenly applied a label that only pertained to one item in a mixed box and didn't display the actual SD&A file numbers within, so most of the day was spent moving, re-packing and re-labeling heavy boxes of files. I hope we find some younger eager volunteers with library science degrees before all of the current staff get too old to do this stuff. Soon. The expansion of the Library is underway with the first concrete pours scheduled for next month.

In the Display Building, Dawn and Jim have been busy cleaning, preparing display cases and organizing the layout again after special events. We continue adding signage and are in the middle of putting together an exhibit of the railroads uniting the states using signs reproduced signs from major railroad events and an exhibit of passenger trains serving Southern California through Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal. Recently, the video exhibit of the Santa Fe's Super Chief has been added. New steel stairs are being completed which will allow access to the Railway Post Office car and Southern Pacific #2353 to replace the wooden stairs. The fresh concrete was also sealed.

All the life members are now recognized on plaques inside the Campo Depot Waiting room and a replacement plaque is in the works for our Gold Spike Life members.

Many thanks go to Ken Brown and Robbie Smith for their continued maintenance and care of our Signal Science exhibits. Also, thanks to Bruce Deck for the same effort on the model train exhibit.

Finally, I would like to thank all the members who were able to attend the Annual Dinner, and to Frank Denison for the year in review video. It was great fun. The Museum Services Department Volunteer of the Year Award went to Dawn Lundquist. Dawn is seen regularly at Campo on Friday, Saturday and/or Sunday assisting with new displays, cleaning and helping with the designs for new exhibits. During the week, she also regularly makes trips to various stores and sign companies assisting Jim Lundquist with making our museum better and better. Congratulations Dawn. Next year's Annual Dinner is on April 13th at Tom Ham's Lighthouse. Mark it on your calendars now and plan on being there. ►

New Members March & April 2016

By Alex Fiori, Membership

March

- Geraldine Losch
- Andrew & Nancy Andretta
- Wanda Liebig
- Robin & Mike Allen
- Michael Radashkevich
- Darrell Preston
- Ronald Roman
- Emma Kettering
- Christopher Freeman

- Craig & Susan Neville
- Marla Roche
- Randy Walter
- Paul Schuch
- Edward Zwibel
- Stephen Dillon
- Jason Eddy
- Mathew Friesen
- Richard & Betsey

April

- Robert Marin
- Peter Fruean
- Kevin Corrigan
- Shawna Cully
- Adrienne Butters
- Toby Espinola
- Mark Fogerty
- Annie Lennon
- Kelly Jordan
- Miguel & Sandra Aguirre-Compton
- Jarod Black
- James Thornhill
- Shinao Hazlett
- Zac Wheeler
- Felix Zavala
- Robert Griffin
- Herbie Seabrooks

- Mark Davis
- Michael Shipman
- Larry Gragson
- Gary Routh
- Tim Austin
- Greg Shue
- Owen Boggein
- Ava Guerra
- Ely Huang
- Petra Colson
- Neil Bucken
- Troy Dailey
- Terry Thayer
- Thomas Calabrese
- Alayn Yasay
- Bree Stevens
- Stephany Nguyen
- Haydee Perez
- Francisco Castaneda
- Joerg Beland

New Life Members

- James Peterson
- Trent Davalos

Thank you all for joining the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum! ►

PSRM Gets the Bird

By Diana Hyatt

(The Imperial Bird that is)

More than ten years ago, Ron and I were invited to tour the collection of rolling stock belonging to the Pacific Railroad Society that resided on three tracks in Commerce, CA. There was a beautiful collection of primarily, passenger rail equipment including the last Santa Fe RDC (Budd Rail Diesel Car) and the Pullman 4-4-2 sleeper Imperial Bird. At that time, it was suggested that PSRM might be interested in the Imperial Bird but PSRM was not in a financial position to move the car and PRS was not yet ready to relinquish the Bird. Jumping to the second half of 2015, PSRM received word that PRS was now in a position to consider disposing of some of its rolling stock at Commerce. Rumor had it that the equipment may be cut up in place for scrap; this immediately mobilized our interest in assisting PRS in finding good homes for its surplus equipment. As it turned out, the Imperial Bird had already been promised to the San Bernardino History and Railroad Museum and the Santa Fe RDC had been promised to Orange Empire Railway Museum.

Being the persistent president that I am, I decided to continue following up on the disposition of things. In December I was informed that SBHRM had withdrawn their interest in acquiring the Imperial Bird and I wrote a Letter of Intent on behalf of PSRM, to the PRS board regarding our interest in acquiring the Imperial Bird for our museum in Campo. The Letter was favorably received and logistical plans took shape, primarily driven by Ron Hyatt, Robbie Smith and myself. In January, 2016 a budget was submitted to the Board outlining the preferred and most cost effective means of moving the Bird to Campo. The move would involve removing the Waukesha ice engine and fuel tanks as well as the truck center pins from both ends of the car in advance of the house moving company's arrival. Ron Hyatt, Robbie Smith and Martin Caestecker traveled to Commerce on Sunday, February 28th to prep the car

for loading as well as removing trees and opening a chain link gate that had been closed for thirty years. On Sunday, March 6th Ron, Robert, Martin and Aaron Hyatt headed to Commerce to continue work with the intent of having everything ready for the house movers by Tuesday morning. I arrived with Alanna Hyatt, the official photographer for this move and Ian Hyatt, one of the tool gofers.

John Shannon joined the crew on Tuesday assisting where needed. The house movers cribbed up the vestibule end of the car, using jacks to elevate the car, the trucks were rolled out and the end of the car placed on a steerable, rubber-tired dolly. Literally inching along to pull the car out using a heavy-duty forklift, our progress was measured in feet for the day. John Shannon joined the crew again on Wednesday morning; the day began by cribbing up the other end of the car, jacking it up to roll the trucks out and lowering it onto two temporary dollies. Because of the height difference between the yard track and the parking lot, the car required extra cribbing on one side to keep it level and from tipping over; this took some time. Once everything was ready, two forklifts were used, one pulling the rear end and the other forklift was steering the 85 foot car and turning a hard right into the parking lot in order to clear the warehouse situated perpendicular to the tracks. There were many tense moments and multiple contact points to look out for: fence posts on both sides of the car, the Southern Pacific combine parallel to the Bird and the warehouse building. After a very long day, the Imperial Bird was out of the yard and sitting in a parking lot on temporary house moving dollies.

Thursday morning brought more work to be done as the car was elevated onto cribbing once again and I-beams were placed under each end of the car to make jacking easier. Also, on this day, the trucks were loaded onto a flat-bed trailer using two forklifts. Each truck weighed 18,000 pounds and both forklifts were needed to load one set. The house movers measured the trucks' overhang on the flatbed trailer and declared their width to be 120" which would require a wide load permit; even applying for the permit on Friday meant the trucks wouldn't move any sooner than Monday or Tuesday. This meant the Imperial Bird would arrive at Campo without trucks to place it upon. Our crack Equipment Department was determined to avoid this, and on Friday morning Ron and Robbie set out removing all four brake pistons and brake levers. John Shannon and Martin Caestecker arrived Friday night to assist the effort. John and Martin worked until 1:00 am on Saturday morning. Ron, Robbie and Aaron continued to work until 3:30 am. All these people labored in the rain and dark to make sure the job got done.

Meanwhile, the sub-contracted transport company arrived Friday morning with a standard low-bed with an attached swivel-point and a scraper dolly. The swivel-point acted as a receiver for the center plate on the underside of the car body – very similar to the way a fifth wheel and receiver work. The truck backed the modified low-bed trailer under the leading end of the Bird. The I-beam and cribbing was slowly removed and the car body lowered onto the low-boy. Then the scraper dolly was positioned under the trailing end of the car and lowered onto it and secured. When the I-beams and cribbing were removed, the car body acted as the trailer; with the added benefit of



The Imperial Bird on the dollies and ready to hit the road.
Alanna Hyatt

keeping its clearance at an appropriate height, not requiring an over-sized permit. All morning, we were operating under a statement by the transport company that if it started to rain, the move would have to be re-scheduled (rain was prominently in the forecast). The Bird set out from its home in Commerce just before 1:00 pm (on a Friday afternoon) as it started to pour down rain. Alanna, Ian and I followed the pilot truck behind the Bird. We were routed through two lane surface streets for an hour before entering the freeway and heading south. It rained non-stop to San Onofre where the truck pulled off the highway at Basilone Road for a short break. From there, it was a non-stop trip to San Diego's east county where the Bird was parked on the south side of Interstate 8 between Greenfield Dr. and Los Coches Rd. around 6:00 PM.

Saturday morning at 10:00 am Cary, Alanna, Ian and I returned to meet up with the truck driver and follow the Bird to Campo. Other than the slow pull up the grade to the 4,000 foot level, the drive didn't take long. We pulled into

the main driveway off Forrest Gate Road at about 11:30 am and I instructed the driver to hold short in the parking lot. In the meantime, Robbie had left from Commerce around 8:00 AM following the driver with the Bird's trucks on the flatbed trailer. We needed to unload the trucks using the Santa Fe gantry crane; this was accomplished by Ron, Robbie, John and Charles Smith. Ron then used the railcar mover to move the trucks, in the proper order and position from the upper yard to track 1 in the lower yard. As fate would have it, our truck driver with the Bird move refused to drive past the Section House to track one citing the drainage ditch as too narrow for him to cross. The transport company detached their truck from the Bird and left it in our parking lot and went home; requesting their lowboy and scraper dolly be ready for pickup the following day.

The remainder of Saturday was spent clearing all the rolling stock off of track 1 and clearing a path from track 10 under the Gantry Crane to track 1. Sunday arrived and the Bird needed to be transferred from the lowboy and scraper dolly back to the house moving dollies. The car body was cribbed and jacked yet again, and the lowboy trailer and scraper dolly pulled out by Robbie with the museum's forklift. The house moving dollies were again placed under the car body and the cribbing removed. Robbie towed the Bird from the parking lot past the Campo Depot, workamper pad and Section House onto the newly graded area of track 1. On Monday, the fun continued: cribbing was again placed under the car body and jacks utilized in order to remove the house moving dollies. Adjustments were made and each truck was pushed under the car and lowered, one end at a time, aligning the center plate on the underside of the car body with the bolster on the truck, this was nearly a precision maneuver. Finally, the Imperial Bird was sitting on its own trucks once again! Robbie brought SDA 7285 down to track 1 and we attempted to make a joint. As with everything else, that didn't quite go as planned and we couldn't seem to get the pin to drop. After multiple attempts and adjustments, it passed the "double-stretch" test our train crew is familiar with and we took it up to the Car barn and placed it inside on track 13 as we knew it had a leak in the roof and it needed additional TLC that we would accomplish over the next several weekends.

Many volunteers gave up a substantial amount of time and effort to ensure every aspect of this move was supervised. Ron and Robbie took a week off from their full-time jobs, John Shannon and Martin Caestecker helped out as they could between their work schedules and I left a household of work behind for our oldest son who kept the animals alive while we were gone. Alanna, Aaron and Ian took a week off from school as I felt this was an educational experience. It is quite an accomplishment to move an 85 foot, 65+/- ton passenger car by truck but the fact of the matter is, even if Mexico or the Desert Line were traversable, Class One railroads have no interest in specialty moves like these; considering we are still waiting for a call back from the Union Pacific, I believe we made the right choice and the more financially affordable choice. Ron, Robbie and I have learned quite a lot over the years in moving railroad equipment: from the Santa Fe S-2 donated to us by CSRM that moved on a heavy duty flat car modified with rails from Sacramento, to the GE 70 tonner we purchased from a broker thanks to a significant donation by Larry Rose, and trucked from Modesto, to the low-nose GP-9 we craned onto a lowboy and trucked from Oceanside to the last two SDAE steel boxcars trucked from SDTI in San Diego. It is a privilege and an honor to have been selected by PRS as the new caretaker of the Imperial Bird and we are very grateful to them and their membership. The next step for the Bird will be an interior cleaning, although it is in very good condition, and setting it up as an interpretive display inside the Display Building for the public to tour. Time and funds permitting, the Bird will also receive some bodywork and a new paint job. Stay tuned for Part II in the July-August issue of the Hot Scoop in which I will detail the history of the Imperial Bird. ►



The Imperial Bird enters museum property for the very first time.

Alann Hyatt

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