

HOT ***SCOOP***

A publication dedicated to Pacific Southwest Railway Museum members
June 2020





**Pacific Southwest
Railway Museum
Association Inc.**
www.psrmm.org

Train Operations

PSRM Campo Depot
State Hwy. 94 at Forrest Gate Rd.
Campo, CA, 619-478-9937
Lat: 32°36.8"N Lon: 116°28.2"W
Open weekend 9AM to 5PM
See website for complete train
schedule.

La Mesa Depot Museum & Business Office

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

PSRMA Board of Directors
Meetings are held on the 3rd Fri-
day of the month at 6:30 PM,
Trinity Church, 3902 Kenwood
Drive, Spring Valley, CA 91977

Museum Officers

President: Diana Hyatt
Vice-President: Martin Caestecker
Treasurer: Rob Stebbins
Secretary: Stephen Hager
Equipment: Ron Hyatt
Facilities: Frank Denison
Museum Services: Jim Lundquist
Operations: Mike Edwards

Museum Staff

Certification & Training:
Mike Edwards
Fundraising: Donna Spevack
Gift Shop Mgr: Alanna Hyatt
Historian: Bruce Semelsberger
Hot Scoop Editor: Alanna Hyatt
Membership: Alex Fiori
Photographer: Alanna Hyatt
Special Events: Diana Hyatt
Steam Foreman: Jim Baker

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**Stephen Hager works on the
SD&A 7285 airbrakes**

Alanna Hyatt



From the Back Platform

By Diana Hyatt, President

The month of May began uneventfully but ended shockingly. Most reading this know the state of affairs right now but I would like to recant for future readers of this publication who will lack context and those who do not reside in San Diego County.

During May the shelter-in-place quarantine order continued in California. The shelter-in-place quarantine was believed to be a legitimate solution to 'flatten the curve' as America's health care system was unprepared to respond to a mass pandemic that this virus could create as it spread through the population.

Grocery stores, gas stations, convenience stores and restaurants (take-out and drive-thru only) had been allowed to continue operations during the quarantine with increased requirements such as mask-wearing by all, increased sanitation of high-touch surfaces and social distancing (maintaining a minimum distance of six feet from others). As the month wore on, phase two went into motion and a few more types of businesses were allowed to reopen. As May ended parks, beaches and hiking trails were reopened with restrictions.

Then, in Minneapolis on May 25, 2020 an African Ameri-

can man named George Floyd was detained by police officers, one of whom used a chokehold that resulted in him dying in custody. Two days later an African American man was cited at the Grossmont Trolley Station for smoking in public. Many people with smart phones were on-hand to upload portions of the encounter to social media. This is where La Mesa suddenly hit the limelight.

On Saturday afternoon, May 30, 2020 a peaceful protest of several hundred people descended upon La Mesa and walked down the onramp to Interstate 8 eastbound and crossed over to Interstate 8 westbound around 3:30pm shutting the freeway down in both directions. At some point later in the afternoon, attempts were made to disband the protestors. At this point the protest turned into a riot and dozens of businesses were vandalized and looted, vehicles set ablaze, and several large buildings were burned to the ground. American flags were taken down at the La Mesa Police Department and the La Mesa VFW and burned. The La Mesa Depot received relatively little attention from the rioters until after midnight.

A group of opportunists broke the only glass window next to an exterior door and



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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 Heritage Rail Alliance 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.

were foiled at entry, thanks to the double-keyed dead-bolt. Another attempt at entry was made at the main door where the upper right door panel was broken through and again the perpetrators were foiled at entry by the double-keyed dead-bolt on that door. At this point it seems someone had a blow torch and was using it on the bottom right of the door melting the paint off and attempting to set fire to the La Mesa Depot. There is another rumor an attempt was made to set off explosives underneath the 1941 Southern Pacific caboose. Fortunately, in both scenarios, La Mesa Depot neighbors on the same street and their friends intervened to save this historic structure, dating to 1894. One of these heroes was a young lady and veteran of the U.S. Military, Cheyenne Navarro who ended up briefly in the hospital for her efforts. On Sunday, June 7, 2020 Cheyenne was recognized by PSRM with a gold chromed spike and by the grateful community with a beautiful basket of items. There was a second lady recognized there also, her name is Julee and she tried saving the historic art-deco Randall

Lamb & Associates building from fire. Unfortunately, this building that was lovingly restored over ten years ago by the local-based architectural firm, was burned by rioters who broke all the huge glass panes in the front then proceeded to pile up office chairs, paper and desks and set them on fire.

On the bright side, starting at around 6:30 am Sunday morning, May 31, 2020 hundreds of La Mesans were out in force with paint, wood, brooms, dustpans, trash bags and tools to clean up businesses where even the business owners had not been yet. Our 1957 PFE reefer had been tagged on the trackside with black spray paint and these wonderful people had already cleaned it off before PSRM personnel arrived. Attempts at boarding the broken window were made and glass, splinters and trash had been swept up. It was heartwarming and impressive to witness the response from the residents of La Mesa; they are proud of their community and have proven they want to help with other vandalism incidents we have had in the past.

For the next two

weeks, it was recommended by neighbors that PSRM try to keep some people on the property every afternoon and evening. Thank you to the individuals who took the time to patrol and protect the Depot: **Jim Baker, David Black, Travus Clark, Cary Hyatt, Jim Lundquist, Mike McIntyre, Glen Rogers, Gabe Zorbas** and myself.

WHEN WILL THE MUSEUM OPEN?!

Your Board has been discussing when the museum will open again for some time. After much discussion and with some review and research, the date being aimed for is Saturday, July 18, 2020. The Gift Shop, Campo Depot public restrooms, Display Building (without interior access to the rolling stock) and outdoor grounds will be open to the public. Caboose rides will be offered every half hour or on an as-needed basis with a crew break for lunch around noon. Mask wearing will be required by all visitors and volunteers within the public areas.

At this time, the La Mesa Depot re-opening date has not been determined. ►

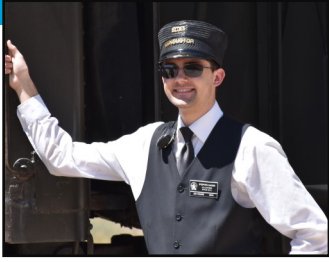
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

to assist with the COVID-19-Compliant
reopening and operation at our Campo facility

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Construction of a plexiglass barrier for Gift Shop | R Hyatt |
| 2. Signage at Campo Depot | Denison |
| 3. Procuring hand sanitizer/sanitizing wipes/atomizing
spray cleaners/masks and setting up hand sanitizer
stations | R & D Hyatt |
| 4. Procuring temperature scanner and setting up scanning
and check-in station | Edwards &
R & D Hyatt |
| 5. Reviewing County Health screening requirements and
revising existing sign-in sheets | M & J Caestecker |
| 6. Procuring drop-box for sign-in sheets | R Hyatt &
Caestecker |
| 7. Assembling County Safe Reopening Plan | Hager |
| 8. Creating and posting required signage at entrance and
other locations as required | Lundquist |
| 9. Procuring and installing channelizers and social
distancing marks in Display Building | Lundquist |
| 10. Completing miscellaneous equipment work to enable
train operations | R Hyatt,
Caestecker |
| 11. Reviewing enhanced screening procedures and procuring
screening forms for cab rides and EFAH | R Hyatt |

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Diana Hyatt	dhyatt@psrm.org
Martin Caestecker	mjcaestecker@psrm.org
Stephen Hager	hager@psrm.org
Ron Hyatt	ronhyatt@aol.com
Frank Denison	denisoniv@gmail.com
Jim Lundquist	jimlundquist@gmail.com
Mike Edwards	traindancer169@hotmail.com



Board Briefs, May 2020

By Stephen Hager, Secretary

The Board held its May 2020 meeting on the 15th. Like the past two months, this meeting was held telephonically due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Directors attending were Diana Hyatt, Martin Caestecker, Stephen Hager, Rob Stebbins, Ron Hyatt, and Frank Denison.

Rob gave his usual treasurer's report with special emphasis on the museum's cash flow situation due to the pandemic-related closure. Net expenses for the month of April were \$7,000, and net year-to-date expenses as of April 30th were approximately \$31,000. Overall, this is not too bad considering that the museum has been closed for two months. The board has acted to cut all non-essential spending from the general fund, with only grant-funded and restricted fund expenditures continuing at this time.

I gave an update on our search for the as-built draw-

ings for the bridges at Division and Dog Patch. We have located the Division as-built drawings and learned that the Dog Patch bridge is a Southern Pacific common standard 30' steel plate girder bridge. Once we have all of the required drawings, it will be possible to have an engineering firm generate load ratings for the bridges without needing to do extensive field measurements on each bridge. Along with annual inspections, these load ratings will allow us to put the bridges back into service and facilitate the move of the Coaster locomotives to Campo sometime in the next year.

The board reviewed a proposal by Jim Lundquist to cancel the account for one of the water meters at Campo. There are three county water meters that serve the property. Two of these are on the same loop, with one supplying nearly no water. The county charges a flat rate of \$65 per month for each me-

ter in addition to the actual water charges. The board agreed to cancel the water account for the one meter, which will save the museum \$780 per year.

The board discussed plans for reopening the museum. Once the county permits businesses like our museum to reopen, the biggest challenges will be access to cleaning supplies, cleaning and sanitation procedures, and compliance with social distancing requirements aboard our trains. Ron Hyatt has been reviewing federal guidance and the procedures in use at Amtrak. As of the meeting, the board agreed that it was too early to set a reopening date for the museum, but agreed to hold a discussion specifically pertaining to reopening before the June board meeting.

The board also discussed changes to the 2020 election procedure. Typically, one month is given for those wishing to run for election to

gather 10 signatures on a nomination form in order to appear on the ballot. In light of social distancing, the board decided to extend the

nomination period and change the forms so that each supporter can individually fill out a nomination form and send to the nomi-

nee. More details on the revised procedure have been published in a separate Hot Scoop article. ►



How Campo become the home of our railway museum

by Jim Lundquist, Director of Museum Services

Within San Diego County, how was the community of Campo chosen as the home of our railway museum? The answer dates back to the very beginning of our museum, when the founding fathers broke away from another railway history group to establish our museum with one main goal as the objective. Back in 1959, the decision was made to establish an OPERATING railway museum where the public could learn history by actually observing and riding on historic trains. With that as the main driving force, several sites looked promising and were pursued over the next two decades. Each site looked promising, with a new track in the Otay River in a former sand mining plant the strongest possibility. Eventually, all sites didn't result in a new home as

hoped.

In 1979 and 1980, the goal of the new President of the museum was to find and establish a permanent home. At that time, we had our collection in many locations scattered throughout the county and country – from a spur track at MCRD, Miramar Naval Air Station, Perris, Poway, National City, La Mesa, downtown San Diego and Ogden. Our volunteers were busy restoring the La Mesa Depot, some of our equipment, mainline operations of #1509 and Robert Peary behind Amtrak trains. We needed a place where we could build a museum and tracks to allow for the operation of trains, which limited us to locations adjacent to existing tracks to allow for the movement of existing and future acquisitions. All potential sites were exam-

ined.

La Mesa Quarry was great location but a very small and limited site, with future operations on the La Mesa branch of the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway a possibility. The limited space and the possibility of future Trolley operations restricting or eliminating our train operations eliminated this site.

Imperial Beach Road Station – another in-town location, with support from Mayor Brian Bilbray. The site was on the old abandoned Coronado branch line. Again very limited space and being located adjacent to the salt water and the bottom of the San Diego Bay with the resulting damage to our steel equipment eliminated this site.

Several sites were examined along the Escondido Branch

of the old AT&SF Railway. There were concerns of increasing houses nearby and the possibility of future transit trains on the tracks restricting or eliminating our train operations eliminated this site.

The Rose Canyon old AT&SF Railway right-of-way was reviewed, with this in-town location both a positive and negative, with many neighbors on the ridgeline looking down on our site. The concerns of these neighbors who might have expressed opposition to a steam locomotive and our collection in the backyards eliminated this site.

Jacumba was a great potential site, located in a community which was actively seeking our museum. The proposal involved a spur track off the SD&AE Railway crossing the Jacumba Creek, crossing Old Highway 80 to a site adjacent to the Mexican border where the softball field and community center is now located. The potential of operations on the SD&AE was a real plus. The distance, heat and creek/roadway crossing were of great concern.

During this time, in 1980, it was learned that the County

of San Diego was going to be selling the former gymnasium from Camp Lockett in Campo, adjacent to the SD&AE. The community and the County Supervisor were very supportive of our museum. The County put the property up for auction with a minimum bid of \$23,000. The Museum Board authorized a bid. We placed a bid and went to the Board of Supervisors October 22, 1980 meeting where any competitive bids would be disclosed, with open bidding at that meeting. It turns out that we were the only bidders on the building and the 3.65 acres surrounding it were ours, with payments over time to the County. We had our permanent location! (For a complete report on the purchase, visit <https://members.psrn.org/reports/report169/report-169.pdf>)

The original plans were to convert the gym into a shop/display building, with a small depot and parking lot located immediately north of the gym. We received permission and entered into a land lease for property adjacent to the SD&AE Railway upon which we would construct a track as far as the Highway 94 east of Campo.

We hoped that someday we could operate our excursion trains on the SD&AE but that was not an operation at that time due to the ongoing active freight trains over the line. It became immediately obvious that we needed the parcel of land immediately to the north, as we purchased the 4.35 acres from Archie Leach for \$43,500, again, with payments over the years to Archie. Now, we finally had our permanent home with a debt of over \$60,000 and an annual income of about \$10,000, mainly from excursions to Puerto Penasco and other Mexican destinations. Member donations made our museum payments over the next 5 years or so, and we paid off the debt! Campo was our home.

Next was to convert the former gym and property into a museum. We hired a local fencing contractor to fence our eight acres. We then hired Joel Cloud of Hester's Granite Pit (a friend of the museum) to grade the museum. That effort took two weeks of a D-8 tractor and a paddlewheel excavator. As other volunteer projects were completed, work started on the gym building. Af-

ter one last basket into the gym hoops, they came crashing down. The first piece of railway equipment arrived at Campo, a handcar, which was driven by volunteers across the hardwood floor. The Santa Maria Valley railbus was soon to follow. The gym wooden floor was removed, along with showers and locker rooms on both the upper deck and downstairs. The concrete slab under the wooden floor was removed as it was too thin to support railroad tracks. The concrete was broken up by a crushing machine and removed from the building by volunteers with a loaned front end loader after the first large door was installed. Volunteers installed new skin on the old

gym building, along with three large doors on the east end. A few very tired ties and a bit of rail were donated and moved to Campo and installed inside the building and just outside. Next to arrive Campo were two wooden coaches from Poway, RS&S #3 and D&R #14.

Plans were made to install our first tracks off the SD&AE mainline. Permission for a switch was secured, and volunteers poured a concrete collar around a steel pipe to cross a drainage ditch. At this time, the Trolley was lying rail in town, and we secured the donation of old ties along with 60 pound rail off the old Coronado Branch. The Trolley high-rail crane was used by volunteers to pick up the rail

off the branch, with SDG&E donating transportation to Campo. Volunteer Trolley track workers worked side-by-side with museum volunteers to lay track that is now known as track #1. As 800 feet was laid, planning was underway to gather up our equipment around the County and move it to Campo. Damaged track in Mexico had to be repaired first, and included repairs to the long bridge over the Tijuana River, no small feat. Once repaired, we planned to move the majority of our equipment ourselves using our own steam locomotive and volunteers in one day. That effort became a multiday event which has become known as the Great Freight – but that's another story! ►



Old Campo gym



Frank Denison and Jim Lundquist are making repairs to the mine train caboose at Campo. June 4th 2020.

Jim Lundquist

Dawn Lundquist is painting the Mine Train caboose at the Campo Railroad Park and Museum on June 11, 2020.

Jim Lundquist



Our thanks to Chris Herzog who donated this water tank tower from the Barrett Cafe and the contractors doing work for SDG&E for loading the tower. It was hauled to Campo by Jim Lundquist with assistance by Frank Denison on May 21st.

Jim Lundquist



Robert Smith performs repairs on the backhoe

Alanna Hyatt

Stephen Hager works on the SD&A 7285 airbrakes

Alanna Hyatt



Travus Clark works on the wig-wag donated by NCTD

Alanna Hyatt

