

# REPORT

of the

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST RLY. MUSEUM ASSOC.

Issue 12

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## IT'S BEEN A LONG, LONG TIME

There isn't much that can be said other than to report the summer hiatus has been longer than planned, and it's high time that we got the show on the road.

## PSRMA TO MEET SUNDAY

Members and friends are urged to attend the PSRMA meeting this coming Sunday, September 20, 7:30 p.m., in the "Old Library" building in El Cajon.

Drive east into El Cajon on Business Route US 80. After the curve you're on Main Street. Just past the Magnolia signal look for Prescott. Turn right (south) to the "triangle." The "Old Library" is in the center of the "triangle." By bus it's Route E (1 on Sundays).

Agenda will include an excursion report, a "money raising" idea, a museum committee progress report, and discussion of plans for stepped-up activity.

## WHAT HAPPENED TO THE EXCURSIONS?

1. PSRMA "broke even" on the Fallbrook excursion. There is every reason to believe this jaunt was one of the most successful in this area.

2. Santa Fe was slow reporting rates and equipment for the San Diego-Los Angeles-Redondo excursion. Hearing that the Orange Empire Trolley Museum was contemplating a similar trip, Excursion Director Wally Duthie proposed a joint excursion. This was agreed to. Then OET suggested the train be operated over the Harbor District rather than the Redondo branch. This idea was accepted. Again, Santa Fe, undoubtedly for valid reasons, was slow providing the details, and when a report came the date was late and the minimum had been raised. OET requested a cancellation because of a time conflict with the annual meeting. PSRMA looked at the minimum and the date. Cancellation was agreed upon. (It should be noted that because of Santa Fe's hesitancy with excursions at this

time both San Diego area railfan groups have had problems following through with special train trips. RHSofSD in the current Newsletter reported a similar problem with the Perris trip. Apparently, this trip is also cancelled.)

3. San Diego Harbor trip date was pushed back by the Santa Fe delay. This excursion is now set and official announcement awaits only approval of plans by the membership at Sunday's meeting.

4. Wally Duthie is negotiating with officials of the Sonora-Baja California Railroad for another trip across the border. Here again, there are some equipment problems. Outcome remains uncertain.

## A MEMO FROM THE EXCURSION DIRECTOR

The comment has been made that there have been unfortunate conflicts in the excursion schedules of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association and the Railway Historical Society of San Diego.

It should be made clear that PSRMA has at all times tried informally to ascertain RHSofSD excursion plans so that conflicts can be avoided and both groups can proceed with their respective plans.

Obviously the paramount concern is that San Diego area citizens have a well-rounded and well-timed excursion calendar.

It would appear there should be joint consultation on a more formal basis. PSRMA and its members will patronize all excursions. The need is for more fan trips rather than fewer. Therefore, PSRMA seeks consultation on the excursion calendar.

## MUSEUM COMMITTEE

Chairman Walt Hayward reports that he expects to have two 8 mm films of operations at two operating museums available for the next meeting. Your reporter can't find his notes, but he remembers that Walt said one is of the Connecticut Electric Railway operation.

## NEWS ITEMS

We're anxious to issue this Report. Look for news items in the June !! Dispatcher, available in about two weeks. Report - Eric Sanders, editor. Address is 7861 Normal Avenue, La Mesa, California

Editor's comment: We changed our minds again! Here are a few more items!

IN THE GLARE OF THE HEADLIGHT - MORE OWLS

George J. Oliver

On your trip\* today on the Harbor District you will pass a place where an unusual bit of railroading took place some years ago, and may still: a Torrance switch run used to do its work between Torrance and Watson near the time of the "Night Harbor" freight from Los Angeles. As the latter approached the trestle under Vermont Avenue (between Ironsides and Watson) the crew watched to see if several large owls flew from their home under the trestle; if they did the switch engine was gone long enough for the owls to have settled down again, if not the switch engine could be near and the "Night Harbor" governed itself accordingly. Perhaps not in the rule book, but an aid to navigation nevertheless. As Julius Caesar would say: "Bubos non boobos". \*Trip that was indefinitely postponed.

THE SCHOOL HOUSE

In common with most schoolboys your writer has wished to burn down the school house at one time or other, but it had to be years later that he almost ran through the middle of one with #8, the Santa Fe's Fast Mail; gather ye around and ye'll hear:

One night a couple of years ago we had just crossed a Union Pacific spur at Water Street where a 10 mph speed applied and were increasing our speed to the 25mph allowed through Los Angeles and Highland Park when the fireman remarked that a house must be on the move along Marmion Way which parallel the Santa Fe, both curving to the left approaching North Figueroa. However, as we started into the curve the sky suddenly looked like Disneyland on fireworks night as, seemingly, hundreds of fuses arced into the night in all directions; then we could see that the "house" which at first appeared to be on the curved street beyond was really on the side street ahead and right in front of our pilot. At 25mph stopping was no problem, so we watched as the moving crew went on with one of those portable school buildings they can move overnight as needed in various locations.

Two things were never cleared up to us: one, how so many fuses could be lit and thrown so quickly by so few; two, why the moving crew overlooked a nightly train. The fireman and I figured the last as the movers having got an OK to use the crossing as soon as the mail train went by, someone overlooked Third 18, an occasional advance section of #8. As we were on the block of Third 18 there wasn't much time for a slow move across the tracks.

NEWS ITEMS FROM HERE AND THERE

On July 31 Santa Fe trains 70 and 81, the "mail trains," made their final runs..... Hearings on Santa Fe's request to curtail passenger service on the Los Angeles - San Diego run have been completed....Stodelle reports the Salinger special which ran August 29 on Santa Fe southland trackage including stops in Orange and San Diego counties included a two-unit Alco, a lightweight baggage car, and heavyweight: two coaches, club-dormitory car, and 1509.....Newsletter (RHSofSD) reports substantial passenger traffic on Santa Fe. Del Mar specials are doing good business. Newsletter reported one of two sections one day to include 27 cars.....SD&AE "La Mesa branch" trains are running four or five times weekly. Geyer reported seeing the double and triple-headers coupled so that a cab is always in the lead. Newsletter reports that these trains now run without a fireman....Track in Central La Mesa is being re-worked. Appears that with highway construction in the works SD&AE track in central La Mesa will be limited to the through track and a short passing or run-around or storage track. A similar facility is now in service along Fletcher Parkway adjacent to the three industrial spurs.....Southern Pacific in October, unless hearings are called, intends to discontinue passenger service on Mail Trains 39 and 40 west of Phoenix. Your editor reports these vacation jaunts: 1. A ride on the "Redwood" (one locomotive and one combine replaced the damaged RDC), 2. A ride on the El Paso street cars, and 3. a ride on Number 40 from Lordsburg to El Paso, also the mixed Lordsburg to Clifton.