

REPORT

A chronicle of San Diego county rail museum activity

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BACKGROUND

Ten years ago, when the Railway Historical Society was but a handful of interested San Diego railfans meeting informally at each others house, the idea of an operating railroad museum was far-fetched, to say the least. It is true that, even then, they were interested in obtaining some of the railroad and streetcar equipment which was then in existence. But, due to lack of sufficient means of organization, such acquisition, unfortunately, was not possible.

It wasn't until 1959 that the possibility of a "Traveltown"-type of operating and stationary museum exhibit actually began to activate the imaginations of a small group of Society members.

Twelve interested persons met on Oct. 18, 1959 to exchange ideas on the possibility of an operating museum, and attempt to determine a plan of attack. Out of that meeting came many interesting ideas but we were still no closer to a solution. Since that time, several more meetings have been held, the most recent one on Oct. 9, of this year.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Individuals are at present seeking suitable land for the museum project. Realtors are being canvassed. Land owners are being contacted. Every lead, however small, is being followed up. Used railroad rail, spikes, and other hardware is being collected and stockpiled.

Land is the major problem, however, and from recent reports, "problem" is an understatement.

Equipment is relatively plentiful. Even a full size, operating narrow-gauge steam locomotive is available, as is an operating San Francisco streetcar. The streetcar is now stored at Perris, Calif., near Riverside, until a place to store or operate it can be

found in the San Diego area.

Historic San Diego railroad car and streetcar bodies are available in the S.D. area and members are at present working on the acquisition of some of these car bodies, with the intention of eventually providing them with wheels for operation.

Also, the Society is now the owner of U.S. Gypsum' Co.'s 3-foot-gauge "CABIN CAR", a caboose-like affair built on an old flat car in the Company's shops. This car, however, is still in storage at Plaster City, Calif., pending negotiations with the SD & AE Ry. for moving the car to San Diego.

It appears that, ultimately, the operating museum layout would necessarily be standard-gauge for trolley operation and narrow-gauge for steam operation.

The REPORT welcomes any comments.

OFFICIAL NOTICE

The next meeting of the Rail Museum Committee will be held Sunday, Nov. 13, 1960, 7:30 p.m., in the Balboa Park Organ Pavilion office. ALL interested persons are URGED to attend, and share in the privilege of "getting in on the ground floor". If you are interested in helping with the project, but cannot attend the meetings, mail your name, address, and phone to Dick Pennick, Chairman, 8689 Lamar St., Spring Valley, or phone HO#6 8206. The Committee would gratefully appreciate your interest. Remember: Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m.

GRIZZLY FLATS R.R. EXPANDS

Ward Kimball, President & General Manager of this back-yard railroad in San Gabriel, Calif., has recently acquired a flat-car and stock-car from the defunct narrow-gauge Keeler branch of the Southern Pacific, south of Bishop, Calif. He also acquired a narrow-gauge 4-wheel dump-car from a sugar plantation and is rebuilding it into an open-air passenger car. (Cont'd)