

Report

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A MUSEUM IS BORN

by Charles Kent



Our pride and joy! Oil-burning Shay is shown at Perris, California with line shafts removed prior to shipment to San Diego. This engine last operated on Feather River Railway in 1966, where she was Number 3.

-Eric Sanders photo

It all started with a meeting of 12 railfans on October 18, 1959. This small group of railfans discussed railroad museum activity in San Diego County. They decided that there was not enough being done towards the establishment of an operating museum in San Diego County. In short, they talked of the possibility of establishing a rail museum. At that time those on hand agreed that the Railway Historical Society of San Diego would and should be involved in a museum project if one should be initiated.

Even at that early date one of the major hurdles appeared to be the acquisition of land for a museum site. This is still a major problem today—nearly ten years later. Among sites suggested were the National City waterfront, Rose Canyon, Otay Valley and the former street car right-of-way in Balboa Park.

After a few more meetings, some of which were held at the Spreckels Organ Pavilion office, the San Diego County railway museum (now the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association, Inc.) was organized. The SDCRM, which came into being on April 16, 1961, was not affiliated with the Railway Historical Society of San Diego. The first business meeting was held on May 21, 1961.

Believe it or not, the dues for the San Diego County Railway Museum were \$10 per year, or \$1 per month. Looks like we shouldn't complain about the proposed hike to \$10 per year in PSRMA dues!

The officers in that first year were: Lyle Judd, president; Eric Sanders, secretary; and Charles Gerdes, treasurer.

In September, 1961, much interest in obtaining land near Campo was evident in the group. The Campo area has been the