



Coast Mail

News from the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum



Volume 9, Number 1

San Luis Obispo, California, Winter-Spring, 2008

www.slorm.com

La Condesa Arrives in Santa Maria

Early on Monday morning, October 22, 2007 Museum Vice President **Karl Hovanitz** and Treasurer **Dave Rohr** climbed aboard *La Condesa* in Los Angeles for the trip to Guadalupe.

After seemingly endless months of planning and making arrangements, the Countess was pulled out of the spur in Fullerton where she had been parked for over 20 years and coupled to the back of Amtrak train 799 for the trip north.

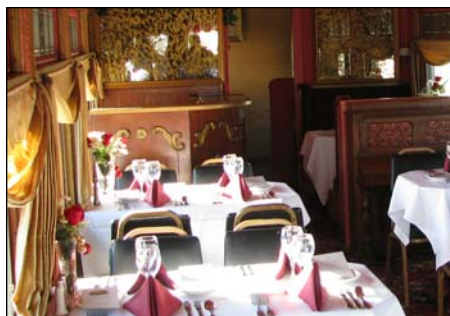
After arriving in Guadalupe around noon, the 1926 Pullman Observation Car was coupled to Santa Maria Valley Railroad's Geep-9 and hauled to Santa Maria where it sits today.



La Condesa speeds across the bean fields, pulled by Santa Maria Valley Railroad's GP-9 number 1801, on its way from Guadalupe to Santa Maria.



After arriving in Santa Maria, La Condesa is parked by the SMVR offices at 628 South McClelland Street in Santa Maria. A line of speeders that were in town for a Motor Car Operators West (MOW) meet can be seen sitting on the adjoining track.



Help Badly Needed

This year's **Pacific Coast Railroad Roundup** has been scheduled for the weekend of May 10th and 11th so it will not be competing with Railroad Days in Fullerton, California. This change of dates will mean that more vendors and visitors from Southern California will attend our event. More Museum Members are needed to contribute their time and energy to make this fund raiser a success. We had a good turnout last year, but we need even more. Please contact **John Marchetti** at janddmarchetti@aol.com or **481-6160** to sign up today.

Track Removal from CMC Completed

The next phase of the track removal project at the California Mens' Colony (CMC) was completed on December 2, 2007. Brad LaRose, Duane Powell, Dave Rohr and Ted VanKlavern, using a crane and forklift provided by

Superior Crane Company, loaded over 300 railroad ties onto a flatbed truck and moved them to the Emily Street Yard. All that remains to be removed from CMC is approximately 7 dump truck loads of ballast.

**Spring
Train Festival**
at the
BITTERCREEK WESTERN
LIVE STEAM RAILROAD
SUNDAY
April 20, 2008
10 am to 4 pm



Mission Statement

The San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum, founded as a non-profit, public benefit educational museum, will preserve the railroad history of California and the Central Coast by collecting, restoring, displaying and operating historic railroad equipment.

SAN LUIS OBISPO RAILROAD MUSEUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brad LaRose *President*
 Karl Hovanitz *Vice President*
 Aron Kahn *Secretary*
 David Rohr *Treasurer*
 Bill Pyper *Newsletter Editor*
 Arnold Jonas, John Marchetti,
 Duane Powell, Frank Rheinisch

Telephone 805-544-6531
 e-mail: info@slorm.com
 web site: www.slorm.com
 Mail to: P.O. Box 13260
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

TIMETABLE

The following is a list of future meetings of the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum. Business meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at the Quality Suites Hotel, 1631 Monterey Street, San Luis Obispo. They begin at 6:00 p.m.

The Program Meeting locations and times will be announced in advance. All meetings are open to the public.

March 11..... *Business Meeting*
**April 20 - Spring Train Festival
 at BitterCreek Western Railroad**
 April 8 *Business Meeting*
**May 10 and 11 — Pacific Coast
 Railroad Roundup**
 May 13 *Business Meeting*

BY-LAWS AVAILABLE

Every member in good standing is entitled to have a copy of the By-laws. In the interest of economy, we have not automatically distributed them to all members. To get a copy,

2

send a #10, self addressed, stamped, envelope to SLORRM, Post Office Box 13260, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.

Thorne Family Photo Collection



Train No. 22 at San Luis Obispo circa 1915. Frank Aston Photography.



Train No. 21 crossing Stenner Creek trestle circa 1915. Frank Aston Photography. Kelsey Thorne, 1912



In the Fall 2006 issue of *Coast Mail* we printed the picture of **Kelsey Thorne**, seen above, which had been given to us along with some railroad photographs without any information about him. We were soon put in contact with Kelsey's son **Charley Thorne**, who is a retired railroader living in San Luis Obispo. Charley told us a little about his father and let us copy some other railroad photos which we published in the Winter 2006 *Coast Mail*.

Noah Bullock, great-grandson of **Kelsey Thorne**, has donated nine railroad photographs to the Museum.

The collection, which dates from about 1915, includes; a picture of the roundhouse shot from Terrace Hill, one photo of a train at SLO depot, four photos of trains on the Stenner Creek trestle. The other four pictures are of a train wreck just north of the Cuesta Grade in 1915.

All of the photographs taken in and around San Luis Obispo are mounted in matts bearing the name of *Frank Aston Photography*. Anybody know who he was? Maybe there are more of his railroad photos lying around.



All of the pictures shown on this page are details electronically cropped from the originals.

Walter Rice

One of the original members of the *Avila Valley Railroad Museum*, now the *San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum*, died December 12, 2007.

Walter E. Rice, Ph.D., was a Cal Poly professor for 36 years. He was well known in academic circles for his innovations in the teaching of Transportation Economics.

He was better known among Museum members and other railfans for his authoring books about rail transportation. He wrote with *Karl Hovanitz*, a book about the Swanton Pacific Railroad. His most recent work, *Rails of California's Central Coast*, will be offered for sale, by the Museum, at this year's Railroad Roundup in May.

A monetary donation was made to SLORRM by **Joe and Janet Kourakis** in honor of **Walter Rice**.

Museum has new Telephone Number

The San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum has a new telephone number.

It is: **805-544-6531**

This new number will enable us to more efficiently respond to enquiries from our members and the public.

New Members Ronald Janney, Will Martin, Cathy Larsen and Kevin O'Roark have become members of SLORRM since the last Coast Mail was published.

Renewals Charles Dockstader, George Wilson, James Holmes and Ronald and Louise Milot have renewed their membership since the last Coast Mail was published.

Donations Monetary donations to SLORRM have been made by Robert and Irene Brown, Charles Dockstader, Dyer Campbell, Henry Myers and Jack Feliciano.

If you're not a member, please join. Your support is needed. Single members pay \$36 per year. A family can join for \$60, a sustaining member pays \$100 per year. Mail to SLORRM, P. O. Box 13260, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406. See below for information about Life Memberships.

Become a Life Member

Membership in SLORRM provides an outlet for any person interested in railroad history, train travel, railroad oriented entertainment and the value of railroading to the community.

Membership is especially designed for those who love trains and wish to educate others, young and old, and who share the dream of building the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum in the 1894 SP Freighthouse, at the San Luis Obispo railroad station.

Life Memberships: receive a special laminated membership card, embroidered patch, enameled pin, the Coast Mail newsletter, and have voting rights for one person for life. *Use current age to calculate amount due.*

0-17 years \$1200 or 5 payments of \$280
 18-39 \$900 or 5 payments of \$220
 40-61 \$600 or 5 payments of \$160
 62 and older \$300 or 5 payments of \$100

HELP! SLORRM is updating its member database using new software. We would like all members who have e-mail to e-mail us at info@slorrm.com so that we can update the records and include more members when we e-mail announcements. This will help reduce printing and mailing costs. The Coast Mail is posted on the slorrm.com web site. If you would rather read it there and not get a paper copy please let us know by e-mail. This too will save money for the Museum.

Editor's Note

For those of you who haven't heard, I moved to Salem, Oregon. Thanks to the wonders of e-mail and modern electronics, I can still write and edit the Coast Mail.

However, not being on the Central Coast makes it more than difficult for me to gather the news. Now, more than ever I need your help keeping up with all the events and happenings involving the Museum.

Please e-mail stories and pictures to me at: rrbill10@comcast.net. Don't worry if you think that your writing skills are less than perfect. I will fix the spelling errors and help the grammar. That's what an editor is supposed to do. Photographs of current events or historic scenes are equally useful. If you e-mail pictures, please put them in **jpeg** format at 300 dpi or more.

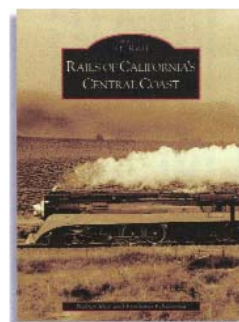
If you're still not comfortable with e-mail, my address is Bill Pyper, Post Office Box 885, Salem, OR 97308.

Family Life Memberships: receive special laminated membership cards for all family members, the Coast Mail newsletter, two enameled pins, two embroidered patches, and voting rights for life for two people residing at the same address. *Use the age of youngest family member to calculate amount due.*

0-17 years of age \$1800 or 5 payments of \$420
 18-39 \$1350 or 5 payments of \$330
 40-61 \$900 or 5 payments of \$240
 62 and older \$450 or 5 payments of \$150

If making payments the life membership card will be sent upon receipt of final payment. Until such time as the life membership is paid in full, the member will receive a yearly membership card. All payments made toward a life membership are non-refundable and failure to make a scheduled payment by the due date will result in forfeiture of all funds paid toward the life membership. Payment plans include yearly member dues.

New Book Out



Rails of California's Central Coast will be for sale at the Railroad Roundup

Authored by transportation historians Emiliano Echeverria and the late Walter Rice (Museum Member), this modest book illustrates the diversity of the California Central Coast rail operations. They range from local horsecar services to the narrow-gauge electrified industrial railroad that served the Santa Cruz Cement Company at Davenport. Naturally included is the Southern Pacific Railroad's engineering marvel on the Cuesta Grade.

128 pages, 6½" x 9¼"
 200 b&w vintage images **\$19.99**

Company Store

SLORRM has a variety of items for sale to raise money for the Museum. All the goods listed below are available for purchase at any time. To order, send a check to SLORRM, P.O. Box 13260, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406. Local orders will be delivered. Outside of SLO County please include \$8.50 for shipping and handling.

T-Shirts \$17⁰⁰ Adult sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL, Childrens' S, M, L.

Baseball Hats \$20⁰⁰ Adjustable

Embroidered Patch \$5⁰⁰

Enameled Pin \$5⁰⁰

12 oz. Coffee Mugs \$10⁰⁰

Engineers Hat w/button ... \$8⁰⁰

Belt Buckle \$25⁰⁰

VIDEOS and DVDs \$20⁰⁰

Charles Smiley Presents:
 Southern Pacific Scrapbook,
 SP Vintage West,
 SP When the Empire was Intact,
 Electric Rails of Utah.

PACIFIC
COAST

RAILROAD ROUNDUP

to benefit the

San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum
at the Santa Margarita Ranch Pacific Coast Railroad



BBQ Tri-Tip • Hot Dogs • Hamburgers • Soda • Beer

Advance Admission
Adults \$15⁰⁰
Children under 13
\$8⁰⁰
accompanied by an adult
Children under 3 free



To purchase advance tickets

Mail check or money order to:

San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum

Post Office Box 13260, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

CHECKS MUST BE RECEIVED BY APRIL 28, 2008

Tickets and map will be mailed to you on receipt of donation

Advance tickets may be purchased in person at:

Central Coast Trains, 7600 El Camino Real, Suite 3, Atascadero

No Refunds. Tickets are transferrable

For more information telephone 805-544-6531 or e-mail to info@slorm.com

Admission at the gate: Adults \$20⁰⁰ - Children \$10⁰⁰

Join the Fun!

Bring the kids

and Grandkids!

Saturday or Sunday

May 10-11, 2008

10 am to 4 pm

TRAIN RIDES

in ex-Disneyland Coaches

pulled by steam locomotives.

Or ride the mini-trains of the
BITTERCREEK WESTERN RR

Food for Lunch

MONTE MILLS

and the Lucky Horseshoe Band

10:30 to 2:30 both days!

Model Trains

T-Shirts • Souvenirs

Railroad Videos and Art