



TRAIN ORDERS

Scheduled and Unscheduled Society Events, Timely News, and Notes of Interest

SEPTEMBER, 2004

www.scrvrhs.com



Heritage Valley History of 'King Citrus' Lives Thru Society's Pacific Fruit Express Reefer

by Jeff Trimble

The Santa Clara River Valley Railroad Historical Society purchased the reefer car thru the generous donations of the Fruit Growers Supply of Santa Paula California and Sunkist Growers. What makes this so appropriate is that the PFE cars were such a vital part of the Santa Clara Valley's history for so much of the 1900s. One can still see today where the various fruit packinghouses, from Ventura to Piru, had loading docks for PFE cars, where the valleys fruit was sent to destinations around the nation.

The Santa Clara River Valley Railroad Historical Society PFE car (Pacific Fruit Express) # 11403 was built by the Pacific Fruit Express Company of Colton, California in May of 1957. The model is called a R-40-27 steel reefer. The car was originally owned by the joint venture of the Union Pacific and the Southern Pacific railroads, which was called Pacific Fruit Express. Both companies' emblems are displayed on the car. This car was among the last of the refrigerated cars made that used ice and salt to cool their cargo. In 1978, the joint venture between the U P and the S P ended. The #11403, since it has both the SP and UP emblems still on the outside, shows this car was not repainted after the 1978 asset split.

The car had several problems associated with its continued usefulness to the railroads after 1978. The method of cooling the car, which was by ice, was quickly coming to an end, and the temperature regulated mechanical reefers were replacing them. The trucks or wheel sets on the car were friction trucks, and were being replaced by cars with non-friction or 'roller' bearings. Although the car could have had its trucks replaced with the non-friction bearing type, one other problem probably dealt the deathblow to its service usefulness. This is when the swing out doors used on the car were outlawed. The doors that were now acceptable for boxcars were the type of doors that slid on tracks from side to side flush with the car.

Even though there is a bit of a gap in the history of the car after 1978, Stan Garner, one of the previous owners, has been gracious enough to provide the following history on the car. L. S. Garner purchased the car from Phil Monte during June 1996. Ownership was later transferred to The Train Source, Inc. on August 7, 1997. Finally it was then sold to the Santa Clara River Valley Railroad Historical Society on January 16, 1998. Stan Garner writes, "Phil Monte told me, that when the car was retired from reefer service, the ice bunkers were removed and planked over, so the car could be used to ship dry dog food. I suspect that it was removed from service when the swing open side doors were outlawed. I'm not sure when that happened."

The car is currently stored in the Poll Creek Yard of the Fillmore & Western Railway awaiting refurbishment to its original condition. It is hoped to locate two original ice bunkers to reinstall in the car. The PFE is one of three pieces of railroad rolling stock owned by the Society. The others are a Union Pacific Pullman sleeping car and a Santa Fe cupola caboose.

The Tale Of The Turntable Continues

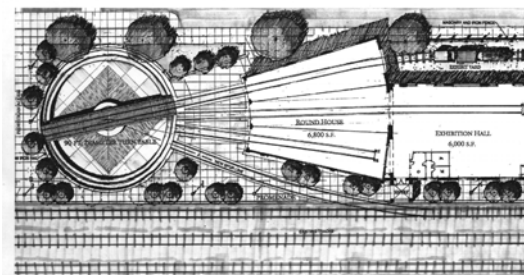
The deadline for project approval of October 2004 is fast approaching. Without it, the Society loses some \$250k in State/Federal transportation grant monies. That project approval continues in the hands of Cal-Trans . . . but there is some hope.

The Ventura County Transportation Commission reports that they anticipated approval of the e-76 obligation of funds by Cal-Trans in July. Per CalTrans, all of the paperwork appeared to be in order. In fact, we received an apparent 'local' approval in July with the request for final approval sent to CalTrans in Sacramento. No word yet as to that status.



The City of Fillmore is our contracted Grant Administrator. On August 20th, in anticipation of final CalTrans approval, the City went through the first steps in selecting a project management team. Once the team is selected, it will go to the City Council for approval. If grant approval comes in the next two weeks, the project could go out to bid in September or October with construction starting as early as December.

Maybe our turntable will be ready for the Rail Festival? And the tale continues . . .



CONCEPTUAL PLAN

RAILROAD INTERPRETIVE CENTER

DISPATCH BOARD

SEPTEMBER 2004

Join us for an informal breakfast every Saturday morning at 8:00 am.
NEW LOCATION AGAIN! *Yanni's Charbroil Restaurant.*
736 Ventura St., (Hwy 126) Fillmore between IHOP & Carl's Jr.

1st 7:00 pm - **SCRVRHS Board of Directors Meeting**
Railroad Visitor Center 455 Main Street, Fillmore

3rd - 6th



Another Day Out With Thomas

Hosted by the Fillmore & Western Railway
Train rides from 9:50 AM to 3:30 PM

We need one **Car Attendant** per car &
docents for the Railroad Visitor Center
Contact **Don Hatch** at: dhatch@scrvrhs.com or
805 484-8624

8th **General Membership Meeting**
Railroad Visitor Center - Central & Main, Fillmore
See www.members.scrvrhs.com for a map and directions
7:00 pm - Refreshments

11th & 12th **CAR ATTENDANT OPPORTUNITIES!**
FILLMORE & WESTERN call Don: 805 484-8624

18th & 19th **CAR ATTENDANT OPPORTUNITIES!**
FILLMORE & WESTERN call Don: 805 484-8624

18th **LOCOMOTIVE WORKSHOP**— meet at Yanni's
9 AM. Come early at 8 AM for breakfast!

25th & 26th **CAR ATTENDANT OPPORTUNITIES!**
FILLMORE & WESTERN call Don: 805 484-8624

AROUND THE ROUNDHOUSE . . .

STAN HURST — is recovering from a fractured back sustained in a fall at home. He is up and doing well and is keeping his quick wit about him. Stan is a long time member and Co-Director of our Railroad Visitor Center. You can help Stan out by volunteering for a shift at the Center on any week end. E-mail him at shurst@scrvrhs.com.

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FAIR — the Metrolink train broke down (for the first time ever)! Apparently an electrical short in one of the communication cables that connects the engine with the cab car caused an onboard computer to fail. This made the first day of Ventura County Fair service one train short, causing some early scheduling delays. Our Car Attendants split up to serve on other trains and Metrolink recouped to handle service for the rest of the day.

WANT TRAIN ORDERS IN LIVING COLOR? — have it e-mailed to you on-line each month. It saves the Society time and money and you are rewarded with the current issue in **COLOR**. To begin service, e-mail your name and e-mail address to dhanley@scrvrhs.com.



DON'T FORGET — to get the latest news and information on the Fillmore & Western Railway by visiting their website at:
www.fwry.com.

*It's so hard when I have to,
and so easy when I want to.*

-- Sondra Anice Barnes

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TRAIN ORDERS

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