

# Santa Clara River Valley Railroad Historical Society News Letter

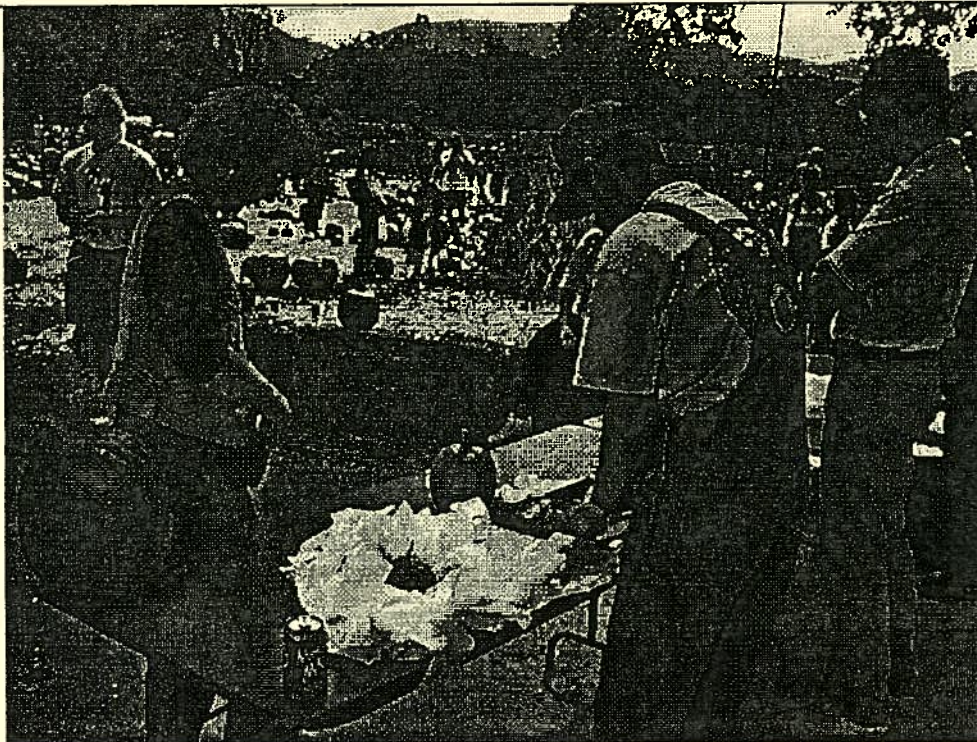
(Vol. 4, issue 3 -#17) December 1998



## *Merry Christmas & Happy New Year* Halloween has come & gone – again!

Halloween has come and gone, once again offering an ever changing opportunity for fund raising. This year F&W blessed us with us supplying labor while they fronted all cost. SCRVRHS in turn got a percentage of the net profits.

The crowds were acceptable as can be seen in the photo. Occasionally groups and charters showed up greatly increasing the numbers. As always, we sure could have used more help. Hint – Hint.



SCRVRHS Director Mike Martin (Arms crossed, nearly asleep, standing) keeping one eye on our very active member Steve Pierce (doing all the work) selling Pumpkins at "The Site"

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### Special points of interest:

- Membership is up.
- Live Steamers laid track in Fillmore.
- Sand blasters ready for the turntable.
- F & W owner Dave Wilkinsons cars are here, now what?
- The Rail Center is in & Fred Ervast is selling RR memorabilia.

## TRIP REPORT OXR-SEA

By: Michael Martin

The girls and I finally took a trip this summer that we have been promising ourselves for a long time, the Amtrak Coast Starlight from Oxnard to Seattle. Rather than bore everybody with details, I would like to list some high points and low points of our trip. Bottom line... it's a great trip that is not to be missed.

Sunday, 16 August, 1100 - The girls and I spend a very pleasant half hour on the patio at the Oxnard Depot waiting for Amtrak 14, which is 15 minutes late. While we are waiting, the Metrolink Fair Train rolls in. Messrs. Swanson and Stau-~~bach~~ make an appearance as Car Attendants that we should all be proud of.

Sunday, 16 August, 1200 - Lunch in the diner as we block traffic on State Street in Santa Barbara. The length of the train requires a "double spot" on the platform. No problem here, yours truly is enjoying a cheeseburger and ice tea watching the traffic jam,

Sunday, 16 August, 1400, - The sun is shining as we travel through Hollister Ranch and Vandenburg AFB. The view is magnificent!

Sunday, 16 August, 1530, - A stretch stop in SLO, and we are on our way up Cuesta Grade. Ellen and I enjoy a wine tasting party in the Pacific Parlor Car as we round the horseshoe curve.

Sunday 16 August, 1930, - Dinner is New York Steak in the diner as we roll through San Jose at sunset.

Sunday 16 August, 2130, - A short stretch stop and crew change in Oakland and a service stop in Emeryville. We are ready to call it a day. Donald, our Car Attendant has turned down our beds and left chocolates on the pillows. We are an hour late, but who cares.

Monday, 17 August, 0600, - Sometime during the night we have lost another hour and a half on the schedule, the good news is that we are running past Mt. Shasta in daylight. Breakfast overlooking the lava fields and a snow covered volcano, not bad.

Monday, 17 August, 0730, - We roll into Oregon at 83 mph (as we pass a MP detector, somebody on the train crew says "yahoooo" on the radio).

Monday, 17 August, 1200, - We crest the Cascades and

start a downhill run through thick forest and tunnels protected by snow sheds. This is a great place to enjoy lunch in the diner.

Monday, 17 August 1600, - Champagne tasting in the Parlor Car as we run alongside the Willamette River approaching Portland. Oh sure, we are still two hours late, but it really doesn't matter.

Monday, 17 August 1900, Dinner in the diner as we pass the Tacoma Narrows as the sun starts to set. We are enjoying the view and no longer care about the schedule.

Monday, 17 August 2200, King Street Station in Seattle looks like where the hep crowd in Chernobyl would have gone on Saturday night if the communists had won the Cold War.

Tuesday, 18 August - Thursday 20 August, Seattle is beer, coffee, tattoos, and multiple body piercing. Victoria, BC is newlyweds, flowerbeds, and nearly dead.

Friday, 21 August - We are greeted by Dave-from-London (yes, this is the hyphenated name on his name-

*(Continued on page 3)*

tag), our Parlor Car Attendant. Dave-from-London has a buffet breakfast waiting for us even though it is only an hour before lunch is served when we board the train.

Friday, 21 August – At some point during the afternoon we are an hour late waiting for a meet with northbound Amtrak 14 around Eugene, OR.

Friday, 21 August – We reach Klamath Falls a half-hour early, and enjoy a stretch stop on the platform on a very cool and crisp evening.

Saturday, 22 August 0600, – We awake in the Roseville yard at a dead stop. I join Dave-from-London for coffee in the parlor car as we move a mile, or so, and then stop for another hour. Dave-

from-London and I chew the fat about life in general and suddenly we are on our way.

Saturday, 22 August 0900, - Breakfast in the diner as we take the siding north of Emeryville waiting for the Eastbound Zephyr. Danielle orders room service to consume the largest stack of pancakes I have ever seen.

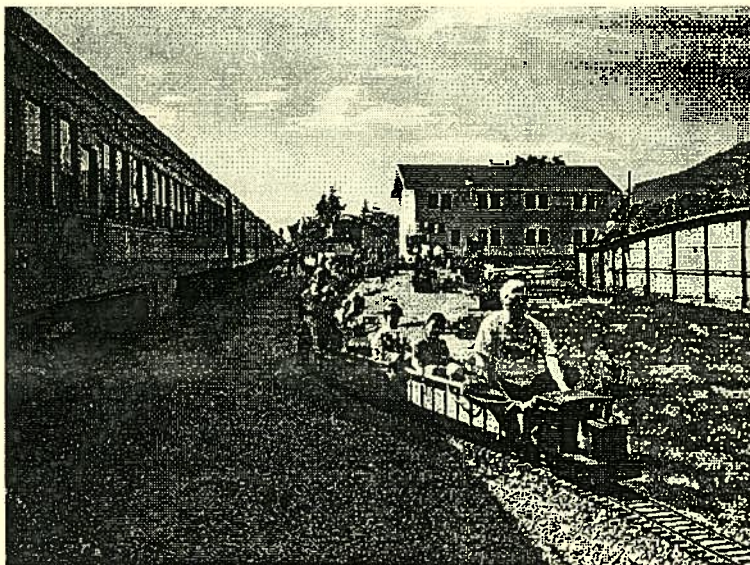
Saturday, 22 August 1100, - Following a crew change in Oakland, we run over a shopping cart in Fremont. It takes half an hour to clear the wreckage from under the train.

Saturday, 22 August 1600, - We have run out of blocks south of King City and are looking at a red flag. The Omaha dispatcher has asked the crew to use cell phones for communication. A half hour later we are told about a

“sun kink” in the track that requires a maintenance of way crew from SLO to repair the track. Dave-from-London extends the wine tasting.

Saturday, 22 August 2000, - The Oakland operating crew “dies” at Surf. Unfortunately, the patch crew sent to relieve them was waiting in Guadeloupe as we blew by them at high speed. We wait an hour for the patch crew to reach us at Surf.

Saturday, 22 August 2330, - We arrive in Oxnard, very late, and tired, but happy. The Coast Starlight is a great trip. Jim Treloar once told me that the greatest part of being involved with trains is being flexible enough to deal with the unexpected. Jim was absolutely right, getting there is as much fun as being there.



Member Bill Victor's "Little Toot" is the train that could. With fewer & fewer activities available to SCRVRHS for fundraisers, we are ever more thankful for Bills little train around the turntable lot. We've found it hard to pull people away from the main activities at Central Avenue to this back lot for a mini-train ride however, some find their way.

## My Grand Daddy was a "Railroad Man" — by Stan Hurst

My interest in railroading goes back to my early childhood days, even before I can remember, I'm sure.

Being grandson of W. C. Hurst, a man who started his railroad career at the age of twelve as a "water boy" tending the right of way maintainers (Gandy Dancers). From there he worked his way up through the ranks— laborer, foreman, superintendent, division manager, and general manager of the Chicago, Peoria & St. Louis, which was soon to be acquired by the Chicago & Illinois Midland (C&IM) of which he eventually became President.

The C&IM was primarily a coal hauling operation— moving coal from Southern Illinois to Commonwealth Edison Plants in Chicago. It also served as a freight hauler for industry along its right of way, also a limited number of passenger runs up to the early 1950's. In 1933



C&IM built a coal dumping facility at Havana, Illinois, so coal could be loaded on barges, then on to Chicago. Although a crude operation, it proved the idea would work and paved the way for today's rotary dumpers which can handle hundreds of cars daily. He was so proud of "His Dumper" as he was so involved in its design and construction.

W. C. was a perfectionist, thus

the whole operation was first class. Equipment, and all facilities were well maintained. "Trains must run on time" was his motto. (And they did!).

I did not know him real well as he lived in Springfield, Illinois, and I grew up in Fillmore, California. He would come to California three or four times a year for a few days visit. I remember well going to Union Station in Los Angeles for dinner on #90, his business car, and hear some stories of his railroading career. Some exciting and some sad.

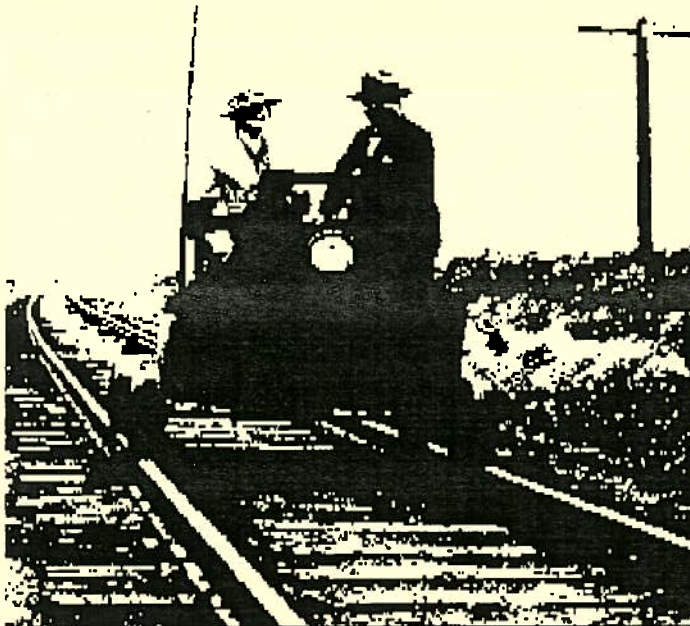
One thing W. C. did while at the C&IM, based in Springfield, Illinois, was to develop the Cimco farm. On the farm were grown many crops and animals. The food was made available to the employees of the railroad.

In 1948, my family traveled from Springfield to the Cimco farm aboard the business car

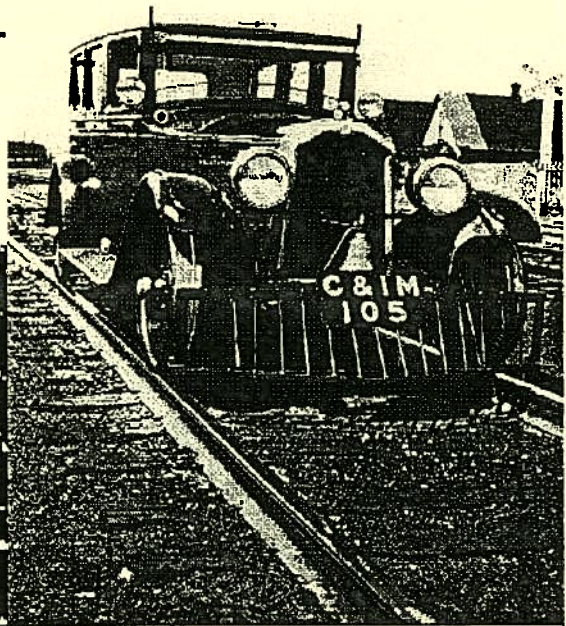
for a wonderful day. The farm was a show piece state-of-the-art. The C&IM is now part of the Genesee & Wyoming system and has been renamed Illinois & Mid-



A real "Gandy Dancer" - C. W. Hurst, left, on his way to President of C&IM



C. W. Hurst & wife inspecting the track  
On a company "Speeder".



C. W.'s. Inspection car after becoming President.



### Iron Horse Restaurant

Saturday morning at 8:00 AM is call time for the hard liners that want to work on Saturday.

This months project is cleaning up the Interpretive Center, setting up some glass display cases, and installing scale train sets.

Steve Pierce showed up what we thought was late however, he informed us he had already completed two of his scheduled three projects for the day. Great! It gave us something to talk about.

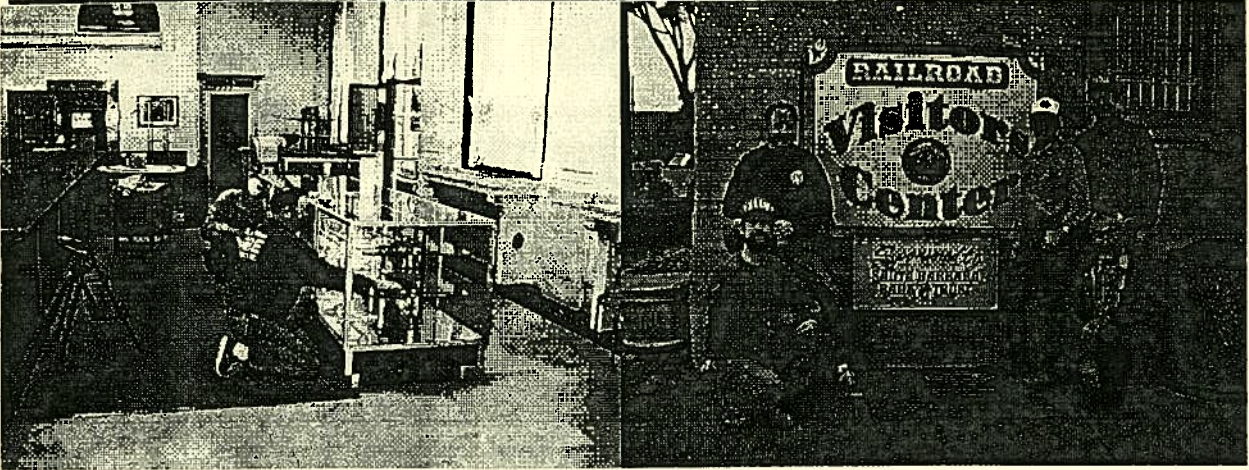
## Rail Bull — by Troy R. Helton, Jr.

A- We've secured a lease with the City of Fillmore for the Turntable — Interpretive Center property for the consideration of one US Dollar per year.  
B- A toll free phone number has been added which is connected to our answering machine. It will eventually be connected to the interpretive center. It is (888) 342-4182

C- We are applying for grant monies for the RIC.  
D- The Associated Historical Societies and Museums of Ventura County is reprinting its brochure with our add.  
E- Santa Barbara Bank & Trust is very helpful with the Grand Opening Saturday Dec. 5th.  
G- Flyer design for the 99

Spring Rail Festival is in process.  
H- We are considering accepting the train from Falkner Farms, hopefully donated by the Hanson Trust.  
I- Anyone interested in seeing the Society's Treasures Report just ask Joe Kern. All members are invited to the Board Meetings held on the first wed.

## Interpretive Center readying for the December 5th Opening



Pat Askren was caught polishing the newly acquired glass display cases purchased in Camarillo. Stan Hurst asked him about going over it after he already cleaned. We concluded either Stan did a Bad job or Pat is getting it really clean. All non essentials have been

removed and put in storage. All cabinets and shelving is to be left in place for the future bank. Steve Pierce did a wonderful job patching the ATM hole with the Sign on one side and an invisible drywall patch on the other. Every crack was checked but no one hundred dollar bills

were left behind. (except the one I found).

Pictured left to right is kneeling – Steve Pierce, Pat Askren, Paul Haase, Rick Swanson, and Stan Hurst kneeling. Photo by Troy R. Helton, Jr.

## The Prez Says” – by SCRVRHS President Paul Haase

To the Membership of the Santa Clara River Valley Railroad Historical Society

December, 1998

We are certainly back in full swing as winter is at our door. The past few months have been busy and the future will bring many opportunities for our members to do things.

Member Fred Ervast, before leaving on his trip to Australia and New Zealand saw to it to gather a crew and

erect 2 more Mile Post Markers, namely 422 and 423.

Roger Samuel's and his sister donated for 422 and Stan Hurst and his brother Jim donated for 423 at the Grand Avenue cross-crossing. Thanks to you all. The Fillmore and Western crews certainly appreciate the markers also.

The month of October was a very busy one. Fillmore and Western owner and Past President Dave Wilkinson split the profits with us during the

pumpkin season trains. Every week-end, besides the normal trains, Dave ran trains in and out of the Pumpkin Patch and we were there to sell the folks their Halloween pumpkins).

With members Bill Victor and Paul Jacques heading the pumpkin patch sales, many of our members turned out to help. With so many workers coming so willingly, there are too many to count, so I would just like to thank you all. We certainly could have not done

## "The Prez Says" – by SCRVRHS President Paul Haase

it with our each and everyone's help. The profits were well worth the effort. Also, member Bill Victor and his wife Eleanor and member Gary Phillips came and erected Bill's 1.5" gauge track and train. We sold mini-train rides for the duration of the Pumpkin trains where we netted over \$900.00. Thank you Bill and Eleanor.

With only one week in between, Bill put together a train trip for underprivileged children from the inner-city area of Los Angeles whom we hosted on Dave's train. The whole thing was a success, and we were able to accomplish our "scholastic" deed which are required to do to keep our 501-(c)-(3) status. Thanks again, Bill and Eleanor.

This month, on December 5th at 11:00 a.m. we are opening our "Visitors' Center" at 416 Central Ave., in Fillmore. This building was built in 1917 and was the site of the Bank Of Italy before becoming a part of the Bank of America system. In later years, it was a part of the Bank of A. Levy, which was eventually sold to Citizens' State Bank of Santa Paula. In time, Citizens was purchased by Santa Barbara Bank and Trust, who currently are leasing the building. Since Santa Barbara Bank and Trust are currently located on Sespe

Ave. and have no use for the building, they are sub-leasing to us at for a very nominal fee. For our Grand Opening on December 5th at 11:00 AM., the bank is hosting the event for us. Rusty Watson, their Vice President in charge of marketing has seen to it to also do our nice invitations as well as the beautiful flyer for the event. (She says it's neat to do something also besides selling checking accounts for a change). The bank also provided us with the beautiful sign at our south-west corner. We, with SCRVRHS, should feel very proud to have the building and we are very grateful to the fine people at Santa Barbara Bank and Trust. At this time, we are housing three or four model railroads plus we have purchased two nice show cases for memorabilia. We have invited the Gold Coast Model Railroad to join us and they have set up a fine display. There are many people who have many things either to donate or to "lend" us for a spell. If you have things you would like to "lend" of GIVE us, please let us know. I would like to thank our Vice President Pat Askren and Gerry Mathews plus our very capable carpenter and all around fix it men Steve Pierce and Stan Hurst for their work. The future holds good for peo-

ple who would like to work as docents. If you would like to help, please give us a call.

By the way, we now have a toll-free number to leave us a message, day or night. That number is 1-888-340-4182.

We are hoping that the turntable will soon be back in the limelight also. With Troy Helton locating a person who would like to sandblast and another who would like to paint behind him, maybe we can move on that project.

We all want to look ahead to the up-coming Rail Festival in 1999. We have chosen the theme "Steaming' into the 21st Century." The dates are March 20 and 21, which is closer than we would like - so mark your calendars.

As the year grinds to a close, we don't want to forget that Dave needs car attendants to help with the people on the train as well as people to help unload when they arrive back in Fillmore. Let's all help.

I want to take this special moment to thank all of those who helped this past year. There are far too many to name, but you are all very important to us. So, with that in mind, I would like to wish you all a very Happy Yule Tide Season. Thanks to you all. Paul



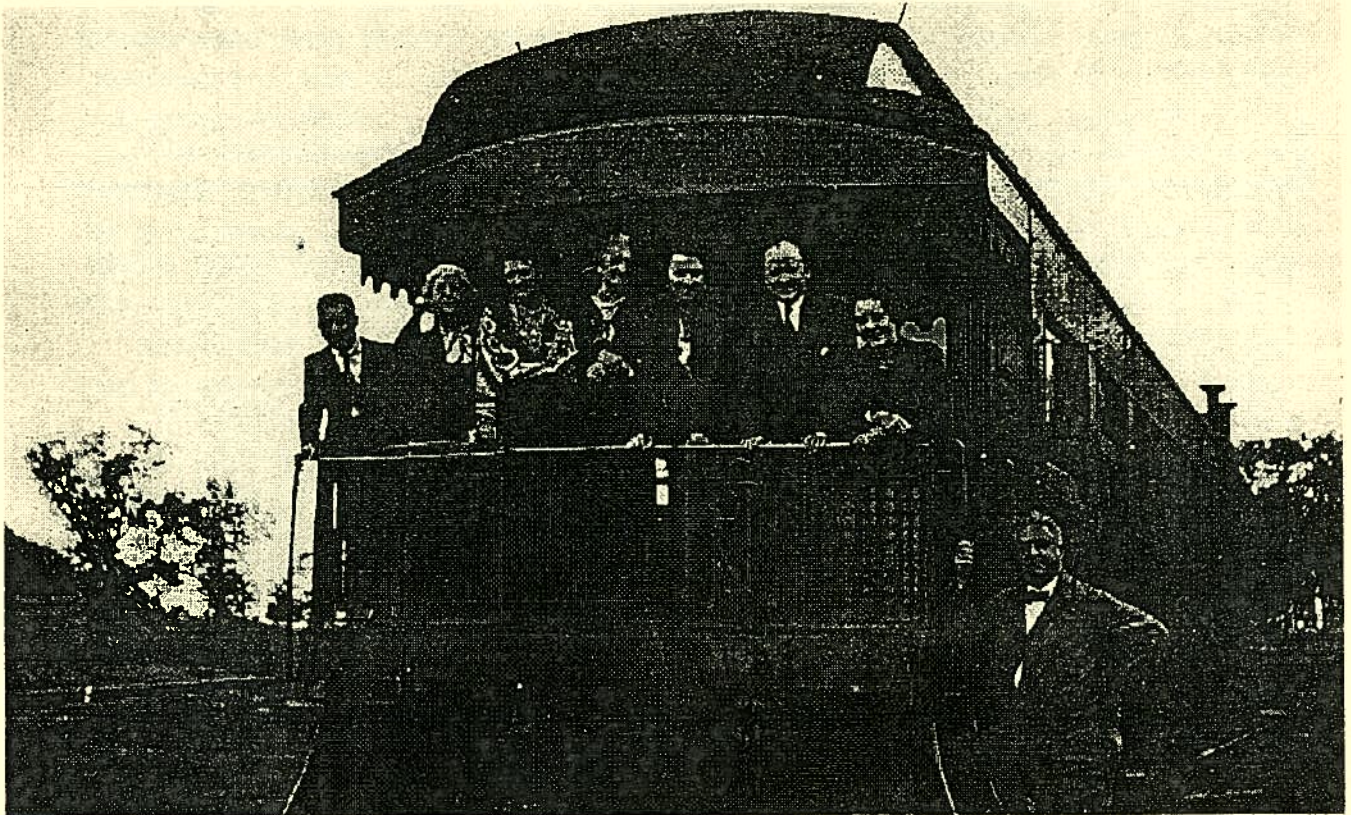
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Mailing Address Line 3  
Mailing Address Line 4  
Mailing Address Line 5

**Were on the web. See <http://www.fishnet.net/~johngart>**

- Get Connected – Be an active member.



Stan Hurst's Grandfather C&IM President C. W. Hurst with co-workers and wives on his private car, ole # 90.

**BECOME A MEMBER – SIGN UP OR CALL (888)-340-4182**