



# RAIL NEWS

FALL 1996

NUMBER ELEVEN

## Horse Trains And Iron Rails - Part 2

### THE TAMING OF THE WEST

**A**merica is a land of quick enthusiasms and quick rejections. Transportation in the early 1800s underwent one revolution after another: the early turnpikes with their wagons and stages were barely in place before the country was swept by a new passion for canals and packets. By 1840 there were some thirty three hundred wonderfully picturesque but slow miles of these "expensive gutters". On the rivers, with equal suddenness, sails and drifting rafts gave way to steamboats. When viewed beside these sometimes luxurious craft, puffing railroads of the 1830 and 1831 may have seemed like mere toys.

Merchants learned in 1832 that the freight charges between Baltimore and Ellicott's Mill were down to one quarter of the old turnpike levy. Similarly Yankee businessmen of Boston discovered the fare to Worcester was a third of the old wagon rate. Canal rates were often cheaper but speed along the Erie, for example, was four miles per hour downstream and two upstream, plus the shallow water froze during the winter. Crude as they were, railroads could run all year long, every day (except Sunday, of course!), and they could be built anywhere, without having to follow a river valley or flat country. One could move perishable products, like milk or fruit, and all kinds of materials and manufactured goods which previously cost too much to ship.

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## SCRVRHS 'PREZ' TO BUY F&W Ry.

FILLMORE — David Wilkinson, founding President of the Santa Clara River Valley Railroad Historical Society, Inc. and his wife Tresa have entered into an agreement to purchase Short Line Enterprises, parent company of the Fillmore & Western Railway. Dave and Tresa, owners of the Santa Fe 409 business car, a reefer, a former Amtrak baggage car, and several cabooses, say the deal will close by the end of October for an undisclosed sum. Dave resigned his Society office and plans to resign from the Board. Pat Askren, Vice President is now acting Society President.

Appointed as the CEO during the transition period, the Wilkinson's have big plans for the F&W. Work has begun to upgrade equipment to include a common exterior paint scheme and restore interiors. Although the heavyweight cars will get the most attention, the flat car has been converted into an open-air passenger car while the streamliners will be next for refurbishing. In addition to the famous movie work, new public train runs include Box Car Bingo, Pumpkin Patch and Christmas Tree Farm trains. Additional daytime thursday and friday trains are designed for Operation Lifesaver programs for school kids and commercial tour bus groups. The public is also welcome.

Dave and Tresa continue to support the efforts of the Society. They are co-sponsoring several events to make the Railroad Interpretive Center and turntable project a reality in Fillmore. They vow to work closely with our Society volunteers for the mutual betterment of both organizations. For instance, on November 10 the F&W has invited Society members and their families aboard the train for a potluck dinner and train ride. On December 11, the Society's monthly membership meeting will be aboard the F & W train parked in Fillmore's Central Park. Everyone is invited for some holiday cheer and celebrating.



# THE TAMING OF THE WEST

(Continued from page 1)

"Railroad fever" became widespread in the United States. By 1837 there were some two hundred railroad projects in process. The fever spread to the new mid-western states, to Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, with Illinois authorizing thirteen hundred miles of rail that year.

As business melted away on the turnpikes and canals, teamsters turned violent, tearing up track and beating up crews of stalled trains, often stoning or shooting at them from ambush. (sounds like Hahn Creek in 1995). Legislators also took sides passing laws requiring rail companies to pay anything over ten percent profit, making fares not less than canal fees, and not allowing connecting tracks in some parts of the cities. Many canal or turnpike town regretted the day for driving rails from their area.

Despite the follies of inexperienced railroad builders, the enemies of rail, and overly optimistic friends, three thousand miles of track had been laid by 1840, and three times that by 1850. The industrial revolution was on. Germans swarmed to the new world, hard fisted Irish driven by poverty and famine settled in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. Farmers of New England were headed to the rich soil of the Middle West. Gold had been discovered in California, and had uprooted thousands more. The race for the west was on, the prize for the ports of the east, each with its own "Iron Horse". Sheer joy railroad men took in their creations was evident in the heraldry of bright colors, shining brass, ornamental scrollwork, and even painted pictures

## TALES FROM THE GRILL AND BBQ! by John Gartman

May 25 and 26 We all met in downtown Fillmore bright and early in the morning. The fires were started eggs and sausage were cooking for the crew when all of a sudden there they were people everywhere and they wanted our sausage in a sandwich! So we sold them to them. When they were gone they had to buy Tri-Tip sandwiches. We cooked they kept coming so we cooked until they quit coming. 100 dozen or so buns, 206 Tri-Tips, 2 large pots of chili, 2 dozen sausages, 50 chicken breasts, and a few cases of sodas and water latter when it was all over with and all the counting was done we found out that we sold over \$5300.00. WOW!!!!!! We sold all the tri-tips in Fillmore!!

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on the early engines. Commodore Vanderbilt, as good at pinching pennies as he was at extracting millions from everything he touched, painted the engines black and ruled out the shiny brass on his newly acquired railroads, the bright colors soon disappeared.

By the 1850 s, railroads had settled in on the so called "American" design, known in later years as a "4-4-0." It was a trade off between wheel sizes, larger for speed and smaller for power to pull the grades. The shop of Thomas Rogers of Paterson, New Jersey, whose factory was an ancestor of the giant American Locomotive Company, is credited with combining many new ideas of the time, including spread trucks, the wagon-top boiler, and lower center of gravity, into the standard wood burner of the era. And Matthias Baldwin, whose firm

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## MEETINGS

Board of Directors meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm at Fillmore City Hall. General membership meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Santa Paula Depot. Info: (805) 524-1201.

## INTERNET ADDRESS

<http://www.fishnet.net/~johngart>

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

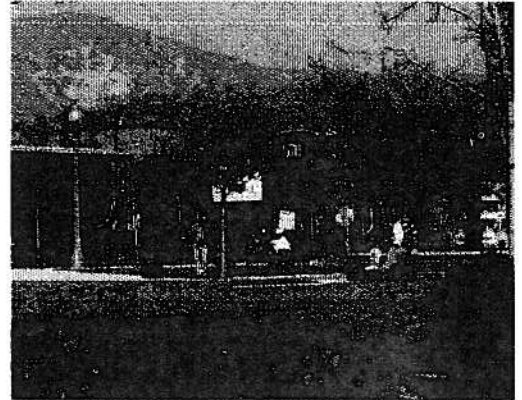
It is the purpose of this organization to assist in the preservation of the railroad corridor between Montalvo and Saugus, California, so as to maximize the economic, educational, environmental and recreational value of this unique historical asset to the residents of the Santa Clara River Valley and the surrounding area. To this end it is the intent of this organization to acquire, preserve, restore, exhibit and operate historic railroad equipment, and to acquire, preserve, display, and make available for study, artifacts, information and photographs pertaining to railroad equipment, structures and operations in the Southern California region.

# Santa Clara River Valley R.R. Historical Society

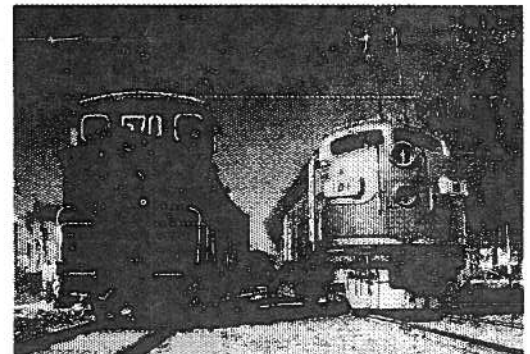


## Santa Fe Caboose #570

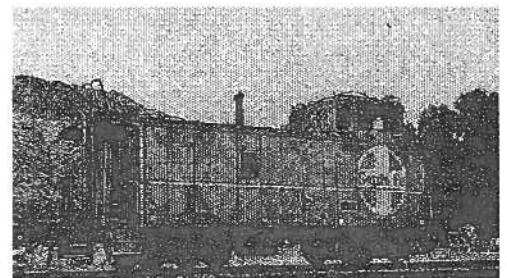
- ◆ The SCRVR Historical Society is currently operating Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Caboose #570 on the Fillmore & Western Railway in Fillmore, California. The operation of this car is part of an on-going effort by the SCRVR Historical Society to raise funds for the City of Fillmore's railroad interpretive center. When completed, the center will include an operating locomotive turntable, roundhouse and the original Southern Pacific freight depot as well as other historic buildings from the town of Fillmore.
- ◆ Built for the Santa Fe Railway in 1927, #570 was the 3rd metal-sided caboose to be built for the AT&SF by the American Car and Foundry Co. The caboose was designed to handle 5 crew members and up to 15 ticketed passengers. Records kept by Santa Fe indicate that the original car was numbered #1587, rebuilt in 1976 as #999906 (906) and rebuilt once again in 1979 as #999570 (570). During its final rebuild in 1979, the caboose underwent a complete mechanical overhaul and was equipped with new trucks, bolsters and sprung couplers for high-speed container service between Los Angeles and Chicago. Records indicate that the car logged approximately 18,250,000 miles before it was retired in 1990.
- ◆ This caboose was designed to handle either crew members or passengers and operated primarily in the Plain States. As an example, passengers might buy a ticket from Vaughn, NM to Los Angeles, CA and find themselves traveling in this type of caboose on the Santa Fe branch-line from Vaughn to Albuquerque, at which point they would transfer to a mainline passenger train. Today's modern-day travel equivalent would be an airline "puddle-jumper".



Santa Fe Caboose #570 on display at Central Park in Fillmore, California.



Santa Fe Caboose #570 and Fillmore & Western F7 #101 switching near the proposed railroad interpretive center in downtown Fillmore.



Sister caboose #533 in service at Klinefelter, California on July 18, 1988.



# TAMING THE WEST

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would become dominant, discovered how to make metal joints so steam tight that pressure could go as high as 120 pounds. There have been many passing fads and many real developments since, but nothing quite as suitable to all purposes in its time as the faithful 4-4-0.

Rails played an important part in the Civil War, on both sides with "The Great Locomotive Chase" of April 1862 being perhaps the most notable. James J. Andrews and 24 men dressed in civilian cloths made their way south to Marietta Georgia and stole "The General", an American type wood burner built in 1855 by Rogers, Ketchum & Grovesnor of Paterson, New Jersey. The object was to make their way north, burning bridges and trestles on the way, joining General Mitchel, thus disabling the southern supply

route between Atlanta and Chattanooga. After a long chase and many near captures, the men abandoned the *General* but were soon caught by troops from the last chase

engine, the "Texas". The leader and seven of the remaining men were executed, the other six remained prisoners until a trade was set up by Stanton, in March of 1863. All survivors were given the first Congressional Medals of Honor ever awarded. Today the *General* is on display at Big Shanty Museum, in Kennesaw, Georgia, the "Texas" at Atlanta.

**STAY  
CONNECTED**



**RENEW YOUR  
SCRVRHS  
MEMBERSHIP**

## BBQ GRILLING (con't)

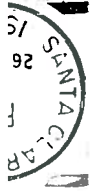
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We had to get some from Santa Paula. What a great team!!!!!! I would like to give a big THANKS to all of those who volunteered:

- |              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| The Morgan's | The Haase's     |
| Fred Ervast  | Larry Stermolle |
| Dave Curci   | Jie Kern        |
| Dave Jeffery | Bill Ellis      |
| Troy Helton  | Pat Askren      |

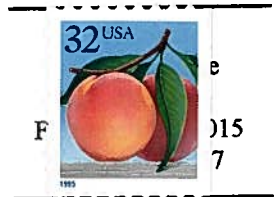
Also, the LeBards for the BBQ, Segovia's market in Fillmore for the supplies and Paul Haase for the 'orange' firewood!

SCRVRHS BBQ TEAM IS 'SMOKIN'!



# RAIL NEWS

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