

Fullerton Railway Plaza Assn. &
So. Calif. Scenic Railway Assn.
present the

Hot Rail!

newsletter

Issue V, Number 4

Spring 2008

DISNEY, 100th YR. OF FULLERTON FIRE DEPARTMENT FEATURED AT 10th FULLERTON RAILROAD DAYS

*By Fred Canfield,
Railroad Days
Coordinator*

Disneyland Railroad's return with a yet-to-be-announced exhibit and Fullerton Fire Department's 100th anniversary celebration are just two exciting elements to be found at the 10th Fullerton Railroad Days, coming Saturday and Sunday, May 3 and 4, 2008, at Fullerton Metrolink Station, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free.

Nearly 80 participants are slated to appear, including railroad exhibits from AMTRAK, BNSF, and several private car owners. Disney's entry is expected to be another exciting artifact from their vintage train collection at Disneyland Resort. Garden railroads, model railroads, memorabilia vendors, numerous food stands, and entertainment acts are expected to delight



Fullerton Railroad Days 2006, Panorama View. Photo © Johnathon Ortiz

the public throughout the weekend. Come early and enjoy a pancake breakfast prepared by Boy Scout troop no. 292 each day at 8 a.m.

See the most current list of participants on the web at <http://www.scrmf.org/rrdays/>. Read more about Fullerton Fire Dept's distinguished 100 years on page 4.

DISNEY HISTORIAN BROGGIE MAKES REPEAT APPEARANCE AT APRIL 9 DINNER

By Stan Swanson, FRPA General Meeting Chair

Michael Broggie, recognized authority on the personal life, career, and historical legacy of Walt Disney, is scheduled as guest speaker at our April 9th General Meeting.

This will be Michael's second appearance as speaker at an FRPA Quarterly Dinner Meeting. His presentation will revolve around his interviews of his friends Ollie Johnston and Ward Kimball, both animators for Walt Disney and contributors to the development of the Disneyland Theme Park concept.

Michael Broggie's father, Roger E. Broggie, was the first Imagineer and one of eight in the family to work for Disney. From that beginning, Michael has become a life-long devotee of Walt Disney and has authored many books and articles including his book *Walt Disney's Railroad Story*, for which he has awarded the Publisher's Association Benjamin Franklin Gold Medal Award as Best Biography of the Year 1998.

**Movie Event:
April 19**

Dodge City (1939)

**-- In Bakersfield, CA --
Movie: 1:30 p.m.**

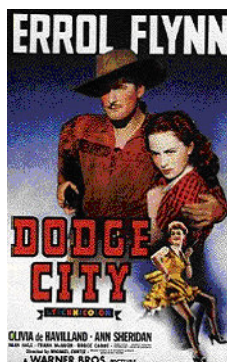
Granada Theatre
618 Kentucky Street
Bakersfield, CA 93305
telephone 661-326-1308

***Free for FRPA/
SCSRA members and guests***

Those taking the bus from Fullerton meet at the Fullerton Metrolink Station for 9 a.m. departure. If driving to Bakersfield on your own, see you there!

Wine tasting will take place on the bus which is now full!

See the 2008 Calendar on page 9



Continued on page 2

Michael was a participant at Railroad Days 2006 at the site of Disney's E.P. Ripley steam engine.

We are again expecting a large attendance of over 100, so plan now to attend. Bring your friends and acquaintances interested in railroading and railroad history as it applies to Fullerton and southern California. You will hear the latest about participants at Fullerton Railroad Days 2008 and news of the various activities of our association. That's Wednesday, April 9, at the China Buffet, 104 West Orangethorpe Avenue, Fullerton. Mixer starts at 6 p.m. Dinner is \$15 per person which includes all-you-can-eat, soft drink, and gratuity.

FRPA MEMBERSHIP AT 210 IN 2008

By Norma R. Goble, Membership Chair

As of this publication, there are 210 members. This includes 32 new members and five from 2006. *I am very proud of you!* Keep the renewals coming in quickly so that I can make an even better report at the Quarterly Meeting in April. There are a number of you who have not yet renewed. Please take your renewal notice from the bottom of the pile and put it on top! We do need your renewal.

As always, thank you for continuing to hand out member applications.

HISTORICAL & MODELING COMMITTEE WINTER REPORT

By Dennis White, H&MC Secretary and Editor

The Historical and Modeling Committee recently received two donations that will ultimately find their way into FRPA's Southern California Railroad Experience.

A nicely built stand-alone HO scale model railroad built by Buddy Young of San Diego, was donated to SCRXX. It features a major mountain complete with a



stream featuring real running water, a horse-shoe curve high timber trestle, tunnels an urban area and switching facilities. Some locomotives and rolling stock completed the donation. The layout was broken down into three sections for transport to Fullerton and is currently under restoration by committee members.

Doug Archer and Harold

Benash and Stu Proctor

Fullerton Railway Plaza Association

Our Vision Is

To create a large community-supported premier interactive railroad attraction that would include a Santa Fe heritage railroad museum and restoration facility for the purpose of bringing together businesses, government and the community to preserve our national rail heritage and provide an educational experience for our youth in a meaningful, exciting, and fulfilling manner.

Our Mission Is

To educate our youth and provide all people an historical insight into the numerous contributions the railroads have made to the creation and economic development of the City of Fullerton, the County of Orange, and Southern California from the 19th century to the present and into the future.

Benash made two trips to San Diego to retrieve the layout.

Another donation came courtesy of the estate of Santa Ana resident Fred Schrock, consisting of a genuine Southern Pacific wig-wag warning signal, switch stand with indicator light and Adlake switch lock, and an opportunity to help dismantle a large and extensively detailed model railroad built into Mr. Schrock's home. Members were able to salvage electrical equipment, many detail parts, rock castings, spare parts, and construction supplies. Members also helped family members disassemble the layout preparatory to restoration of the room to non-railroad use prior to placing the home on the market. Those helping were Harold Benash, Stu Proctor, Bryan Hunnell, and Dennis White.

H&MC's very talented Doug Archer continues to research and build scale models of historic Fullerton buildings. Most recently, he completed a model of the Eadington Fruit Packing House that used to sit west of Spadra

(Harbor Boulevard) on the north side of the ATSF tracks. This building will be added to the existing Fullerton Depot module displayed at various railroad and history shows. Other models built by Archer include the Union Pacific Fullerton Depot, Elephant Packing House, cut-away versions of the



Harold Benash, Stu Proctor and Brian Hunnell claim victory over rusted bolts after successfully disassembling an SP Wig Wag at the former home of Fred Schrock. In addition to the donated signal, Mr. Schrock had an extensive model railroad in his home. FRPA was allowed to salvage as much of the layout as possible, gaining many switch machines, electrical components, detail parts and rock castings.

Blue Goose Packing House and Granada Packing House, both complete with full interior details and lighting. His current project is an updated model of the proposed SCRX building for inclusion in the N-scale diorama, which is displayed every year in the Fullerton Library, at Railroad Days and in the FRPA office. Future projects



Martin Kluck prepares display board for Fullerton Railroad Days 2008.

are the Chevron gas station that used to occupy the northwest corner of Truslow and Spadra in Fullerton (next door to the Union Pacific Depot), and the Pacific Electric Building on Commonwealth (currently the home of Spadra Italian Restaurant).

H&MC will once again promote Railroad Days with a display of historical photos at Fullerton Library during the month of April. A program of Fullerton's rail history will be presented in the Fullerton Library auditorium, Wednesday April 23, 2008, at 7 p.m. The speak-



Doug Archer checks placement of Elephant Packing House and the Fullerton Union Pacific Depot models on new Union Pacific module. Archer used measurements and photos of the prototype buildings to create HO models of the buildings as they appeared in 1949.

er will be Harold Benash. A movie will also be shown and refreshments served. The event is free to the public.

As Fullerton Railroad Days approaches, weekly work parties have kept membership busy preparing for that most important annual event. Regular members participating are Martin Kluck, Ted Johnson, Doug Archer, Harold Benash, and Dennis White.

The Historical & Modeling Committee is always looking for members. If local history, rail history, railfanning or model railroading (any scale), interest you and you would enjoy fellowship with others who share these interests, we invite you to become a part of our growing



Ted Johnson checks alignment of track switch leading to Elephant Packing House on H&MC's new Union Pacific Module. Johnson, a charter member of FRPA and the H&MC, is also a member of the Orange County Modular Engineers model railroad club, which helps FRPA and the H&MC display their HO modules at various railroad meets throughout California.

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committee. It is a great way to become an active member of the FRPA. Meetings are held 7 p.m., the fourth Tuesday of each month (except July and December) at St. Paul's Lutheran Church (corner of Las Palmas and Harbor Boulevard), Fullerton. Please contact Dennis White (714-871-4341) or Harold Benash (714-525-6266) for directions or any questions regarding H&MC.

FULLERTON FIRE DEPARTMENT CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

Excerpted from City of Fullerton Website

http://www.ci.fullerton.ca.us/depts/fire/our_department/history_of_the_fullerton_fire_department.asp



Fire officers, 1937. Photo © www.ci.fullerton.ca.us

On an April morning in 1908, Fullerton residents were roused from their slumber by a horseback rider racing through the streets firing a six-shooter and shouting "fire!"

Three structures on the southwest corner of Amerige Avenue and Spadra Road (now Harbor Boulevard) had caught fire, and the blaze was threatening to spread throughout the downtown.

After citizens tried unsuccessfully to stop the flames, a call went out to Anaheim, which sent its sole piece of firefighting equipment - a horse-drawn cart carrying 600 feet of hose. But calamity struck when the citizens, racing to hook Anaheim's hose to Fullerton's only hydrant, found the hose threads did not match those on the hydrant.

Undaunted, the residents formed a bucket brigade and managed to bring the fire under control, but not before much of the block had been razed. "Had the wind been blowing, it is believed the whole business part of town would have been consumed by fire as the city has absolutely no fire protection," reported the "Orange County Tribune," a newspaper of the day.

As embers of the fire still glowed, the residents quickly called a town meeting to discuss fire protection and start planning for a fire department. In a report filed April 17, 1908, "the group cited a plan for obtaining water, recommended purchase of 1,200 to 1,500 feet of 'good quality' hose, and announced that between \$1,500 and \$1,600" had already been pledged by local businesses to fund a department, writes Fullerton historian Bob Ziebell in *Fullerton: A Pictorial History*.

On Aug. 5, 1908, the "Orange County Tribune" reported the enrollment of volunteer fire company members. Emerson J. Marks, the city attorney, was named chairman of the group, and O.J. Harvey took on the role of secretary. On Aug. 10, 1908, the Fullerton Fire Department was formally organized, with O.S. Erickson elected its first chief, and Emerson Marks and Gus Stern appointed first and second assistant chiefs, respectively.

Local shops fabricated a hook and ladder wagon and two hose carts. The good citizens of Fullerton had also outfitted their new department with three nozzles, a hand-pulled hook-and-ladder truck, two hand extinguishers, a fire bell, a hand-pulled 60-gallon chemical fire engine, and two fire plugs. The City entered into an agreement with a privately owned water company to provide a water distribution system.

Five years later, the voters approved a \$5,000 bond issue which enabled the City to purchase its first motorized engine - a 1913 Seagrave combination ladder, hose and chemical truck.

The first "fire station" was a small, wooden building located in the 100 block of W. Amerige. In 1909, the



Fullerton's first "fire station." Photo © Fullerton Public Library

building was moved to the 300 block of N. Spadra, between Wilshire and Whiting avenues.

With the arrival of the first motorized engine, a building was rented in the 200 block of N. Spadra to house it, while the City contracted for the lower floor of a nearby building to house the truck's volunteer driver and his family. In 1924, the equipment was moved around the corner onto W. Amerige and into a sheet metal building.

The City's first formal firehouse was opened in 1926 in the 100 block of W. Wilshire Ave., and the Firefight-



The Wilshire building, opened in 1926, served double-duty as firehouse and City Hall. Photos © Fullerton Public Library

ers shared the space with City employees as the upstairs served as City Hall. The Firefighters were able to occupy the entire building and add sleeping quarters when, in 1942, the "new" City Hall (now the Fullerton Police Department) was opened on the northeast corner of Commonwealth and Highland avenues.

The Wilshire structure remained Fullerton's only fire station until 1953 when Station 2 opened at Brookhurst Street and Valencia Drive, to serve the west side of the city. Station 3, 700 S. Acacia Ave., was added in 1958.

Today, Fullerton's six stations house one ladder truck, six front-line engines, and three reserve engines and one reserve truck, with a minimum staffing of one

Battalion Chief supervising 25 on-duty Firefighters. Six engines and the truck are staffed 24 hours per day. Three of those engines are Paramedic-staffed and equipped. Another is a Paramedic Assessment Unit.

Always progressive, the Department's history is filled with many "firsts," dating back to 1916 when it received the first resuscitator equipment in Orange County. In 1919, the Department purchased the first triple combination truck in the County.

Fullerton was the first Orange County fire departments to recognize the importance of providing Paramedic service for its citizens; the first to make extensive use of cable television for training and briefing purposes (for which it received the coveted "Helen Putnam Award" from the League of California Cities); and the first in Orange County to use 12-LEAD EKG "heart monitors" on its Paramedic engines, expected to soon be the standard throughout the state.

An active and important component of the Fullerton Fire Family is the Fullerton Firefighters' Association, which was formed in 1960. The FFA sponsors a variety of activities for its members, and enthusiastically supports many community programs.

As the Fullerton Fire Department nears its centennial anniversary, its staff stands steadfast in its commitment to the Department's traditions of excellence and service to the community. The Department is proud of its role in the development of the City of Fullerton, and looks forward to a future in which dedication to the citizens and City of Fullerton remain the highest priority.

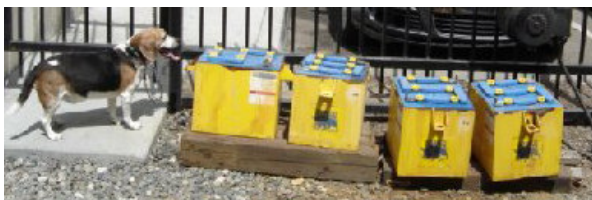
SCSRA'S CABOOSES HOST PARTY AND WORK CREW IN MARCH

By Sue Kientz with Photos by Elliot Alper

The SCSRA cabooses generate a steady stream of interest in birthday party rental, with an inquiry or two coming in each month. One such party brought about 20 people out on Saturday, March 29, one day before SCSRA's scheduled Maintenance Day. Jim Hoffmann, who opened up the AT&SF Cupola Caboose for the group, said everyone seemed thrilled with their unusual party venue.

The following day, SCSRA associates and a few FRPA members assembled to install new batteries in the caboose, dispose of the humongous old ones, and then clean up the two cars in preparation for Railroad Days. SCSRA's Tommy Reminiskey hit on a clever method for hoisting the old batteries into Gordon's truck: slipping two bars under each side and carrying them like Cleopatra on a sedan chair.

Soon enough, the built-in lights of the caboose were working again. The crew worked so efficiently that everyone was able to head for home an hour early.



Elliot's dog Neo guards the old battery cores.

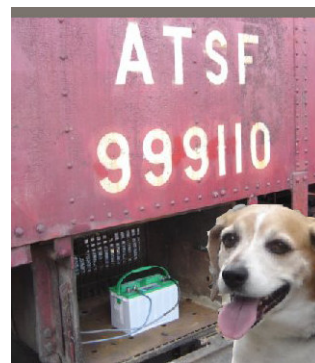
HOT RAIL! NEWSLETTER



Charles Forsher, Mark Carnighan, Bob Bennett, and Dave Smith slide a battery into Gordon's truck as Fred Canfield looks on.

Gordon now reports that when he recycled the expended cores, he was given a credit for \$70, which will buy two more of the small green batteries. This will ensure that each caboose has a backup battery.

Thanks to all who came and lent a hand: Elliot Alper, Gordon Bachlund, Bob Bennett, Fred Canfield, Mark Carnighan, Charles Forsher, Jim Hoffmann, Sue Kientz, Dan Price, Tommy Reminiskey, Dave Smith, and Neo the Dog.



New battery installed! Thanks to PhotoShop and a photogenic Neo for jazzing up this picture.

Jim Hoffmann and Tommy Reminiskey work on an uncooperative light fixture as Gordon Bachlund supervises.



A few of the heroes of the day, left-right: Mark Carnighan, Jim Hoffmann, Bob Bennett, Dave Smith, Sue Kientz, Neo, Charles Forsher, and Elliot Alper

BNSF IN CAJON PASS

March '08 Update

Article and photos by
Dennis White

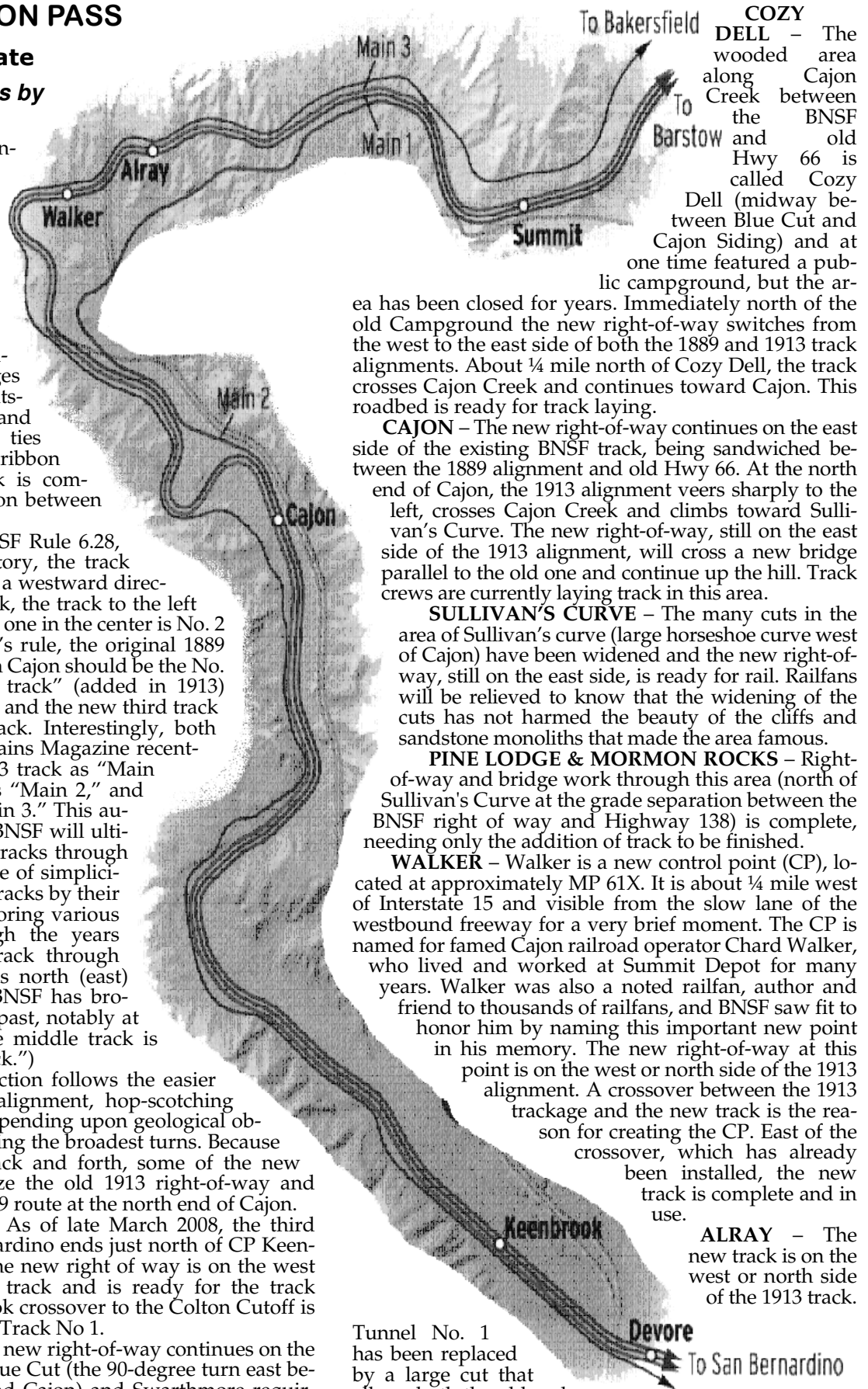
Construction continues in Cajon Pass, as BNSF builds a third main line through the rugged desert pass between San Bernardino and Victorville, CA. A visit to the pass Friday, March 28, 2008, found all cuts widened, all new bridges completed and rights-of-way graded and ready for concrete ties and the laying of ribbon rail. The third track is complete and in operation between Walker and Summit.

According to BNSF Rule 6.28, "in three track territory, the track to the right facing in a westward direction is the No. 1 track, the track to the left is the No. 3 track, the one in the center is No. 2 Track." Using BNSF's rule, the original 1889 right-of-way through Cajon should be the No. 3 track, the "uphill track" (added in 1913) should be No 2 track and the new third track should be No. 1 track. Interestingly, both Railway Age and Trains Magazine recently identified the 1913 track as "Main 1," the 1889 track as "Main 2," and the new track as Main 3." This author is unsure how BNSF will ultimately identify the tracks through Cajon, so for the sake of simplicity, will identify the tracks by their date of creation, ignoring various realignments through the years and the fact that track through Cajon generally runs north (east) and south (west). (BNSF has broken rule 6.28 in the past, notably at Fullerton, where the middle track is known as "No. 3 track.")

The new construction follows the easier grade of the 1913 alignment, hop-scotching from side to side, depending upon geological obstacles and maintaining the broadest turns. Because of this switching back and forth, some of the new alignment will utilize the old 1913 right-of-way and even the original 1889 route at the north end of Cajon.

KEENBROOK – As of late March 2008, the third track from San Bernardino ends just north of CP Keenbrook at MP 69.4. The new right of way is on the west side of the existing track and is ready for the track crews. The Keenbrook crossover to the Colton Cutoff is accessed from BNSF Track No 1.

BLUE CUT – The new right-of-way continues on the west side through Blue Cut (the 90-degree turn east between Keenbrook and Cajon) and Swarthmore requiring two massive cuts between the existing track and the UP Colton Cutoff line, which parallels it to the west. Here too, the right-of-way is ready for track laying.



area has been closed for years. Immediately north of the old Campground the new right-of-way switches from the west to the east side of both the 1889 and 1913 track alignments. About ¼ mile north of Cozy Dell, the track crosses Cajon Creek and continues toward Cajon. This roadbed is ready for track laying.

CAJON – The new right-of-way continues on the east side of the existing BNSF track, being sandwiched between the 1889 alignment and old Hwy 66. At the north end of Cajon, the 1913 alignment veers sharply to the left, crosses Cajon Creek and climbs toward Sullivan's Curve. The new right-of-way, still on the east side of the 1913 alignment, will cross a new bridge parallel to the old one and continue up the hill. Track crews are currently laying track in this area.

SULLIVAN'S CURVE – The many cuts in the area of Sullivan's curve (large horseshoe curve west of Cajon) have been widened and the new right-of-way, still on the east side, is ready for rail. Railfans will be relieved to know that the widening of the cuts has not harmed the beauty of the cliffs and sandstone monoliths that made the area famous.

PINE LODGE & MORMON ROCKS – Right-of-way and bridge work through this area (north of Sullivan's Curve at the grade separation between the BNSF right of way and Highway 138) is complete, needing only the addition of track to be finished.

WALKER – Walker is a new control point (CP), located at approximately MP 61X. It is about ¼ mile west of Interstate 15 and visible from the slow lane of the westbound freeway for a very brief moment. The CP is named for famed Cajon railroad operator Chard Walker, who lived and worked at Summit Depot for many years. Walker was also a noted railfan, author and friend to thousands of railfans, and BNSF saw fit to honor him by naming this important new point in his memory. The new right-of-way at this point is on the west or north side of the 1913 alignment. A crossover between the 1913 trackage and the new track is the reason for creating the CP. East of the crossover, which has already been installed, the new track is complete and in use.

ALRAY – The new track is on the west or north side of the 1913 track.

Tunnel No. 1 has been replaced by a large cut that allows both the old and new track to pass through the hill. Interestingly, Tunnel No 1's portals are still in place, though the roof is gone.

Tunnel No. 2 has also been uncovered and a similar cut made to allow the two tracks to parallel each other through the hill. Tunnel No. 2's portals and liner are still in place and both the new track and the old are in operation. A U.S. Forest ranger at Alray said that the tunnel portals might remain, as they are being considered for addition to the National Register of Historical Places. He said that being listed on the Register isn't a guarantee the structures will be saved, but a historical group from San Bernardino is currently negotiating with the BNSF for their preservation. A decision by the railroad, the National Park Service, or both, will be made within 45 days.

SILVERWOOD – Between Alray and Summit the new track is on the north side of the old alignment and is in operation. Trains wishing to access the Silverwood crossover to the Colton Cutoff must attain track No 1 at Summit.

SUMMIT – Construction is complete, the staging area for the contractor is gone and the third track is in full operation. The Martinez Spur, which used to end at Post Office Road, is now part of the three-track system. The man-trap fences east of Post Office Rd. and the security buildings remain.

When complete, Cajon Pass will have four new crossovers (Keenbrook, Cajon, Walker and Summit), in addition

to the existing crossovers connecting the BNSF to the Colton Cutoff at Silverwood and Keenbrook.

Access to railfan areas is still somewhat restricted unless one knows other ways to get onto the Forest Service Roads. The fire road from Hwy 138 to Alray is still closed due to construction and the road that parallels the UP Colton Cutoff is currently posted for ATVs and motorcycles only. Power Line Road (the old John Brown toll-road) is open and the security camp at Little Knoll is gone. Sullivan's Curve, Mormon Rocks, and Cajon Siding are still off limits, but Stein's Hill is accessible. The right-of-way from Blue Cut to Cajon Siding is best seen from the shoulders of Historic Highway 66. The turnout on Hwy 138 overlooking the deep cut at the west end of Summit is the best way to observe operations in this area.

By late spring 2008, Cajon should be in full three-track operation.

Sources:

California Region Timetable 14 – Altamont Press, Modesto, CA

Chard Walker's Cajon, Trans Anglo Books

History of Cajon Pass – *Desert Gazette* - <http://digital-desert.com/cajon-pass/history.html>

Map – A composite of charts from *Trains Magazine* and Chard Walkers Cajon, Trans-Anglo Books



The cut at Swarthout Canyon required six months of blasting and grading to make room for the new third track through Cajon Pass. The Union Pacific (ex Southern Pacific) Colton Cut-off is visible at near the top of the cut. The trees at the bottom of the photo mark the location of Cajon Creek and the "low water bridge" of Swarthout Canyon Road.



Above: New track on cement ties awaits the addition of ballast at Cajon. Note the new cantilever signal bridge spanning all three tracks. These new bridges, made of tubular steel, are replacing the more conventional block signals on bridges and staffs throughout the Southern California District of BNSF. Visible in the upper portion of the photo is an eastbound (timetable direction) Union Pacific freight heading down hill toward West Colton Yard. Photo on left: Looking east at Power Line Road toward Summit, four tracks are visible. Left to right, they are the Union Pacific Colton Cutoff (the uppermost track traveling from upper left hand corner to right hand corner); BNSF's new Track 1; BNSF Track 2 (1913 alignment) and BNSF Track 3 (1889 alignment). The photographer is standing on a knoll between the 1889 and 1913 alignment, a favorite place to watch trains.



BNSF Extra 4817 East climbs Cajon on the new track about a mile west of Power Line Road with a mixed UPS/J.B.Hunt TOFC consist. Just visible on the far left side of the photo is the 1889 alignment track used primarily for downhill traffic due to its almost 3% grade. Visible to the right and a little above the BNSF train is the UP Colton Cutoff line.

2008 Calendar

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>April 9 FRPA Quarterly Dinner Meeting, 6 p.m., China Buffet, 104 W. Orangethorpe Ave.</p> | <p>July 26* Movie Night: <i>Last Train from Gun Hill (1959)</i>,* 6:30 p.m. with Wine Tasting at 6 p.m. Fullerton Museum Center Auditorium</p> |
| <p>April 19* Movie Matinee: <i>Dodge City (1939)</i>,* 1:30 p.m. with Wine Tasting aboard motorcoach. Granada Theater, Bakersfield. Roundtrip transportation from Fullerton is full; meet us in Bakersfield!</p> | <p>Aug 26 H&MC Meeting, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 111 W. Las Palmas Dr., Fullerton, 7 p.m.</p> |
| <p>April 22 H&MC Meeting, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 111 W. Las Palmas Dr., Fullerton, 7 p.m.</p> | <p>Sept 20* SCSRA Caboose Open House/Pot Luck, Cabooses, Fullerton Metrolink Station, 1-4 p.m.</p> |
| <p>May 3-4 Fullerton Railroad Days, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Fullerton Metrolink Station</p> | <p>Sept 23 H&MC Meeting, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 111 W. Las Palmas Dr., Fullerton, 7 p.m.</p> |
| <p>May 27 H&MC Meeting, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 111 W. Las Palmas Dr., Fullerton, 7 p.m.</p> | <p>Oct 8 FRPA Quarterly Dinner Meeting, 6 p.m., China Buffet, 104 W. Orangethorpe Ave.</p> |
| <p>June 21* SCSRA Caboose Docent Class/Social Time, Cabooses, Fullerton Metrolink Station, 1-4 p.m.</p> | <p>Oct 28 H&MC Meeting, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 111 W. Las Palmas Dr., Fullerton, 7 p.m.</p> |
| <p>June 24 H&MC Meeting, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 111 W. Las Palmas Dr., Fullerton, 7 p.m.</p> | <p>Nov 15* Movie Night: <i>Von Ryan's Express (1965)</i>,* 6:30 p.m. with Wine Tasting at 6 p.m. Fullerton Museum Center Auditorium</p> |
| <p>July 9 FRPA Quarterly Dinner Meeting, 6 p.m., China Buffet, 104 W. Orangethorpe Ave.</p> | <p>Nov 25 H&MC Meeting, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 111 W. Las Palmas Dr., Fullerton, 7 p.m.</p> |
| <p>July 19 H&MC/SCSRA Annual Dinner at the Depot, 7 p.m.</p> | <p>Dec 6* SCSRA Christmas Train-Watching Party, Cabooses, Fullerton Metrolink Station, 2-5 p.m.</p> |

* Dates and movie titles subject to change. Check www.scrmf.org for updates

INTERVIEW WITH A BRAKE WOMAN

By Charles Forsher, SCSRA Associate

One of the tenants in the building I manage in West LA, Cheryl, casually told me one day that she was a brake woman for three years when much younger, and that she was trained by a relative of hers who was the first brake woman on any American railroad.

Naturally intrigued, I managed to contact her relative, Danny Roeseler, and via e-mail conduct an interview of sorts. While Cheryl's claim of her relative's place in history did not seem to pan out, nevertheless the interview proved enlightening. Danny also e-mailed me a few interesting photos.

"In order to give you good answers to some of your questions, I consulted with my old Conductor that I broke for for many years," Danny began. "He retired as the longest serving conductor on the Union Pacific, 56 years!" And now for the interview:

How many years were you a Brake lady?

I started working on the Union Pacific in 1975 and retired in 1993 after 17 years of service. Also, we were called Brake persons, not Brake ladies.

How many Roads did you work for?

The Union Pacific was the only railroad that I worked for.

What other kinds of work did you perform?

Before I moved to Cheyenne with my former husband, I was a museum consultant and anthropologist. My husband also worked in that field, and as I could not be hired by the state Government due to nepotism rules, I decided that to make a good wage rather than

be paid what most women were getting, I went to work as a Switchman-Brakeman and was later promoted to Conductor.

How many women did you know of that were working as Brakepersons?

At that time, there was only a maximum of twenty women working in Cheyenne compared to seven hundred men!

I am in the color photo that is in the *Life* Book, *America, Then and Now*. I am in the middle of the back row with a green cap on. At present, there are only two in the picture who remain working, the first and third in the front row. They are now both Engineers.

Did you have a handle like some interstate truckers?

No one had a "handle." Any nicknames that were given to a person were usually not too complimentary.

When did you retire as a Brake woman?

I was offered a \$120,000 buyout as were all employees when the crews were reduced from two Brakepersons and one Conductor to one Brakeperson and one Conductor. My husband retired as an Engineer a few months earlier with 42 years of service and I wanted to join him. I retired as a Conductor.

Have you heard the term 'bumping' freight cars?

My husband, my old Conductor and I had never heard the term, "bumping" cars. Cars in the yards are either pushed to a joint or "kicked." When kicking a car, the Engineer accelerates while a Brakeperson pulls the coupler pin and the engine is stopped and the car coasts into whatever track is chosen.

Have you written any articles about being a Brake woman?

No, I haven't ever written any articles about my railroad career.



"They've been workin' on the railroad!" Vintage photo of women laborers hired by the railroad, taken by J.E. Stimson, a pioneer western photographer in the Cheyenne yards in 1917.



From the Life Book, America, Then and Now, taken by Life photographer Paul Chesley. Danny Roeseler is in the back row wearing the green hat.

Did you ever teach other women to bump cars?

I didn't teach other women to "bump" (where did you get that term?) cars. A new hire was given one to two weeks of student trips and then worked with a seasoned crew who taught them.

Had you been involved in any accidents?

My train was the first train to go past a train that had a rear end collision with another train. Two of my fellow employees were killed. That makes a lasting impression.

Did you ever use womanly intuitions in the course of your duties as a Brake woman to save the day?

No, no heroic womanly intuitions.

What kind of equipment did you use for communicating with the engineer?

When I first started working, two-way radios were in the locomotive and the caboose. Also, each crew was assigned a handy talkie. Later, on-board computers were installed on the locomotives; cabooses were a thing of the past then.

What experiences did you have with hot boxes? For example, did you ever use water to identify a wheel or axel that was too hot?

When I asked my old Conductor about boiling water on the wheels, his response was, "Where the h---

would you get water?" He did state that before temperature sensing crayons were made available, to determine if a wheel bearing was too hot to safely proceed, the inspecting crewman (person) would urinate on it to get some idea of how hot it was. Obviously, this was before women Brakepersons came on the scene.

Can you tell me something about the black and white photo you sent?

I think that I mentioned when I sent the pictures that one was taken by J.E. Stimson, a pioneer western photographer in the Cheyenne yards in 1917 when women were first hired to do manual labor due to the manpower shortage caused by the war. No women were used in those types of jobs until the second world war when women were working as laborers, store department, passenger coach cleaners, and some even as hostlers who moved locomotives in and out of the round house. When my husband started working in the Cheyenne shops in 1949, there were still many women there and remained until they reached retirement age. I hope that this clears this up.

Many thanks to Danny Roeseler for sharing these details of her interesting occupation, one that many of us railfans wish we had to put in our own resumes.

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