

# TIMEPOINTS

Volume 82

October 1992

Number 10



Riding PE's  
San Bernardino line  
on MetroLink

# Timepoints

October 1992

## *The Southern California Traction Review*

produced monthly by

The Electric Railway Historical Association  
of Southern California, Inc.

Subscription included in membership.

Non-member subscriptions at \$15.00 per year. (Jan to Dec)

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## President's Column

### *MetroLink's Pacific Electric Heritage*

On Monday, October 26, 1992, the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) is scheduled to begin the first phase of its MetroLink rail commuter operations, connecting Los Angeles Union Station with the Simi Valley, Santa Clarita and Pomona areas. Electric railway historians are particularly interested in the reinstatement of rail passenger service (albeit hauled by diesel-electric locomotives) over portions of the former Pacific Electric San Bernardino Line. Between Los Angeles and Pomona, the MetroLink route is of diverse origin.

From Los Angeles Union Station, trains will cross the Los Angeles River on the bridge built in the late 1930s for Union Pacific trains to approach the station. On the east bank of the river, the trains will then use a track connection through a tunnel under Mission Road which was built during the last decade to give access for Southern Pacific and Amtrak trains to the so-called "State Street Line". (Formerly the Pacific Electric San Bernardino Line positioned

on the side of the San Bernardino Freeway from Los Angeles to the Cal. State L.A. campus, and in the middle of the Freeway from there to El Monte.) MetroLink will follow this line to the east bank of the Rio Hondo River in El Monte, where trains will leave the PE route and veer north over track built at the same time as the Mission Road tunnel to meet the Southern Pacific main line, which it will follow east across the San Gabriel River to Bassett. At Bassett, MetroLink will diverge to the north and follow the old Southern Pacific branch through Baldwin Park, West Covina, Covina and San Dimas to "E" Street in La Verne. The final stretch of the MetroLink route, to the Pomona station, is old Pacific Electric track.

The history of the Pacific Electric's segments of this route is interesting. A line from Los Angeles, crossing the river at what was later known as Aliso Street (now the Santa Ana and San Bernardino Freeways' joint bridge) and proceeding east to a point south of Alhambra, then north and east via Alhambra and Arcadia to Monrovia, was built as a three-foot-gauge steam railroad by the San Gabriel Valley Rapid Transit Railway in 1887 and 1888, opening in the summer of the latter year. This line was standard-gauged in the 1890s, then sold to the Southern Pacific, which abandoned it from Los Angeles to Shorb, where it crossed the SP main line at what later became the site of the SP Alhambra Station. In about 1902, the SP sold the abandoned right-of-way to Henry Huntington's "Old" Pacific Electric, which did not use it until 1906, when it built its new Northern District main lines. These lines crossed the river on Aliso Street and passed the then new Macy Street yard (much of which is still an SCRTD bus facility); next came Echandia Junction (just west of the present Golden State Freeway overcrossing), where the Highland Park-South Pasadena Line diverged to the north, and Valley Junction (just west of Solo Street), where the new Pasadena Short Line diverged. East of Valley Junction, PE used the old SGVRT right of way for as long as it went east, and then on a new route to build a line to El Monte, Baldwin Park and Covina in 1906-07. The line was extended to San Dimas in 1910, and in 1912 the SP branch (now to be used as far as La Verne by MetroLink) was electrified from Lone Hill

Junction west of San Dimas to Ganesha Junction, where connection was made with local car lines in Pomona. In 1913 and 1914, a line was built east to San Bernardino, and a connection (now to be used by MetroLink) was built from Lordsburg (La Verne) to North Pomona. Regular passenger service east of Covina (except for annual County Fair service to the fairgrounds north of Pomona and other specials and excursions) ended on November 1, 1941. Service went as far as Covina in weekday rush hours, otherwise to Baldwin Park.

In 1946, in order to abandon their track with slow street running in Covina, the PE acquired trackage rights over the SP from Baldwin Park to Lone Hill Junction (now part of the MetroLink route) and electrified this segment, using it for rush hour passenger service to Covina from November 4, 1946, to March 27, 1947, when all passenger service was cut back to Baldwin Park. The latter service ended on October 15, 1950, but passenger service remained west of Valley Junction for the Pasadena Short Line and Monrovia-Glendora Line until September 30, 1951. The next day, all freight operations on the San Bernardino Line were converted to diesel-electric power.

To summarize the history of the Pacific Electric segments:

Macy Street to Valley Junction: Opened late 1906; last passenger service and de-electrification, 1951.

Valley Junction to east bank of Rio Hondo: Opened 1907; last passenger service (except for excursions), 1950; de-electrified, 1951.

East bank of Rio Hondo to Baldwin Park (PE line not used for MetroLink)

Baldwin Park to Covina: SP line electrified by PE, 1946; last passenger service, 1947 (except for County Fair and other specials and excursions); de-electrified, 1951.

Covina to Lone Hill Junction: SP line electrified by PE, 1946; no passenger service except for County Fair and other specials and excursions; de-electrified, 1951.

Lone Hill Junction to "E" Street, La Verne: SP line electrified by PE, 1912; last passenger service (except for County Fair and other spe

cial and excursions), 1941; de-electrified, 1951.

"E" Street, La Verne, to [North] Pomona: Built by PE, 1914; last passenger service (except for specials and excursions), 1941; de-electrified, 1951.







ERHA Annual Banquet  
Mount Lowe Centennial  
with  
Charles Seims

Saturday Evening October 17, 1992

A Film & Slide Presentation of the Incline Railway, Mountain Railway and Mountaintop Resorts Built by Professor Thaddeus S.C. Lowe beginning on July 4th, 1892. The program will continue through the Pacific Electric era on the Mountain until 1938 when nature and the economy felled this once World famous destination spot.

This year's banquet will be at the Peppermill Restaurant at 795 East Walnut near Lake Avenue (PE's Mount Lowe Line) in Pasadena. Social hour begins at 7:<sup>00</sup>PM, Dinner at 8:<sup>00</sup>PM.

*Tickets will be held at the door.*

The Dinner menu will consist of

Beef Burgundy on Fettuccini Noodles & mixed seasonal vegetables,

Peppermill creamed Spinach,

Hot Breads, Coffee, Iced or Hot Tea, or Milk

For dessert, Crepe filled w/French Vanilla Ice Cream covered in Black Cherry Sauce.

Fare is: \$30/person if your reservation with check or Money order arrives at the Treasurer's mailbox by Saturday **September the 26th**, otherwise the

Fare is: \$35/person after the deadline and for all non-members.

Please mail your check to

ERHA of SC

c/o Jed Hughes

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# TIME TABLES

October

2, Friday. MEETING, Bay Area Electric Railroad Association, 8:00 PM, Veteran's Auditorium, 2nd floor, Grand & Harrison Oakland call after 6:30PM weekdays for program (415)673-6547.

9, Friday. MEETING, Pacific Railroad Society regular monthly meeting, 7:30PM at Joslyn Recreation Center, Alhambra.

10, Saturday. MEETING, San Diego Electric Railway Association regular monthly meeting, 7:30PM at SDG&E Co. 1st & Ash Sts.,

17, Saturday. BANQUET, Mount Lowe Cenntennial Celebration with Charles Seims, at the Peppermill Restaurant Pasadena 7:00PM Mixer, 8:0PM Dinner.

November 20, Friday. MEETING, ELECTRIC RAILWAY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION regular monthly meeting, in the PE Depot, Heritage Square. 7:30PM Business Meeting, 8:00 PM Program: TBA

November

ber

## Meetings By Mail!

We realize that many members live out of the area and are missing out on some wonderful programs. ERHA is videotaping some of our meeting's entertainment portions. Not a slick professional style video, occasional heads in the way, the audience commentary, white screens from missing slides, etc., the picture quality is excellent and any naration is picked up with a wireless microphone. A Hi8 Camcorder is placed on a tripod just above the slide projector so there is no keystoneing.

Please make out checks to ERHA of SC. Shipment time will depend upon the number of orders we receive. (Tapes will be duped to order.) Your donation of \$15.00/VHS tape includes postage, please add \$5.00 U.S. for international orders.

- #100
- #101 Ted Damon's PE slides, Glendale/Burbank, Bellflower, Long Beach & San Pedro. Lots of work trains, Juice Jacks, regular service and fan trips.
- #600 Paul Ward's Trolleybuses of North America 'A-S'.
- #601 Paul Ward's Trolley Buses 'S-Y' plus Volkmer's International Trolleybuses. (Not yet recorded)
- #700 Ken Douglas's slides, Ken Douglas presents his slide show of the British Columbia Electric Interurban & local service, Toronto, London & Port Stanley, Grand River Lake Erie & Northern Railway, Niagra & St. Catherine, Montreal & Southern Counties, Ottawa, Cornwall Street Railway Light & Power, CN electrified MU @ Montreal, Quebec Railway Light & Power, Hershey Railway of Cuba, Puebla Mexico, Mexico City, Tampico, Vera Cruz plus Bill Volkmer misc. at the end.

*We will only tape presenters with their prior permission.*

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