

EDITORIAL



Train #1 leaves Durango behind engine #478 for Silverton earlier this month. More than 100,000 tourists will ride the slim rails through the Las Animas Canyon this summer.

D&RGW PURCHASE NEAR

The purchase of the Denver and Rio Grande Western Rail line between Antonito and Chama has moved closer to reality as Colorado and New Mexico have agreed to terms for the purchase of the 64 mile stretch of narrow gauge track between the two cities.

New Mexico had been reluctant to commit itself to the purchase, rejecting earlier proposals by Colorado. Both states had appropriated a total of \$548,000 for the purchase of the track, nine steam locomotives and 130 freight cars from the D&RGW.

The purchase approval made no mention of the stretch of line between Chama and Durango. Earlier attempts to obtain an option were rejected by the railroad, and it is likely now that the railroad will actually dismantle that section, severing the Silverton branch from the system which gave it its birth.

An inspection of the entire line by your REPORT editor this month indicates that the states will have to make substantial repairs to the track and facilities before any trains could be operated. The remaining water tanks have been drained and the weather plus the shrinking of the wood has all but ruined the tanks. The paving of a state highway over Cumbres Pass has spawned the removal of track sections along the line for culverts, access roads and etc. Not to mention boulders rolled onto the tracks from road construction adjacent to the railroad grade over the pass.

THE SILVERTON, on the other hand, is operating at capacity. Two trains a day operate out of Durango carrying more than 900 people daily to the mining town of Silverton 45 miles away. A wait of at least two days was necessary with long lines at the cancellation window each morning hoping for a chance to ride. Predictions are that the railroad will pass the 100,000 passenger mark this summer alone.

STEAM-UP SUCCESSFUL

An estimated 350 Navy dependents and their families were treated by PSRMA to a ride in Coach 576 pulled by the Shay at the Steam-Up on June 27th at the Miramar Naval Station.

The biggest steam-up in PSRMA history, in that the shay was operated under steam over two miles of track, was necessary to switch the two locos to our new temporary storage site on the Naval Station property. Once the locos had arrived and the cars were arranged in order, a brief ceremony was held thanking the Naval Station for providing us a new home - temporarily.

After the ceremony, coach 576 was opened and the Navy dependents crowded aboard for a ride behind a steam engine. The operation by the members was well received by the Navy officials and future member only steam-ups are planned for training purposes.

The final lease is being drawn up by the Navy at present and when it is signed, we will be in our new home - officially.

One of the most important elections in the history of PSRMA will be facing the membership in the coming months. As you know, during the past year, we have made tremendous advancements. We have acquired several pieces of new equipment including an 1880 vintage snowplow and two turn of the century flatcars.

We have also faced many problems, perhaps the biggest being the location of a new place to store our equipment temporarily. Now in the coming months we may be faced with our biggest challenge ever - that of purchasing a permanent home for PSRMA.

With this in mind, each member should take a close look at himself and how he feels about PSRMA and what he wants to see PSRMA accomplish. Should the land materialize, it may mean that the members will have to contribute more than a few hours of work or a few dollars.

Leadership for PSRMA will be crucial during the coming months. Therefore, the upcoming elections for the 1971 officers is one that every member should become involved in. There are several competent members that can help guide PSRMA during the coming year. I will not attempt to endorse any of these persons, my point here is to try to arouse members to get out and participate in these elections and be prepared to get out and work for PSRMA.

Some members have expressed the feeling that the attempt we are making for the purchase of land at Jacumba may be the real test of our club and should we fail, the club will merely resort to one of fun "Steam-Ups" and a lot of armchair railroading.

I cannot agree completely with that feeling. I do believe that PSRMA is going to have to make a bold step forward and that may very well be committing ourselves to \$30,000 or \$40,000 for a permanent home. We can continue for years to come as we have holding "fun steam-ups" and Token operations for the public, but until we "Stick-Our-Neck-Out" can we really determine if we have something worthwhile to offer to the public and to ourselves **I THINK WE DO!!!!**

Jerry W. Windle
Editor, REPORT

REPORT MISCELLANEA

At the July Board Meeting, Dave Parkinson, Land Committee Chairman was authorized to re-contact the people with the Jacumba land and attempt to negotiate a possible option on the property. A maximum option of \$100 and a minimum length of six months was authorized by the Board.

Special activities chairman Kent Anderson reports that we are still waiting word from the Union Pacific about our proposed Kelso excursion in November. The railroad has to act on our request for a special train and get approval of rates from the ICC.

We have acquired a booth in a local Flea Market which is held each year by a local non-profit group. The booths are \$20 with any profits from sales going to our group. The Ways and Means Committee plans on selling various railroad or associated items that we can manufacture, i.e. decollages, pictures or whatever. Anyone having any ideas on what we could offer to the general public should contact Chop Kerr at 291-4787. The date for the market is in November so we still have time to get some items together.

GENERAL FUND IN BLACK!

PSRMA's general fund is still in the black according to Treasurer Dave Hobson. Our mid-year report shows that our fund balance is \$900. Expenses for the move of the shay and the #11 to Miramar, \$715, have been paid. So we have no pressing bills at the moment. Payable loans total \$500, most of which were made to help finance Coach 576.

The good health of the fund is due to the Puerto Penasco excursion, the film festival plus membership dues for the current year.