



# CENTRAL ARIZONA MODEL RAILROAD CLUB NEWSLETTER

Volume 21 Issue 3 March 2023

Website: [www.camrrc.com](http://www.camrrc.com)

facebook: [facebook.com/groups/409718243722049](https://facebook.com/groups/409718243722049)



## MEETING REFRESHMENT SCHEDULE

Just a reminder to the 50/50 winners from last month's meeting need to arrange the refreshments for the upcoming Mar 8 meeting. This month that falls to Rene Vallejo and Tom Dix. Thank you gentlemen in advance.

## SCHEDULE NOTE

*Hank Morris will be taking photos of the new members for the website at the meeting on Wednesday night.*

CAMRRC regular meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month. They feature tables where you are welcome to bring items for sale. Most months feature a program. Doors open at 6:00 pm for socializing and swapping and the meeting starts at 7:00 pm. Meetings are held at the Prescott Meals on Wheels hall located at Simmons Community Center, 1280 E. Rosser St. Prescott AZ. Rosser is right off of SR89.

**MARCH 8** - CAMRRC meeting at the Prescott Meals on Wheels hall.

**MARCH 18-19 AND 25-26** - Carson & Colorado Railways Slim Princess steam locomotive #18 running at Laws railroad Museum, Laws CA

**APRIL 12** - CAMRRC meeting at the Prescott Meals on Wheels hall.

**MAY 20** - Kingman Railroad Museum model train show. Kingman AZ

**JULY 29** - Beat the Heat train show at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.



# CENTRAL ARIZONA MODEL RAILROAD CLUB NEWSLETTER

MAR 2023



## CLUB MODULAR LAYOUT UPDATE

Hank Morris sends into the newsroom an update on prepping the club modular layout for June display at Sharlot Hall. A painting session on the module bases was held at Hank's house on Sunday February 12<sup>th</sup>. Here are some photos of the volunteers.





# CLUB MODULAR LAYOUT UPDATE





# CLUB MODULAR LAYOUT UPDATE

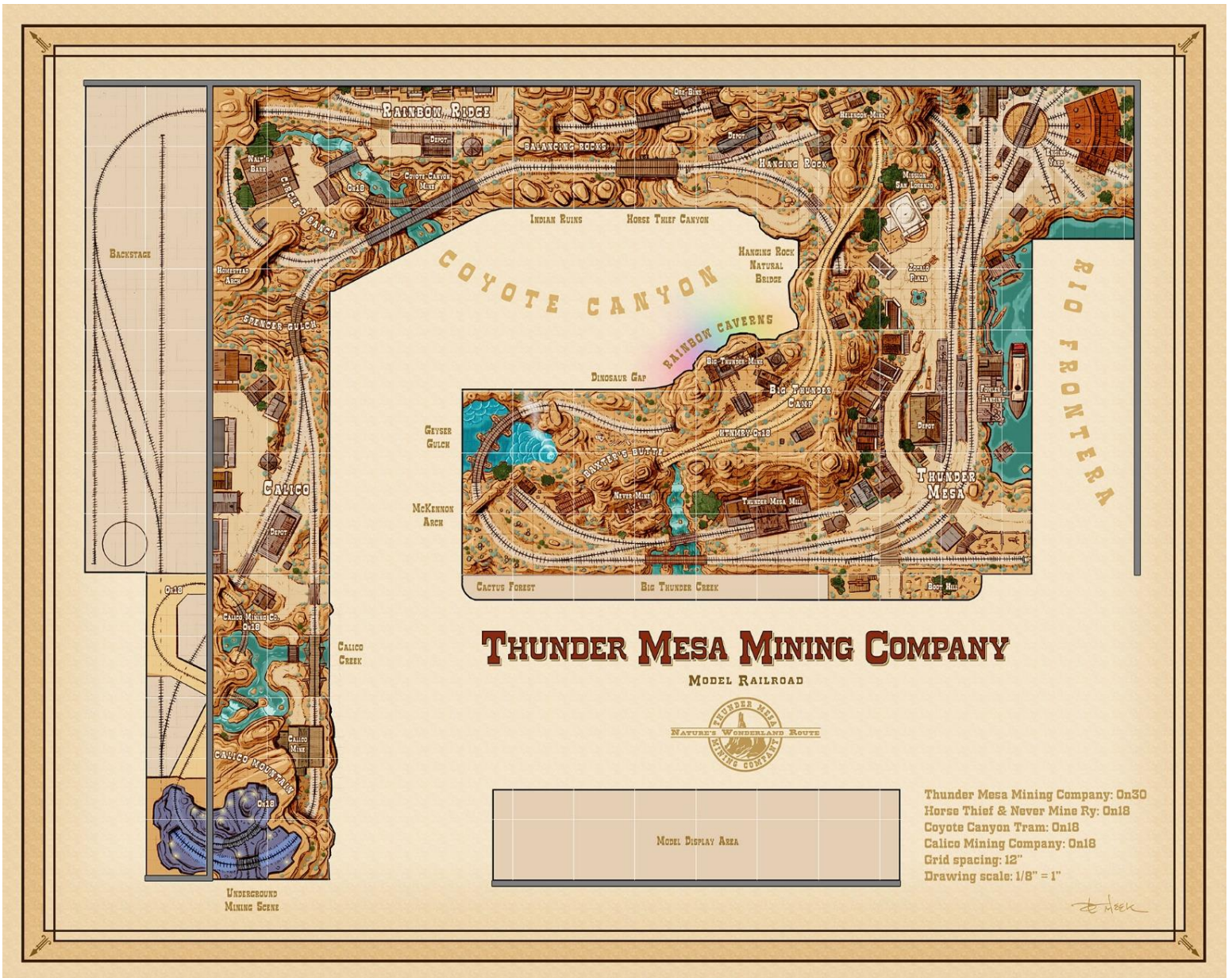




# THUNDER MESA STUDIOS — JEROME AZ

Dave Meek has created the Thunder Mesa Mining Company On30 railroad layout at his studio in Jerome, AZ. This fantastic freelance layout depicts the deserts of the southwest and loosely based on the Thunder Mountain railroad at Disneyland. Be sure to check out this outstanding layout. They offer an open house with free admission on the first Saturday of the month. Check the website for details.

<https://thundermesa.studio/>





# OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE BY FOSTER RASH PART 2



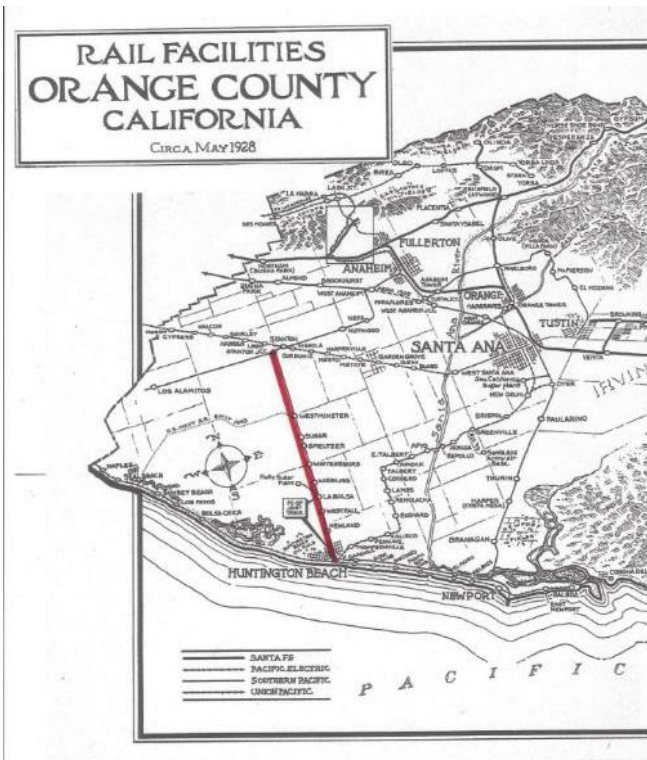
Santa Ana & Newport RR under construction.

In January I explored the working portion of the old Santa Ana & Newport Smeltzer branchline. I'll conclude with a tour of the abandoned portion of the

line from Ellis Ave to Pacific Coast Hwy. The Santa Ana and Newport had spanned the gully, through which Ellis Ave now runs, with an earthen fill.



The fill was replaced with a concrete overpass in the 1970's to permit the extension of Ellis Ave. The overpass now leads to a pedestrian parkway through an upscale residential area. Ellis Ave overpass marks the beginning of pedestrian parkway.





# OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE

Pedestrian parkway on old right of way from Ellis to Main St.

## La Bolsa

About 1/2 mile south of Ellis Ave, the pedestrian parkway ends at Main St. and Garfield Ave. The old right of way can be picked up on the southeast side of the intersection and continues in a straight line to Clay Ave. The La Bolsa station was located along this corridor.



La Bolsa station (photo taken sometime after the electrification of this portion of the line in 1911.) In the photo at right, there is a PE trolley on the main line and a "team track," siding, barely visible in the weeds, runs in front of the freight station loading dock. Also visible is some track work on the left, possibly for the Holly plant or La Bolsa tile.



The Ayres freight station kit is similar to the La Bolsa station

# OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE

Garfield & Main, Huntington Beach today.

Prior to the discovery of oil, processing sugar beets was the main industry in Huntington Beach. Holly Sugar built a large refinery on the north edge of town between Clay and Garfield Avenues and a spur track from La Bolsa served the plant. After oil was discovered, the sugar factory was demolished in 1923 and replaced by an oil refinery. Sugar beets from the area were then shipped to the Holly plant on Dyer Rd. in Santa Ana. A model of the refinery could be kit bashed into an impressive complex using plastic kits from the moderately priced Walthers Cornerstone series of structures (1:87, HO scale).



Holly Sugar Huntington Beach plant was built in 1911. Looking northeast, Gothard St. runs across bottom and the railroad is visible across the top beyond the tree line. Present day alignment of Main St. bisects this property diagonally from upper left to lower right.



In the photo at left, the beet dump trestle is visible on the right side of the plant the beet racks were run up on the trestle, the beets were dumped into flumes below and floated into the refinery for processing.



# OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE



Sugar Refinery site, looking across Garfield west of Main



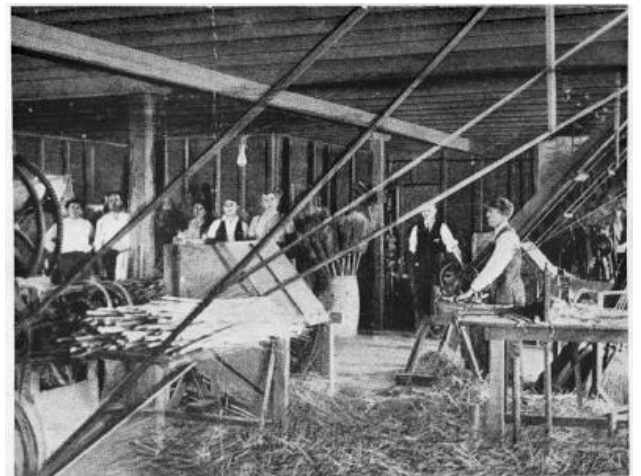
Bagged sugar ready for shipment at Holly refinery



Holly Lane is the only reminder of what was once here

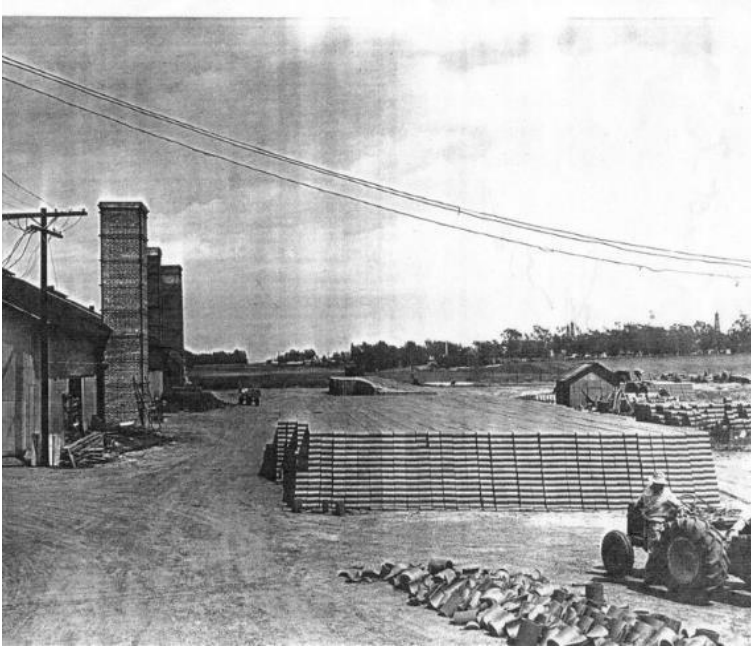
Due to the availability of convenient shipping by rail, other industries located near the La Bolsa station included: Pacific Broom Co, Pierce Cannery, Pacific Oil Cloth and Linoleum, and La Bolsa Tile.

Making brooms in Huntington Beach



# OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE

La Bolsa Tile plant on Garfield Ave in Huntington Beach. Tracks appear to run on the far right of the stacked roofing tile



## Huntington Beach

A Pacific Electric "Red Car" trolley ran on the old Santa Ana & Newport tracks from downtown Huntington Beach to La Bolsa to transport workers to the industries north of town. The area is still mostly commercial/light industrial but the former sugar plant property is predominately residential. A reminder of the old days is a street named Holly Lane!

PE "Red Car" stopped by a cow in Huntington Beach. Photo courtesy of Pacific Electric Ry Historical Society.

The rails from PCH to La Bolsa were removed after PE ceased operations in 1962. The mainline and team track (a team track is a siding where freight cars can be spotted for unloading directly onto vehicles; in the old days onto wagons pulled by a "team" of horses) between La Bolsa and Ellis were taken up in 1976. But much of the former right of way east of Lake St. from Utica Ave to Pacific Coast Hwy remains as a greenbelt and there are some beautiful old homes in the neighborhood. If you look at this area on a satellite map, the old right of way sticks out like a sore thumb!





# OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE



Many sections of the old right of way are evident parallel to Lake St. through old Huntington Beach.



On my way home, I stopped by Arnie's Trains in Westminster to pick up some supplies. I chose a couple of \$1.49 pre-owned plastic flatcars from the bargain table for conversion into sugar beet racks. We'll see how that turns out! Adjacent to Arnie's is the right of way for the recently abandoned (2010) US Navy Railroad that connected the Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station to the Smeltzer branchline at Hazard Ave.

Trestle over Bolsa Chica Channel, entrance to Naval Weapons Station



# OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE



I wonder what happened to the little GE locomotive that could sometimes be seen from the 405 Fwy moving ammo cars.

According to a Navy press release, the railroad was built during WWII and after many decades of use it was worn out. The creosote in the ties posed environmental concerns

for the adjacent Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge and required removal. Moving munitions by truck was deemed more cost effective than rebuilding the railroad.

My little day trip was a pleasant experience as the March weather was unseasonably warm and sunny. A tour of the Foose shop was an unexpected bonus. The industrial area that includes Reliable Lumber is interesting and the old Holly sugar refinery would make an impressive model. The La Bolsa station with an "imagineered" small industrial area, including a tile plant and cannery, could be built as a small switching layout or module.

## Modeling

I created some "Old Orange County" vignettes utilizing vintage kits from my stash:

- Tashima Market - Ayres Knott's Ghost Town General store kit
- Furuta Farm - Revell Barnyard kit and scratch built farmhouse
- Produce packing warehouse - Suydam corrugated metal warehouse kit



# OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE



Tashima Market



Furuta Farm

The Earl Fruit Co. packed produce in California, Oregon and Washington



# OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE

## Building a Suydam Metal Structure

I know we are a plastic modelers club but I thought some of you might enjoy a little non-plastic armchair modeling. I hope you find this build interesting. Ed Suydam produced a number of corrugated metal structure kits in the early '60s. Up until then, modelers had been using the corrugated cardboard wrappers from light bulb packaging or using the teeth of a comb to emboss corrugations in the metal foil from toothpaste tubes in order to represent metal roofing and siding! So the Suydam metal structures were a great leap forward. The renowned pioneer of fine scale model railroading, John Allen, had Suydam structures on his Gorre & Daphetid model railroad; these kits were state of the art at the time! The bugaboo was they had to be soldered together and people said the tinplate material was difficult to solder. For that reason, I avoided the kits as a kid but now I'm ready for the challenge! So follow along while I court the trick of disaster and try to assemble a corrugated metal produce packing warehouse.

### Suydam corrugated metal warehouse kit

As with any kit, I read the instructions and familiarized myself with the components and assembly procedure. The structure is very simple, just a box really, but the walls are all different and interchange side to side and end to end. There are optional placements of the loading doors on the trackside wall, so the builder can customize the structure to suit the site. The walls are reinforced with metal angle. The window inserts are two dimensional with the window pane detail just printed on the celluloid glazing material. Cast white metal rooftop ventilators are included in the kit.

Since this was a 50 year old kit and the tinplate was beginning to tarnish in some areas, I carefully prepped the metal before soldering. I sanded a couple of rusty spots and treated the areas with Naval Jelly rust remover.





## OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE

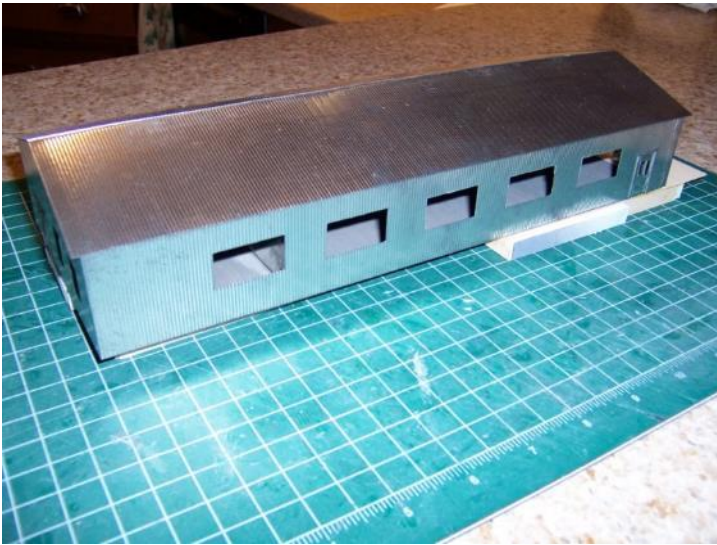
Then I rubbed down all the parts with steel wool and washed them with soap and water. A separate sheet of soldering instructions was included in the kit which contained a good explanation of different solders and fluxes. The Suydam instructions recommended 50/50 solid core solder with an acid flux but I couldn't find this at Home Depot. I looked on line and found only one company selling acid flux (\$10 per bottle plus shipping), but my Google search also turned up numerous first aid tips about what to do when you poison yourself from fumes using the stuff! I had 60/40 electrical solder in my toolbox, went to the Weller website and found that the difference between 50/50 and 60/40 solder is the melting point (60/40 is lower). So I skipped the "old school" soldering and tried 60/40 electrical solder with some paste-type plumbing flux I had on hand and had no problems with solder flow or adhesion. Heat build-up must always be considered to avoid warping when working with sheet metal. To avoid warpage, the parts were initially tacked together with small spots of solder.



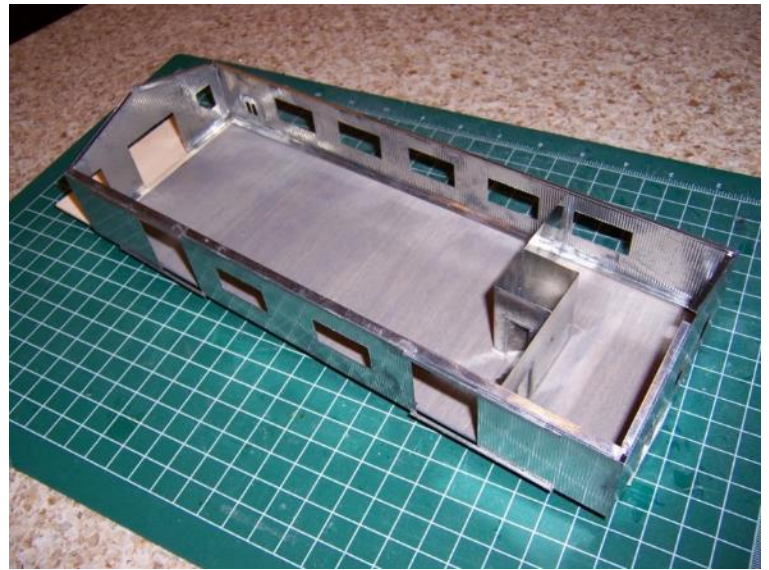
Walls are braced with metal angle soldered in place

After all the soldering was completed, I scrubbed the model with Comet cleanser and a toothbrush, then thoroughly rinsed to remove all traces of flux to ensure good paint adhesion. Finally, I rubbed it down with metal prep to etch the surface for good paint adhesion before spraying on a coat of gray automotive primer.

# OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE



Structure is basically a box



Interior partition soldered in place

The kit builds a tidy but plain structure. There is a mat board floor and the roof is removable. The interior has a partition which creates an office area and restroom but no other details are provided. I found a website with info on old packing houses, [www.coastdaylight.com/ljames1/scph.html](http://www.coastdaylight.com/ljames1/scph.html) and added more detail based on the photos I found there. A packing plant used a lot of boxes.



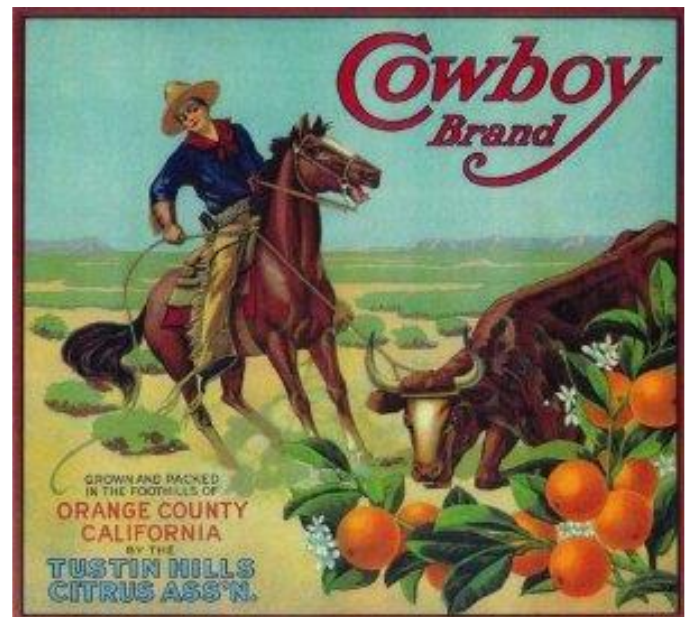
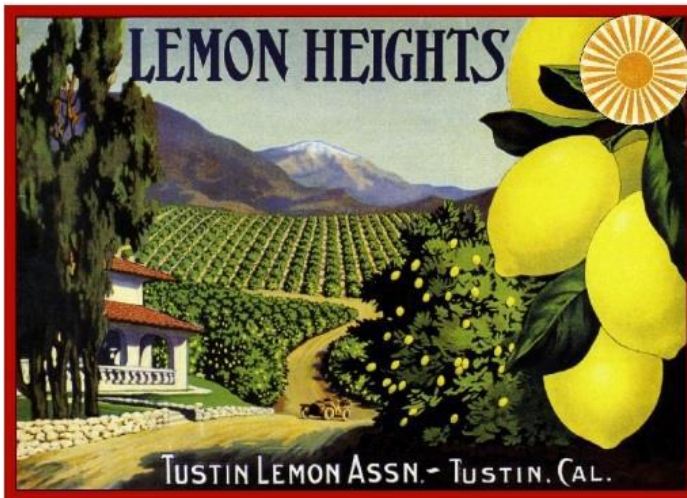
Packing boxes at the ready



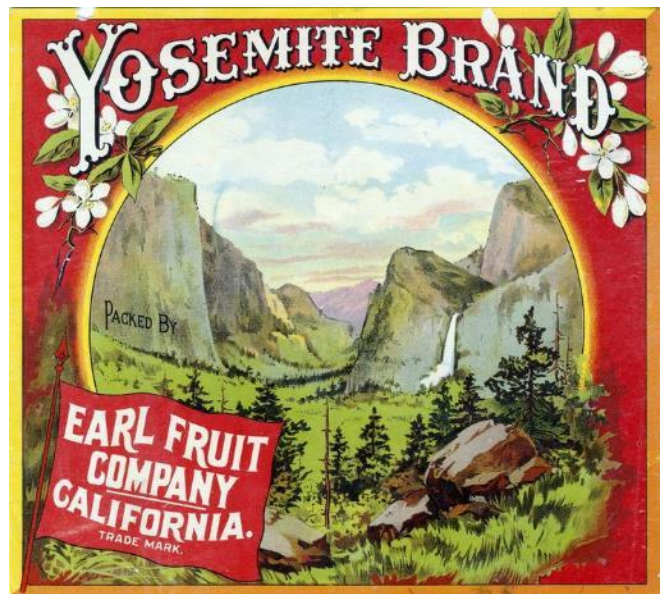
# OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE

I built a large stack of boxes from cardstock and borrowed some of the box art often included in the IPMS OC Newsletter, printed out the reduced size labels and glued them on the ends of my "boxes."

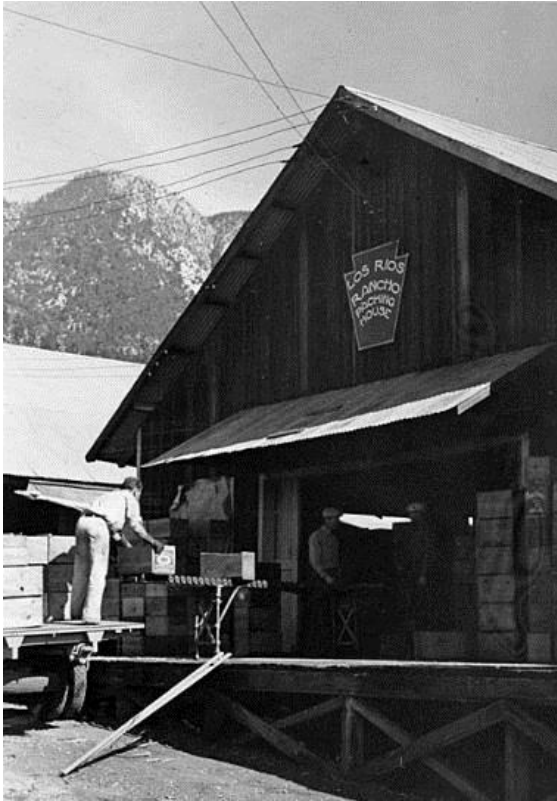
Packing box labels



I overlaid the mat board floor with 1/32" sheet basswood and stained it with driftwood gray Minwax. I elevated the floor on a foam core board foundation with a timber pier-type perimeter foundation constructed of strip wood. Then I mounted the assembly on a 1/8" MDF base. A cover was added over the receiving dock with a farmers unloading produce. The trucks and farm wagon were built from Jordan kits. The Armour billboard reefer was built from a Roundhouse kit. Figures are Micro-Mark.



# OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE

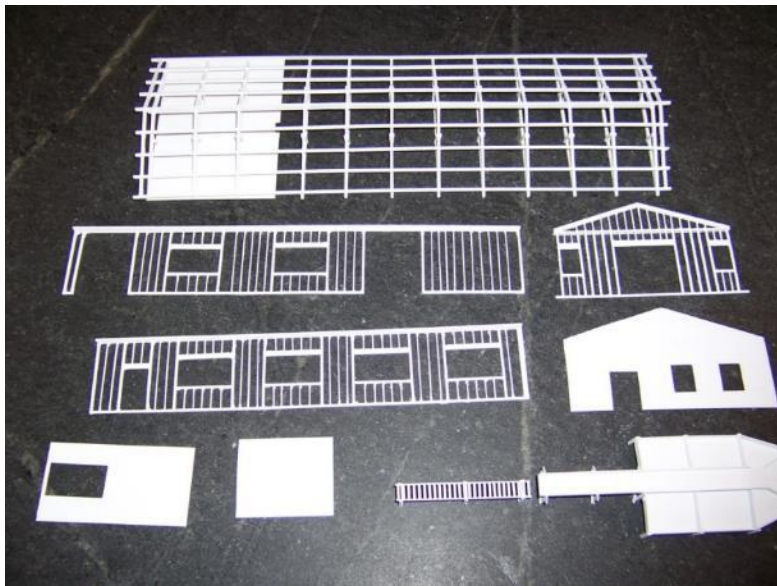


Receiving dock details

Packing house roof truss detail



For interest, wooden trusses were added under the removable roof. Strip wood framing was added to the interior walls. I used .020" sheet styrene to build sorting tables and the produce is represented by some kind of salad seasoning seeds purloined from my wife's spice rack. Painted green, I think they resemble bell peppers. Boxed produce, staged ready for shipment, was set out on the loading dock.



Interior framing was built from scale lumber

I painted the structure exterior with Model Master neutral gray to look like mildly oxidized galvanized metal siding. The window trim and interior were painted flat white. The structure was weathered with pigment powders. Since I am modeling the early 1900-era,

the structure was moderately weathered as it might have appeared in its prime. In other words, no heavy rust or deterioration.



# OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE

Trackside view of the model. Armour reefer built from a Roundhouse kit



Farm wagon built from Jordan Highway Miniatures kit



Empty packing boxes stored on the dock



Farmers unloading their trucks



# OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE



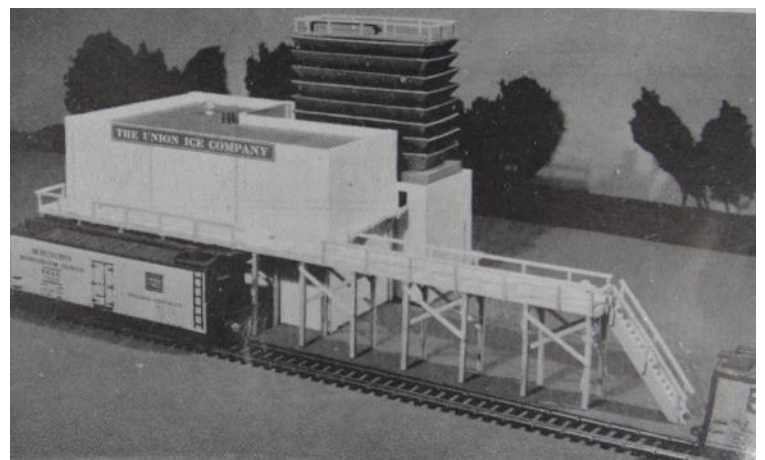
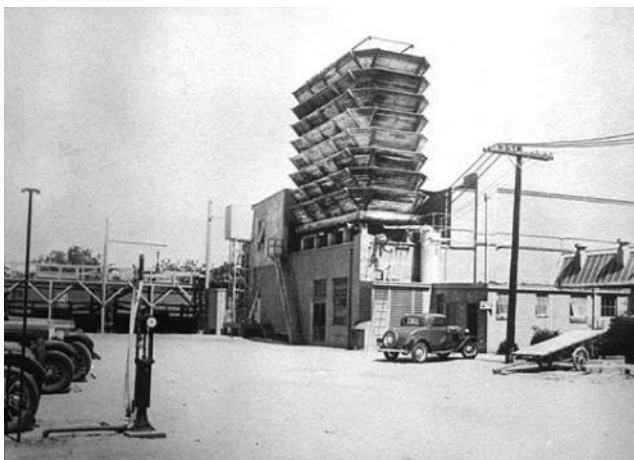
Interior with metal roof removed



Interior with roof support trusses removed

## Sidebar: A couple of interesting bits

While looking through old photos of California produce packing plants, I came upon this photo of a refrigerator car icing facility in Tustin. Compare it to the Ayres/Suydam Union Ice kit at right.





## OLD ORANGE COUNTY CA THE SMELTZER BRANCHLINE

Armour meat had a huge private fleet of refrigerator cars and shipped meat products all over the country. To avoid the expense of returning cars empty from the west coast, Armour acquired the Earl Fruit Co and shipped produce east in returning Armour reefers. The government determined this efficiency to be an unfair trade practice and forced Armour to divest; the refrigerator line became Fruit Growers Express and Earl Fruit Co. was sold to the agricultural conglomerate DiGiorgio.

A restored Pacific Electric maintenance car houses a small museum in Seal Beach. The museum is dedicated to "Red Car era" Seal Beach, surfing and the history of the community. Located on the old PE right of way along Electric Ave at Main St., it is open the second and fourth Saturdays each month from 12 to 3pm and admission is free. [www.beachcalifornia.com/redcar-museum-seal-beach.html](http://www.beachcalifornia.com/redcar-museum-seal-beach.html)



Pacific Electric Museum in Seal Beach is on the old Long Beach to Newport PE Coast Line.

~END~

# CUMBRES AND TOLTEC NARROW GAUGE RAILROAD ANTONITO COLORADO BY TERRY HUBER



Back in 2013 a friend and I attended the IPMS National Convention in Loveland Colorado. The convention ran through Saturday so on Sunday morning my driving partner, Pascal Zandt and I left the Convention hotel and headed south on I-25 towards a town called Antonito in southern Colorado. We were going there to ride the Cumbres and Toltec narrow gauge railroad. Not quite as famous as the Durango & Silverton Railroad in Durango CO, but nonetheless the C & TS as it's called runs from Antonito to Chama New Mexico and is still high on the list of railroad aficionados.

The C&TS was once an extension of the San Juan Valley line built by the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad (D&RGW). Mining operations south of Alamosa to Antonito and into the San Juan Mountains was the main reason for the extension. Narrow gauge at 3 foot track width can handle the tight turns and narrow tunnels in the San Juan Mountains. An extension was built off of this line which became the Durango Silverton line. Today both lines operate their "modern" engines being built in 1925 by Baldwin Locomotive in Philadelphia PA, as a ten engine fleet of K-36 Mikado's. These are 2-8-2 locos with a coal tender and doghouse. We arrived at Antonito late Monday afternoon, took a few photos of the station, the engines and some rolling stock. With the weather threatening with rain, we headed back to Alamosa to spend the night. We would be back to Antonito on Monday morning for the 10:00 a.m. departure time.



# CUMBRES AND TOLTEC NARROW GAUGE

Main entrance to the Antonito Depot



Engine 488 with the fire still burning



Antonito station. The car below is the parlor car where we would board tomorrow morning. At that time, locomotive 488 will be switched to the front of this group of seven cars to begin the first leg of the trip.



# CUMBRES AND TOLTEC NARROW GAUGE

Before we made the drive down to Antonito, early the next morning we went down to the Alamosa station to get a couple of pictures of the SD90's used by the San Luis and Rio Grande RR (SLRG). This line is still in use and these may have been repainted to the Iowa Pacific scheme which operates on these old D&RGW tracks, the train has some heritage. Below are SD90 #115 and #116 which just pulled into the station. Also nearby another early steam engine we found in the yard.



After a few more photos we headed south to Antonito. We arrived at the station and after a few pictures we boarded the train. The parlor car has 20 chairs arranged inside the beautifully restored period car with its sculped ceiling and restored original lamps. Of course we were able to order up a couple of Bloody Mary's for the beginning of the trip, along with coffee, some pastry, fruit plates, juices and soda as much as you felt like.



# CUMBRES AND TOLTEC NARROW GAUGE



The thing about the parlor car was that we were at the end away from most of the smoke, and you could go forward into the other cars during the trip, including the gondola near the engine. A side note is I was wondering why people had goggles on. I found out soon enough up in that gondola car with soot and black bits flying everywhere. The parlor car is the way to go, souvenir coffee mugs, a tote, and an enamel hat

pin for each of us. I highly recommend this approach.

The plan for this trip was to ride with engine 488 on the way up to a place called Osier, have lunch, and then board engine 489 for the return trip back to Antonito. This railroad has different trip options like taking the entire 64 mile trip from Antonito to Chama, and then come back by bus to your home station. You can also go up and back from either Antonito or Chama. Osier is an old toll road way station at 9637 feet. They have a cafeteria style lunch during the stop. More on that later.

We would head out of Antonito station at 7888 feet and climb to Osier slowly but surely. These trains actually go a lot faster than the 20 miles per hour at most that we ran.



The idea being that with the equipment and track conditions, you won't go much faster than this to be safe. This is the highest narrow gauge RR in the country. Lots of volcanic activity ages ago as rocks and boulders from dormant volcano Mt. San Antonio below left are thrown everywhere. There are actually a few hot spots on the mountain today. Slowly we make our way to higher country.



# CUMBRES AND TOLTEC NARROW GAUGE

We climbed high along the Los Piños valley and river 600 feet below the tracks. We would be stopping at an old way station called Sublette for water for the engine which is pumped up from the Los Piños River below. Since we could not disembark the train at this point, Pascal and I went forward to look at the other cars.



As we moved forward into the other cars the train completed its water stop and we began moving up into the San Juan

Mountains at that massive speed of 14 miles an hour. The other cars are not quite as nice as you have from back of the train to front – (2013 prices) Parlor car \$169, the Deluxe Tourist \$129, or the Coach for \$79. The outdoor gondola high sided flat car is the same as Coach. Of course Triple AAA discounts will knock off around \$10 per pass. Photo below of Coach and open gondola.





# CUMBRES AND TOLTEC NARROW GAUGE



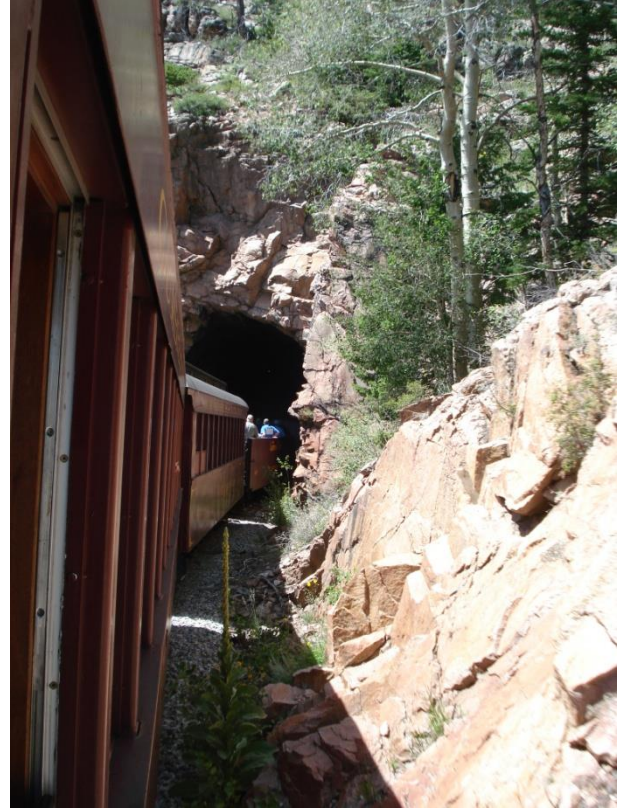
The gondola car is actually a pretty good place to take photos from. Aside from the coal ash you can get some great shots. The photos here are climbing towards Toltec Gorge and Phantom Canyon. The first tunnel we pass through is Mud Tunnel at 342 feet long supported by timbers.

Next up was Phantom Curve so named for the appearances of phantom shadows on the canyon walls that the original crews working on the line observed overnight at this site. When you build a railroad in the Rocky Mountains, the practice is “Go through what you can’t go around. Next tunnel coming up was Rock or Toltec Tunnel at 366 feet long blasted by black powder entirely through Precambrian rock – no supports. At the exit there is a small tribute monolith to President James Garfield erected in 1881 after his assassination during office.





# CUMBRES AND TOLTEC NARROW GAUGE



As I stated on the previous page we climbed a little higher through some tight passes and made it to Osier. Now it was time to disembark and get some lunch.

Nothing special but the food was decent. Soup and Salad bar along with the dessert cart was downstairs, while in the cafeteria upstairs it was a typical line to feed lots of people. The choices were baked turkey, meat loaf, mashed potatoes / gravy, nice looking mac & cheese, some corn and fruit and of course fountain drinks including sugar free. Picnic style seating with everyone and the help was great. Locomotive #488 would travel on to Chama NM, while we took #489 which arrived from Chama back to Antonito.



# CUMBRES AND TOLTEC NARROW GAUGE

Cafeteria building at Osier



Section bunkhouse for replacement crews staying overnight.



Bunkhouse and water tower at Osier



Sign on the section house

At this point after lunch it was pretty much board engine train 489 and head back to Antonito. Same route going back with a lot of different people that had come onto this train from Chama to Osier. I think next time I'll try the Chama side up to Osier. There is crossing of Long Creek on a 100ft trestle and an even a higher pass at Cumbres (Crest in Spanish) at 10015 ft and another trestle at Cascade Creek 408 feet long and 137 feet from the canyon. This is an entire day trip starting at 10:00 a.m. to around 5:00 p.m. back at Antonito. I highly recommend it for anyone especially rail fans.



# CUMBRES AND TOLTEC NARROW GAUGE

There are two ways to ride the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic route. One station in Chama, NM which the line heads east, or from Antonito CO where the line heads west. Both directions meet up at Osier.

Chama Depot

500 S. Terrace Ave

Chama, New Mexico

888.286.2737

<https://cumbrestoltec.com/>

Antonito Depot

5234 B US Hwy 285

Antonito, Colorado

719.472.3984

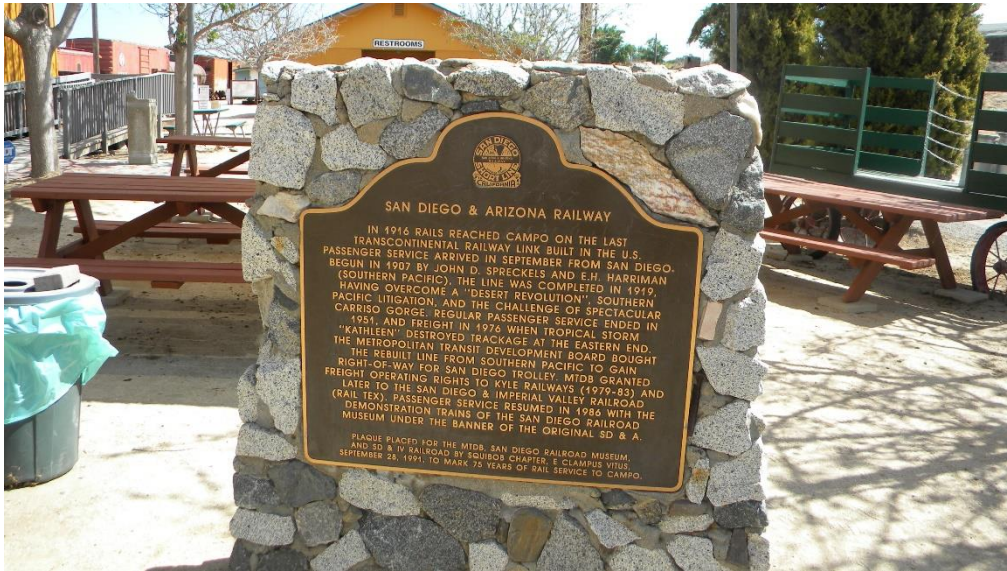
That afternoon we drove to Durango Colorado to spend the night. The next morning we got up and went down to the Durango station depot and took photos of engine 486 getting ready to depart for Silverton. I think this trip is next on my list.



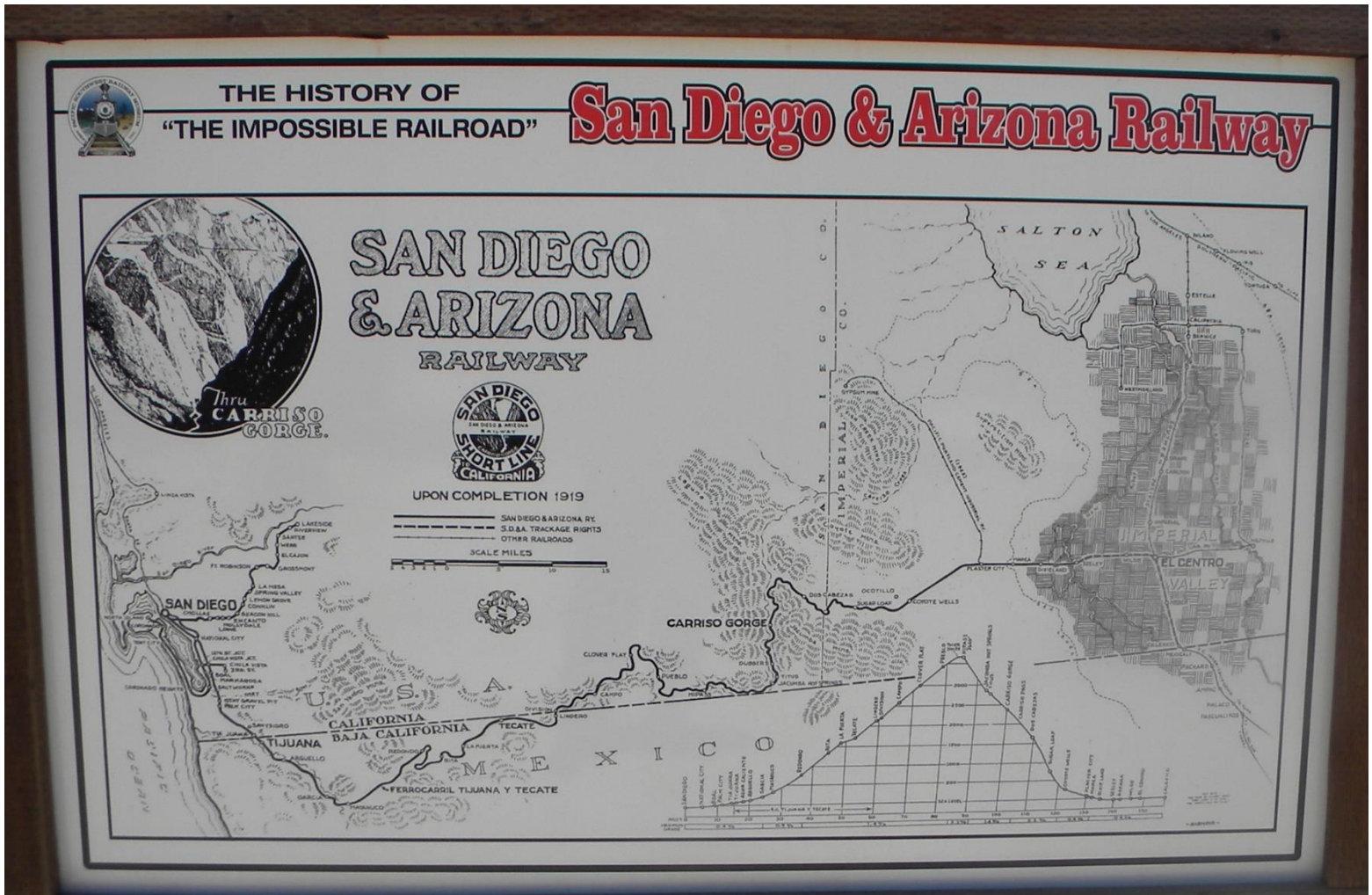


# PACIFIC SOUTHWEST RAILWAY MUSEUM

BY BILL MITCHELL



Bill Mitchell has supplied some photos of a trip to the San Diego and Arizona Railway along with the Campo Depot. There are quite a few photos so your Editor will pick out his favorites. Hope you enjoy.





# PACIFIC SOUTHWEST RAILWAY MUSEUM





# PACIFIC SOUTHWEST RAILWAY MUSEUM





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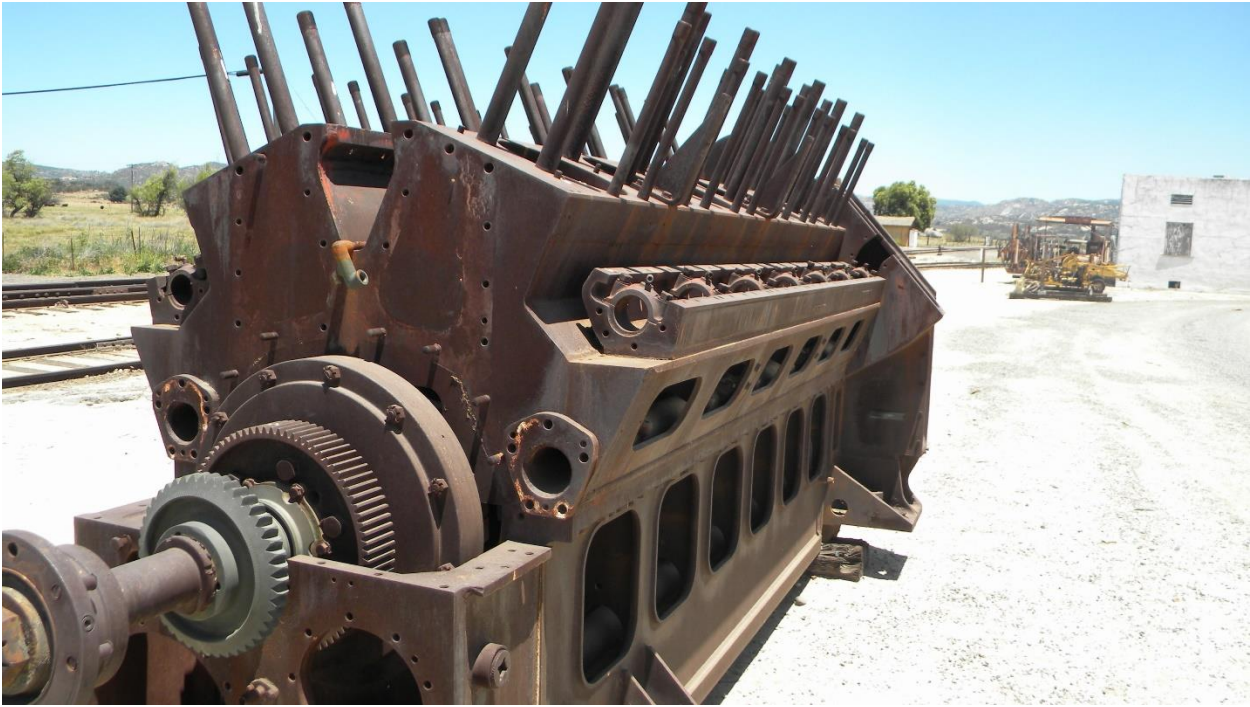




# PACIFIC SOUTHWEST RAILWAY MUSEUM



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# PACIFIC SOUTHWEST RAILWAY MUSEUM



## THE HISTORY OF "THE IMPOSSIBLE RAILROAD"

# San Diego & Arizona Railway

**December 14, 1906** - John D. Spreckels, with his brother Adolph, announced his intent to construct a railroad from San Diego to Yuma, the San Diego & Arizona Railway (SD&A). Condemnation proceedings and surveys were begun. The history of the San Diego & Arizona Railway is a narrative of one calamity after another for this "Impossible Railroad."

**September 7, 1907** - Groundbreaking ceremonies were held near the foot of 28th Street in San Diego. Calamity No. 1: The country was plunged into a short, but severe, depression. Money for construction was almost impossible to obtain.

**January 1908** - Grading started and work continued on the surveys. Two All-American routes via Dulzura and one through Lower California (now generally known as Baja California), Mexico, were determined to be practical. Detailed estimates showed the costs of the All-American routes to be the higher. John D. went to Mexico City and obtained the required concessions from the Mexican Government.

**1909** - Economic conditions were improved and grading contracts from San Diego to the Mexican border and through Baja California to Tecate were awarded, including the boring of two tunnels near the location of the present Rodriguez Dam.

**September 1909** - Calamity No. 2 struck. E. H. Harriman (President of Southern Pacific Railroad (SP) and Union Pacific Railroad) died. He was the key organizer for a secret financial partnership with the SP. The contract with the Spreckels Brothers was cancelled. The SP Railroad would advance no more funds.

**July 29, 1910** - The first passenger train was a popular excursion to Tijuana Hot Springs (Agua Caliente). The bridge across the Tijuana River was completed by the end of the year, as well as the first two tunnels in Mexico.

**May 1911** - Calamity No. 3. The Mexican Revolution came to the Tijuana area in the form of a rash of skirmishes. All Mexican railroad construction workers left the job. In June, the insurrectionists surrendered and work on the SD&A resumed.

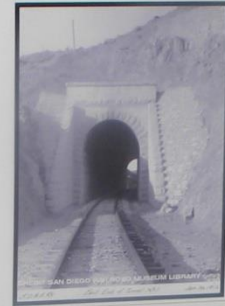
**February 1912** - Calamity No. 4 should have been the knock-out punch, but John D.'s indomitable courage and fierce determination were unconquerable. The Southern Pacific instituted a lawsuit versus the Spreckels Company to recover nearly three million dollars which had been advanced for construction. John D. fought this action through the courts. Meanwhile, Spreckels used his own funds to finance construction.

**September 1914** - Ten miles of bow knots and double horseshoe curves, needed to gain altitude out of Redondo in Mexico, slowed progress. Much of the construction was through solid granite. Passenger service to Tecate, Mexico (52.3 miles from San Diego, elevation 1,685 feet) was initiated.

**1914** - Calamity No. 5 - With the declarations of war in Europe starting World War I, there was no money available for railroad construction projects. Somehow, John D. kept the work going. Political relations with the Republic of Mexico became strained when all American citizens were ordered out of Mexico. However, Mexican foremen carried on the construction work nobly until the disputes were settled.

*The Santa Fe Railway was then building a new train station in San Diego for the 1915 exposition. Negotiations were concluded for use of the new facilities, making it a Union Station, with the San Diego & Arizona paying a pro-rata share of the costs. (Today it is used by Amtrak, Coaster and the San Diego Trolley).*

*Railroad building in the USA was now at a standstill, except for the SD&A. Grading continued to Campo, including the boring of tunnels numbers 3 and 4 (which straddles the border between Mexico and USA).*



## THE HISTORY OF "THE IMPOSSIBLE RAILROAD"

# San Diego & Arizona Railway

**January 1916** - Calamity No. 6 - After Charles "The Rainmaker" Hatfield started his legendary work five miles from Campo at Lake Morena, a massive flood brought tremendous devastation to the line, with the collapse of the Lower Otay Dam on the 27th. The high fill across Otay Valley was swept away; 1,000 feet of fill in Sweetwater Valley was washed out; and great damage was done to the new work along Campo Creek. Over 25% of the railway was destroyed! Steam locomotive #50 was derailed, turned over onto its left side. It sank in the sand and mud in Sweetwater Valley, with the engineer and fireman having narrow escapes. Train service over temporary tracks was resumed in mid-February. The rails reached Campo (elevation 2,585 feet) 65.8 miles from San Diego.

**October 2, 1916** - The first passenger trains to Campo were initiated, with transfers to "roomy 12 passenger chair car autos" of the White Star Motor Company to El Centro. Trains were also operated from San Diego to serve patrons of the horse races held in Tijuana at the racetrack near the border.

**December 1916** - With the lawsuit settled, amicable relations were re-established with the Southern Pacific. Now, the SD&A was jointly owned and financed on a 50-50 basis by SP and Spreckels and construction continued.

**1917** - Calamity Number 7 - The United States entered World War I. The US government seized and took over the operation of all the major railroads, under the United States Railroad Administration. All railroad construction was stopped. John D. overcame this calamity by making a trip to Washington to convince authorities to authorize completion of the SD&A as a defense measure, due to the military installations in the San Diego area. He was granted an exemption, the only one issued. Labor shortages and the high costs of materials still hindered progress.

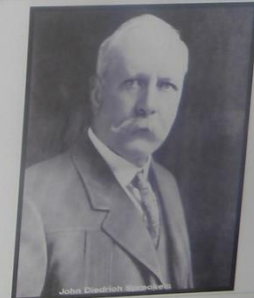
Then the final contract covering the last twenty miles was signed. This included the almost impossible stretch through Carriso Gorge. Work was started from both ends of the canyon. There were 17 tunnels to bore within the 11 miles in the Gorge proper, ranging from about 245 feet to 2,597 feet in length. The roadbed had to be carved out of the steep slopes of the canyon, sometimes as high as 900 feet above the bottom of the ravine. How this most difficult construction could be accomplished taxes one's imagination. Expensive bypass roadways had to be constructed around the tunnels. Laborers lived in construction camps in Carriso Gorge under miserable conditions. Water for construction camps in the desert was a serious problem. The cost of the Gorge section exceeded the wildest estimates, resulting in an expenditure of over \$4,000,000 and running the entire cost of railroad construction up to \$18,000,000.

**November 15, 1919** - The "Gold Spike Limited" made its run from San Diego to Carriso Gorge siding, carrying many dignitaries, politicians, railroad employees and photographers from the Southwest, including Baja California. John D. drove the final spike. It was a real gold one, costing \$286, and it was inscribed "Spike driven, by John D. Spreckels, President." "Last spike driven, San Diego & Arizona Railway, in Carriso Gorge - November 15, 1919!" John D. had accomplished the so-called "impossible." Mayor Louis Wilde said: "You have often heard the remark that San Diego is a one-man town. Personally I feel proud to live in San Diego when it is referred to as a one-man town. This afternoon you can't give our great leader enough glory."

**December 1, 1919** - The first through trains from El Centro - 148 miles to San Diego - arrived at Union Station in the afternoon. Parades and banquets followed. John D. said "This is the happiest day of my life." The first freight train left San Diego that night with 20 cars.

**December 10, 1919** - Through Pullman service to Chicago was inaugurated, with trains operated to and from Yuma over the Inter-California Railway. Crews changed at Calexico. The through cars were switched to the Southern Pacific's Golden State Limited at Yuma.

**1920** - Additional trains were added to the schedule. The Imperial Valley Local was a mixed freight and passenger train to and from Calexico which ran at night. A third pair of trains, #101-102, also carried a Pullman sleeping car.





# PACIFIC SOUTHWEST RAILWAY MUSEUM



THE HISTORY OF  
"THE IMPOSSIBLE RAILROAD"

## San Diego & Arizona Railway

**June 7, 1926** - John Diedrich Spreckels, age 72, dies. He was eulogized as one of America's few great Empire Builders who invested millions to turn a struggling, bankrupt village into the beautiful and cosmopolitan city San Diego is today

**1932** - A series of disasters struck the railroad.

First, a fire burned the wooden timbers in Tunnel 3 in Baja California in January. The portals were sealed and the fire burned for four days. The roof caved in, leaving two separate, but shorter tunnels, with one thereafter called Tunnel 3½. The railroad was tied up for 45 days, causing a reported loss of \$159,000. Scarcely had service been resumed when a huge mountain slide, loosened by heavy rains, blocked the line in the vicinity of Tunnel #15 on March 27th. After an engineering study had been made and plans prepared for a change in alignment, Tunnel #15 was abandoned and about one-half mile of new roadbed was constructed, including a new tunnel and the building of a high wooden bridge (Goat Canyon Trestle) on a 15 degree curve with repair costs of \$319,771. Freight and passenger services were re-established on July 6th. Finally, on October 22nd, Tunnel #7 burned and partially collapsed, and it was decided to abandon it. A bypass was built bordering a cliff and requiring seven 20 degree curves in 1,150 feet. Trains began running on January 23, 1933.

**February 1, 1933** - The heirs to the JD and AB Spreckels' estate sold their interests to the SP. As a result, the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway Company was incorporated as a wholly owned, separately operated, subsidiary of the Southern Pacific.

**February 5, 1950** - The first diesel-electric locomotive pulled a freight train over the mountains in place of a steam locomotive.

**January 11, 1951** - The last through passenger train left San Diego at 7:05 a.m., marking the end of an era. Mexican laws required passenger service to continue between Tijuana and Lindero (at the border with USA), which was accomplished by adding a coach to the daily freight train.

**October 1955** - SP Steam locomotive #104 and the "Carriso Gorge," President Spreckels' private car, were donated by the Southern Pacific. They both travelled through Campo and were placed on display at the San Diego County Fair Grounds in Del Mar until 1983, when they were donated to the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum and moved to Campo.

**1963** - Mexican passenger service ended.

**September 10, 1976** - Hurricane Kathleen washed out the railway in 90 locations over 70 miles in the desert. SP sold the railway to the Metropolitan Transit Development Board for trolley service in San Diego for \$18.1 million. SP was required to repair the rail line. Freight service was operated under a short line contractor, Kyle Railways, until 1983, when fire destroyed two trestles outside of Tunnel #6 in Carriso Gorge.

**January 4, 1986** - The Pacific Southwest Railway Museum began demonstration passenger trains under the SD&A Railway name, which continue to this day.

*Since that time, the railway has undergone numerous repairs by freight railway companies with the goal of reopening the line for freight traffic. Some trestles and Tunnels # 2, 3, 3½, 4, 8, and 16 have all been seriously damaged or destroyed by fire. Limited freight trains have operated on and off during the passing years. What does the future hold for this "Impossible Railroad?" Only time will tell.*

*If ever a railroad was a monument to one man's undaunted courage, indefatigable energy and steadfast determination to surmount overwhelming odds, the San Diego & Arizona Railway is a vibrant memorial to John Diedrich Spreckels, the last of America's great railroad builders.*



## FOR SALE    WANTED    TRADES    DISPOSAL

If you have any items for sale, items wanted, to trade or to dispose of or give away you can send me some photos with a brief description of the items and contact information for inclusion into this section of the newsletter. No prices will be listed as this is negotiated between seller and buyer.

FROM FRED WILLIAMS

Outstanding Lionel Postwar Train collection with some modern. I have many pictures of the items the man has but not all, it is an extensive collection. I'm aware these are highly desirable trains. I am selling these for a friend and I myself am acting as the middle man only to help the man out. Most of the trains are in Very good or excellent condition (Many Boxed). Have lots more pictures and please ask if you have questions or require more pictures to be sent to you. This is an all or nothing deal so do not ask for individual items. I will pass on offers to the gentleman so contact me at [Trainsfan@aol.com](mailto:Trainsfan@aol.com). The seller can meet at his home to finalize the sale (in Paradise Valley AZ). Cash only, sorry will not shipping.

LIONEL 2331 Virginian (Black roof)

Lionel Milw GP7 (2338)

Lionel 2360 Tuscan GG1 (Exec Stripes)

Lionel NYC 2344 ABA

Lionel 624 Switcher (Poor Box)

Lionel 6250 Seaboard Switcher

Lionel 2026 Steamer/Tender

Lionel 746J /Short stripe tender Boxes and Set box/Exec with Madison Hardware labels

Lionel 51 Navy Yard switcher (Boxed)

Lionel 53 Rio Grande Switcher (Reversed A) One window strut missing & 1 cracked

Lionel 6-18005 Hudson (BOXED)

Unrun/Boxed Lionel 6517 Caboose

Lionel 6017 Caboose

Lionel 6650 Rocket Launcher

Lionel 6414 car carrier w/4 cars

Lionel 2625/2627/2628 Irvingtons

Lionel 52 Fire Car

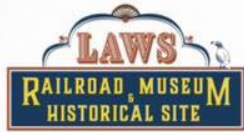
Lionel #50 Gang Car

Lionel 6560 Crane



Lionel 6012 Gondola (Boxed)  
Lionel 3428 Post Office car  
Lionel 3444 Cop/Hobo with poor box)  
Lionel 3419 Flat w/Helio (Helio unbroken)  
Lionel 6519 Allis Chalmers Car  
Lionel 3830 Flat w/Sub (missing periscope)  
Lionel 3349 turbo Missile car (Orig turbo Missiles)  
Lionel 3509 (Have orig Satellite But still looking for car)  
Lionel 3927 Track Cleaning Car (looking for tanks)  
Lionel 3472 Oper Milk Car/stand  
Lionel 16368 Katy Liquid Oxy Car (Boxed)  
Lionel 2411 Flat Car (Need Load)  
Lionel 19250 WP Box car  
Lionel 6500 Flat Car (No Plane)  
Lionel 3356 Railway Express Car (no Corral, still looking)  
Lionel 3462 Milk Car with stand (Missing platform tray)  
Lionel 3656 Oper Cattle Car/corral/Cows (beat up box)  
Lionel 2531/2532/2533 Silver Pass Cars (Boxed)  
Lionel 2530 Small Door Baggage Car  
Lionel 19016/19017/19018 /19015 Irvington Cars (All Boxed)  
Lionel 6460 Crane (Boxed)  
Lionel 8578 NYC Track Ballast Car (BOXED)  
Lionel 3520 Search Lite Car (Missing Search lite)  
Lionel 2456 Hopper Car  
Multiple 6464 Box Cars (Mixed Post War and Modern Most Boxed) Multi Freight  
Cars/Cabooses  
Misc Accs:  
2 Lionel ZW Transformers  
Lionel 1033 Transformer  
KW Transformer for repair  
Lionel 260 Bumper (boxed)  
Lionel 145 Auto Gateman (Boxed)  
Lionel 256 Station  
Lionel 132 Passenger station  
Lionel Oil Derrick 455(Cans and sign gone, might still be in bottom of box)  
Lionel #30 Water Tower (Need Spout)  
Lionel Misc Crossing signals/gates  
Lionel 397 Coal Loader  
Lionel 2302 Crane  
Lionel 6-12759 Light Tower  
Lionel 125 Whistle Station

# UPCOMING EVENTS



We are delighted to announce a special event.

## SLIM PRINCESS SISTERS IN HISTORY 140TH ANNIVERSARY

You'll have the opportunity to ride in caboose #401 pulled behind the one and only Slim Princess #18!

**WHEN: MARCH 18TH, 19TH, 25TH, AND 26TH**

**WHERE: LAWS RAILROAD MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SITE**

**TIME: 9:00 AM TO 4:00 PM**

### GROUNDS ADMISSION

For the first 300 tickets sold per date  
\$30.00 per adult  
\$20.00 per child 10 and under

Admission includes one steam ride and \*one Death Valley Brill ride

For tickets 301 and on per day  
\$25.00 per adult  
\$15.00 per child 10 and under

Admission includes \*one Death Valley Brill ride

Museum grounds will be close to the public on March 23rd and 24th for a private photography workshop. Tickets are required and can be purchased at [LerroPhotography.com](http://LerroPhotography.com).

Questions? Give us a call (760) 873-5950,  
visit [LawsMuseum.org](http://LawsMuseum.org), [CarsonColorado.com](http://CarsonColorado.com),  
or email us at [LawsRailroadMuseum@gmail.com](mailto:LawsRailroadMuseum@gmail.com)

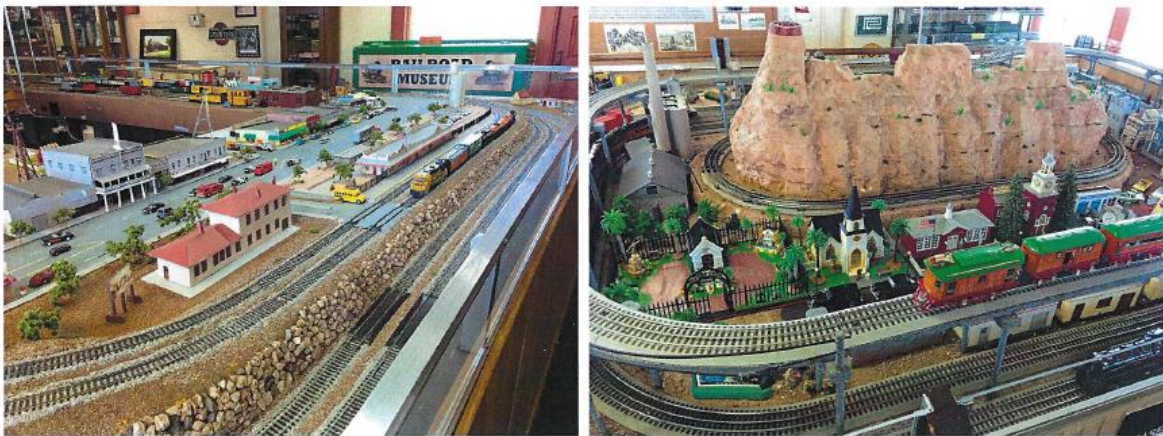
Bonus! Food vendors will be on site for your dining pleasure.  
\*Death Valley Brill Car #5 will be running while #18 is watering.





**WELCOME TO THE KINGMAN  
RAILROAD MUSEUM'S 2nd ANNUAL  
MODEL TRAIN SHOW ON  
MAY 20, 2023 FROM 9am TO 2PM**

THERE WILL BE OPERATING LAYOUTS, RAFFLE PRIZES, FOOD  
& REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE. FREE PARKING. VENDORS  
WILL BE SELLING NEW & USED MODEL TRAIN & HOBBY ITEMS



**ADULTS \$3.00 ADMISSION  
CHILDREN 12 AND UNDER ARE FREE**

IF YOU HAVE HOBBY ITEMS AND WOULD LIKE TO BE A  
VENDOR AND SELL AT THE SHOW COST IS \$10.00 PER  
TABLE. PLEASE CALL SPENCE FOR TABLE RESERVATIONS  
AT: 530-521-9241

THE TRAIN SHOW WILL BE AT THE MOHAVE FAIR COUNTY  
GROUNDS 2600 FAIRGROUND BLVD KINGMAN, AZ 86401



# **Beat the Heat Model Train Show 2023 & Extravaganza**

**Bigger & Better in our new location &  
free parking & shuttle service to the door  
Embry Riddle Aeronautical Univ.**

**3700 Willow Creek Road Prescott, AZ 86301**

**Saturday July 29, 2023 9 am - 1 pm**

**Door Prizes *MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN*  
Cash prizes every half hour & other door prizes**

***Model Trains, Toys, Accessories  
& Display Layouts***

***Adults \$5.00 - Children 12 & under Free***

**Contact: Fred Williams (928) 463-5163**

**Table Reservations, Std. 6' long \$30.00 for the 1st table,  
\$20.00 for extra tables paid in advanced**

**Dealer setup time 7-9 AM NO Early Public Admission**

**The CAMRRC is NOT responsible for lost or stolen items.**

*Scan QR code for more info.*

*Please Note: face masks recommended, NOT required  
Please visit our web site for more info.*

**[www.CAMRRC.com](http://www.CAMRRC.com)**

