

MAIL HOOK

SAN DIEGO DIVISION, PSR-NMRA

2ND QUARTER, 2010

SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT

By Don Fowler

Well, I thought that things would slow down a little bit after the holidays but I was wrong and that hasn't necessarily been a bad thing. Between our usual Division business and preparations for our upcoming Convention, I get to see our members more frequently than usual. I am so grateful for such a great group of friends to share model railroading with.

On February 13th, we held our Winter Division Meet at the Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum in Vista. We enjoyed a swap meet, pot luck, clinics, and a tour of the progress on the Short Track's N scale Railroad. Those guys have been busy and the quality of their modeling talent really shows!

The NMRA National Board of Directors Mid-Year Meeting was held on February 19-20 at the Marriott Courtyard in San Diego's Old Town. PSR President Ben Sevier, along with several other SD Division members and I attended the meeting and were able to meet with several of our National officers face to face. To view the subsequent minutes of that meeting, visit the NMRA's website at www.nmra.org.

We had more than fifty people show up for Lise & Dan Conway's HO scale South Fork Model Railroad

Continued on Page 2

WINTER MEET WRAP UP and SPRING MEET PREVIEW

The Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum (AGSEM) in Vista was the site of our Winter Meet and Swap Meet again this year. Swap meet attendance was lower this year, but there was a lot to choose from, particularly if you are in N scale, since the AGSEM is home to Short Track Railroad.

Following the swap meet we went to the Short Track clubhouse for the usual pot luck lunch. There was A LOT of food! I'm trying to keep up my end, but I need some help. Everyone enjoyed the Short Track layout, and seeing the progress they've made on their Donner Pass Exhibit, since our last visit.

Once everyone had eaten their fill, Don Ham described how he super-detailed and painted several locomotives. He's doing a lot of work preparing for his MMR Motive Power certificate, and he was happy to share some of his techniques with us. Then Don Hicke showed a working drive-in theater he had built, using a display from a video camera.

You won't want to miss the Spring Meet, to be held at Peace Lutheran Church May 8. This will feature the (short) annual business meeting, and of course, the pot luck. Dick Roberts will talk about building the mansion on his Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad.

Then Eric Bradford, a member of Short Track, will describe and demonstrate his DCC speed matching table. This is a small loop that uses JMRI software (the Decoder Pro folks) to automatically set the speed of a decoder-equipped locomotive to match any other locomotive. This makes consisting much easier. Eric's device is set up for N scale, but the theory is the same for any scale. Festivities start about 11:30, and run until about 3pm. Peace Lutheran Church is at 6749 Tait Street in Linda Vista, about a block west of Linda Vista Road, just south of the town center. You should be able to park in the lot just west of the church.

* * *

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Superintendent's Report *from Page 1*

tour on March 13th. Their layout looked fantastic and ran great!

Cajon Division did their usual excellent job of hosting their Mid-Year Meet during the weekend of March 19-21 in Temecula. There was bingo, clinics, layout tours, a banquet, auctions, and steam operations at the Orange Empire Railway Museum. If you were unable to attend, please try to join us next year. During the Meet, PSR also held their mid-year board meeting. I provided the Board with an update on the progress of our upcoming Region Convention being held at the Handlery Hotel & Resort September 15-19, 2010 right here in San Diego.

Our Convention Committee has been working hard on preparations so that we can provide you with an outstanding event that you won't want to miss. If you haven't signed up yet, please do so as the cost increases as the date draws nearer. I have some great clinicians signed up that include Tony Koester (Model Railroader Magazine) and Tony Thompson (SP Historical & Technical Society). I am still looking for more presenters so if you'd like help, please e-mail me at donald.fowler@sdsheriff.org.

I attended the San Diego Model Railroad Museum's Annual Southern California Symposium of Rail Related Organizations on March 27th. At this meeting, we received updates on progress made at the Orange Empire Railway Museum, North County Transit District, San Diego Railroad Museum, and the San Diego Electric Railway Association. I also gave a brief presentation on our local NMRA activities and our upcoming Region Convention. The day concluded with a very educational behind the scenes tour of the Museum's layouts.

On April 28th, PSR President Ben Sevier and I will be traveling to Sparks, Nevada to attend the Pacific Coast Region's Annual Convention. We are looking forward to making new friends, learning about how they run their organization, and promoting our upcoming PSR Convention in San Diego. I'll let you know how it goes.

Our upcoming Spring Division Meet will be held on May 8th at Peace Lutheran Church. There will be a potluck, business meeting, clinics, and a model contest. Please bring a new friend and join us for a great time of model railroading fellowship.

Don

Clear To San Diego 2010 Model Railroad Convention

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION ~ NMRA®

September 15th – 19th, 2010

Handlery Hotel & Resort, 950 Hotel Circle North
San Diego, CA 92108



Clinics ~ Auctions ~ Layout Tours

Prototype Tours and Activities ~ Model Railroad Operations

Model & Photography Contest ~ Public Swap Meet

Railroad Prototype Modelers (RPM) Meet ~ Family Activities

Visit The "Clear to San Diego 2010" Website For Details, Registration And Up To Date Information

<http://www.psrconvention.org/2010>

Convention & Swap Meet hosted by the San Diego Division, PSR, NMRA – www.sandiegodivision.org

LAYOUT TOURS

June 12, Noon to 3pm: Chicago Western

Bob Moore's layout represents his railroad's division point in the fictitious town of Robertsville, IL, south of Peoria. Robertsville and West Robertsville are busy with shops and the connection from the Chicago Western main line to the line to St. Louis completing the Chicago - St. Louis line. Also high speed cross-overs allow a connection honoring a joint Sante Fe - Chicago Western trackage agreement (which allows Bob to run his Sante Fe and BNSF equipment) and Sante Fe uses Robertsville facilities as needed. Scenes include a 50 cow (that's prototypical) dairy farm, diesel and steam service facilities, downtown West Robertsville, a General Aviation airport with a WWII war bird fly-in for the week end, and a stub end passenger station. The layout can be operated either in the 50's or the present and is DCC.

* * *

Layout Tour Summary

We were lucky to see two great railroads recently. In March we visited Dan and Lise Conway's Amador, Truckee, & South Fork railroad. Housed in about one and a half bays of a three-car garage, the South Fork layout includes an interchange with the Southern Pacific, represented by a double-track DC loop. The DCC South Fork is primarily a mining route, composed of several different scenes. A highlight of the layout is the building interiors scratch-built by Lise, including a picture of a South Fork locomotive on the wall of the station!

Bruce Deck showed off his Olive & Homer railroad in April. Housed in a purpose-built second floor room, this layout is freelanced, but based on the Southern Pacific. Bruce's track plan has captured a lot of action in a relatively small space, and can keep several operators busy operating the DCC throttles. Bruce's sense of humor shows in many of his industry names.

I apologize for the lack of pictures of these two railroads, due to time constraints. I'll try to run them next time. Ed.

* * *

From the Editor...

Where does the time go? I thought I'd have a lot of time on my hands after I retired! Who put me on a fast clock? Well, life happens. This issue of *The Mail Hook* is abbreviated, of necessity to get it out before I depart for a long-awaited vacation with my family. Hopefully, that vacation will include some trains.

I'm sorry I'll miss the clinics at the Spring Meet, they both sound great! maybe I'll get to catch them at the convention in September. Somebody grab me a handout!

Speaking of the convention, have you registered yet? There's still time, and Don has packed his clinic schedule with some great topics. Some older but popular, some new. Tony Koester as the banquet speaker is sure to be enjoyable. Prototype tours are again exciting, and the Railette program is organized and ready to go. Check out the web site for more information, and register on-line with PayPal. We try to make it easy for you.

While you're on the web, sign up for the PSR On-Line forum at

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PSROnline/>.

This group was formed to share information about the Pacific Southwest Region and its component Divisions. Tell us what's going on in your neighborhood, ask questions, chat with other region members about the NMRA and its programs... You name it! But you do have to join to participate. The group will only be successful if you contribute.

Speaking of the PSR, the project to update the Bylaws and Manual of Operations continues to move ahead. We're hoping to have these documents ready for action by the membership this year. The annual membership meeting, as always, will be held Sunday morning of the convention.

Finally, Paul Schmitt told me he's getting bored, and he needs more folks to get involved with the Achievement Program. Let's get on the bandwagon, everyone.

Gary

Breaking out of the same old loop.

This time we're going to talk about operating rules. Operating rules can be standard railroad rules, or they can be specific to the layout being operated. They set the parameters for train priority, car handling, and so forth.

Operating rules, as any rules, set the parameters that guide and govern that to which they apply, as the operating session. Thought must be given to whether you will operate with track warrants, train orders, or signals, and planning must address the decision you reach. Also consider such things as these:

- Are there helper districts, where a train must cut in another locomotive?
- Must passenger cars (drover's caboose, etc.) be cut off a mixed train before switching?
- Are there places where the road crew must operate a switch engine to complete assigned tasks?
- (Where) are there special speed restrictions?
- Which railroad has the right of way at crossings?

Other things come into play at certain layouts. For instance, on one layout where I operate, all trains must take on water at a particular spot. This involves stopping the train at the proper spot, and operating the water spout on the tank, complete with sound effects. Another layout requires a fuel and water stop before departing for the next destination, even though it's only two feet away. This is done to simulate the prototype, as the next destination is actually seventy miles away on the real thing. You should evaluate your layout to identify the potential for these types of operations, as they add interest.

A good place to start when developing your operating rules is at a railroaders swap meet. This is a meet where there is a preponderance of rule books, employee timetables, and other such documents from prototype railroads. If you can't find a rule book from your chosen prototype, pick up another, and adapt it to your needs. Rules were very similar from railroad to railroad.

An example of a rule that is universal is Rule 17, which specifies the lighting requirements for locomotives. The most common section dictates the dimming of the headlight for an on-coming train, but other sections can set out the requirements for marker lights and other illumination. This rule actually varies from railroad to railroad, but the dimming portion is consistent across many roads.

Operations using DCC can actually implement Rule 17 using commands from the throttle. Most DCC throttles have a function that can dim the headlight on command. This adds to the feeling of operating a real train.

Creating your own operating rules can be fun, and it adds to the feeling of operating the prototype. Give it a try!

I have some space, so I'll say a few words about equipment. For successful operations, equipment must be in top shape. Nothing dampens enthusiasm at an operating session like equipment failures. Trains on the ties, train separations, and anything that disrupts the illusion that real trains are running.

Check all your couplers to be sure they are mounted properly at the correct height, and operate as designed. Wheels should be true, and trucks should not bind. Locomotives should be tuned to run reliably at realistic speeds. (Check out Eric Bradford's clinic at the Spring Meet for help with this! Ed.) We've discussed track planning and installation in previous articles, but be sure to check your turnouts and apply preventive maintenance where and when needed. Be sure to have an adequate supply of the uncoupling tool of your choice, and clipboards, pencils, and paper for the conductor. Go to the Opsig site and ask a lot of questions. Better still, attend the Pacific Southwest Region convention in September!



See *Breaking Out...* page 8

May 2010

San Diego Division - Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 SDMRRM Swap Meet
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 SD Div Spring Meet & Div Plng
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 SD Div Plng 30	24 31	25	26	27	28	29

June 2010

		1	2	3	4	5
6 SD Div Planning Meeting	7	8	9	10	11	12 SD Division Layout Tour
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 SD Div Planning Meeting	28	29	30			

July 2010

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10 SD Division Layout Tour
11 SD Div Planning Meeting	12 <i>NMRA 75th Annual Convention Milwaukee, WI</i>	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 SD Div Planning Meeting	26	27	28	29	30	31

SCHEDULE OF PSR-NMRA EVENTS

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

Assembled from various sources. Events may have been submitted by sponsors. Send corrections, additions, and future events to the editor at mailhook@sandiegodivision.org. Events should be of interest to San Diego Division members. Division-sponsored events are listed in **bold** typeface.

2010

May

- 8 **San Diego Spring Meet and Annual Meeting.** Peace Lutheran Church, 6749 Tait St, San Diego, CA. 3pm – 5pm Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org
- 8 **Division Planning Meeting,** Immediately following the Spring Meet.
- 23 **Division Planning Meeting,** See above, May 8. Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

June

- 6 **Division Planning Meeting,** See above, May 8.
- 12 **San Diego Division Layout Tour.** Bob Moore. HO scale Chicago Western. Contact: Gordon Miller, layouts@ssandiegodivision.org
- 27 **Division Planning Meeting,** Peace Lutheran Church, 6749 Tait St, San Diego, CA. 3pm – 5pm Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

July

- 11 **Division Planning Meeting,** See above, May 8. Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org
- 11-18 **NMRA 75th Annual Convention,** Milwaukee, WI. For registration and additional information, see the NMRA web site, www.nmra.org.
- 25 **Division Planning Meeting,** See above, May 8. Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

August

- 8 **Division Planning Meeting,** See above, May 8. Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org
- 15 **Division Planning Meeting,** See above, May 8. Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org
- 22 **Division Planning Meeting,** See above, May 8. Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

2010

May

- 1 San Diego Model Railroad Museum Swap Meet. 7am-11am Balboa Park. \$2.00 for buyers and \$5.00 for sellers. Please bring your own table and set up by 6:30 am. For more information Contact Jim Anderson at: 619-224-1041
- 1-2 Railroad Days (formerly Fullerton Railroad Days), Brea, California. Southern California Railway Plaza Association. More info: <http://www.scrpa.net/index.html>
- 2 TTOS Southwestern Division Train Meet. Masonic Lodge, 50 Duarte Rd., Arcadia, CA, 91007. \$5.00 per person or family. 818-848-2653 <http://www.ttos-sw.org/activities.htm>
- 8,9 San Bernardino Railroad Days and Bicentennial Celebration. San Bernardino Santa Fe Depot, 1170 W Third St.,
- 14 Pacific Railroad Society Monthly Meeting. 1930 (7:30 PM) to 2130. Joslyn Center (in Story Park) 210 North Chapel Ave. Alhambra, CA 91801 <http://www.pacificrailroadsociety.org/>
- 22 Santa Susana RR Historical Soc. Swap Meet and Open House. Swap Meet 7:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. In the Santa Susana Park Pavilion. Admission \$2.00 for adults. Open House 10 am – 4 pm. 6503 Katherine Rd. Simi Valley CA Sellers contact Richard Parshall events@santasuannadepot.org or call Richard Parshall at 805-526-0371
- 24 Orange Empire Railway Memorial Day Operations. 2201 S. "A" Street, Perris, CA 92570: 951-943-3020 or 951-657-2605 <http://www.oerm.org/>
- 29,30,31 Los Angeles Live Steamers Annual Spring Meet. Griffith Park, LA29,30,31 Los Angeles Live Steamers Annual Spring Meet. Griffith Park, LA

June

- 5, 6 The Big Train Show, Ontario Convention Center, CA. ALL SCALES <http://www.bigtrainshow.com/> On Track Productions (949) 679-0616
- 6 TTOS Southwestern Division Train Meet. Masonic Lodge, 50 Duarte Rd., Arcadia, CA,

See "Other Events" on Page 8

See the San Diego Division web page calendar for Other Events of Interest for other dates. Ed.

CLUB CAR

This feature will run every issue that I receive input from the clubs. Use this space to keep us up to date on your current activities. Submit announcements to the editor at any time for the next edition.



The San Diego Model Railroad Museum was proud to host the annual San Diego Rail

Symposium again this year. This event brings together representatives from all the railroad entities in San Diego County, from Z scale to prototype, to update each other on recent happenings.

Our next special event is the Spring swap meet, Saturday May 1, 7-11 AM at the Museum. Enter through the rear door.

Mac's Kids Corner is every Tuesday and Friday, and summer camp registration is open for camp sessions beginning June 28, 2010. See the web page for more information. <http://www.sdmmr.org>



Are We Having Fun Yet?
A term, often used sarcastically, to let people know that their promises of fun haven't materialized. At our section house, on the second

Thursday of the month, everyone would answer a resounding, "Yes". We have 3 operating sessions under our belt and it just keeps getting better. We started in January only operating our N Trak modules on DC. February saw the inclusion of our DCC Donner Pass Exhibit on a limited basis. March saw trains being handed off between the N Trak DC and the Donner Pass DCC. We now have crews working both on the DC and DCC. We are incorporating more of the DCC for switching operations.

We operate on the second Thursday of the month and start at 7PM using 2 person crews. Some jobs are only an hour long. Other jobs are more complex and take up to 2 hours. When a crew finishes a job, they can pick up the next one on the list if they like. The photos show operators concentrating on their jobs.

Visitors are welcome on our operations nights. In fact, we get quite a few visitors that like to come and run with us.

We will have an operation session during the NMRA PSR "Clear to San Diego" 2010 PSR Convention. Our session will be from 9AM until noon on Friday

September 17. We will supply lunch to the operators. Sign up through the convention web site at: <http://www.psrconvention.org/2010/index.html>

As usual our club is quite active. We have added 4 new members recently.

Chuck Hart, our web master re-designed our web site. Check it out at www.shorttrackrr.org.

Our building crew is making buildings on our laser. There has been quite learning curve, but we are now able to create accurate museum quality buildings. Currently we are concentrating on the accurately reproducing the downtown area of Colfax, CA.

Look at the photo of the bridge constructed by Ken Allen.

The NMRA – PSR- San Diego Division Winter Meet was held at our facility on Saturday February 13. The day started with a swap meet followed by lunch, clinics, and operations. A good time was had by all.

We are open to the public every Saturday from 9:00AM – 1:00PM. Our section house is at the Antique Gas and Steam Engine Museum at 2040 North Santa Fe Avenue in Vista 92083. Visitors are always welcome.

Visit our web site at www.shorttrackrr.org

Pete Steinmetz

Poway Station lost about a third of our membership within a month. One of those things (or several), but they all happened at once. We pushing onward, though, and preparing for our next show, which will be the Old Fashioned Fourth of July, 10:00am to 4:00pm, in Old Poway Park. We'll show our N scale layout there. We're continuing to make improvements on those modules, and will have some new industries to show off.



Next, we'll be preparing for our show at the San Rafael Parish Hall in Rancho Bernardo, July 31 and August 1. The Knights of Columbus will have an ice cream social Saturday afternoon, and coffee and donuts Sunday morning. We're planning to have both the HO and N scale layouts there this year. Some members are working on Free-mo modules to supplement our HO layout. We're exploring ways to adapt the Free-mo standards to Poway Station standards so the modules can be used in either layout.

We meet Wednesdays for work nights, to better accommodate the remaining members. Our business meeting is still on the last Tuesday at Old Poway Park. Wednesdays we circulate between a member's home and our storage unit, depending on what work must be done. We're a smaller group, but we still have fun! Why not come out and see what we're up to? Contact president@powaystation.org for more information.

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Nominations:	(vacant)		
Publicity:	(vacant)		

Mail Hook

The "Mail Hook" is the official publication of the San Diego Division, Pacific Southwest Region, National Model Railroad Association (NMRA®), and is published quarterly in San Diego, California. The "Mail Hook" is available to all members of the NMRA® who live in San Diego and Imperial Counties.

Responsibility: Except for official reports, all opinions expressed are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent those of the San Diego Division or its parent organizations.

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Submissions: Contributions of articles on any railroad or model railroading topic of interest to the membership are welcome. There is no compensation, but published articles can be credited to the NMRA® Author Achievement Certificate. If you are interested in submitting articles, event information, or other information of interest to members of the Division, please follow these guidelines:

1. Preferred method is by email to the editor, with the submission attached as a text document. Also accepted are: text document on diskette, printout from laser or ink jet printer, or typed using new ribbon.

2. Keep in mind that submissions may be edited for length or formatting, or not used, at the discretion of the editor.

3. Submission deadlines for publication: January 2, April 1, July 1, and October 1.

4. If you wish submission materials returned (i.e., photos), please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your submission.

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

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91007. \$5.00 per person or family. 818-848-2653
<http://www.ttos-sw.org/activities.htm>

12,13 Roger and Faith Clarkson's Garden Railroad Open House. 1000 1600. 1463 Rimroad (one word), Riverside, CA. Map, http://www.rfrailroad.com/contact_us.html.

19,20 Orange Empire Railway Pacific Electric Operations. 2201 S. "A" Street, Perris, CA 92570: 951-943-3020 or 951-657-2605 <http://www.oerm.org/>

July

4 Old Fashioned Fourth of July, with Poway Station N scale modular layout, 10am - 4pm, 14134 Midland Road, Poway, CA 92064. Contact president@powaystation.org

11 TTOS Southwestern Division Train Meet. Masonic Lodge, 50 Duarte Rd., Arcadia, CA, 91007. \$5.00 per person or family. 818-848-2653
<http://www.ttos-sw.org/activities.htm>

24 Roundhouse Gang Model Railroad Club Indoor Swap Meet. 730am - 12noon Janet Goeske Senior Center 5257 Sierra St. (Corner of Streeter and Sierra) Riverside \$3 admission. \$10 per table for sellers in advance, or \$12 at door. Info: Larry Kucharski, 9120 Peoria Lane, Moreno Valley, CA 92557 (951) 686-7890 larryk@dslextreme.com

31 Orange Empire Railway Summer Evening Trolley Festival. 2201 S. "A" Street, Perris, CA 92570: 951-943-3020 or 951-657-2605 <http://www.oerm.org/>

31-8/1 Poway Station Annual Show, San Rafael Parish Hall, 17252 Bernardo Center Drive, San Diego, CA 92128. Sat 9-7, Sun 8-3. HO and N modular layouts. www.powaystation.org or president@powaystation.org.

Model Railroad Clubs in San Diego

San Diego Model Railroad Museum

Balboa Park, San Diego

Info: www.sdmodelrailroadm.com

La Mesa Model Railroad Club (HO)

Info: LaMesaClub@att.net

San Diego 3-Railers (O)

Info: (858) 538-0930

San Diego Model Railroad Club (HO & O)

Info: www.sdmrrc.org

San Diego Society of N Scale (N)

Info: www.sdsons.org

*If you would like your club listed, contact
the Club Liason, San Diego Division*

North County Model Railroad Society (HO)

Oceanside. Info: (760) 722-7366 www.ncmrs.org

Poway Station All Scale Modular Club

Info: www.powaystation.org

Short Track Railroad Club (N)

Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum, Vista

Info: www.shorttrackrr.org

San Diego Garden Railway Society

Info: www.sdgrs.com

ZoCal Group (Z)

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ZoCal>

San Diego S-Gaugers

<http://sites.google.com/site/sdsgaugers/Home>

Online - Web Sites of Interest

NMRA: www.nmra.org

PSR: www.psrnmra.org

NMRA National Convention <http://www.nmra75.org/>

San Diego Division: <http://www.sandiegodivision.org/>


Arizona Division: www.azdiv-nmra.org

Cajon Division: www.cajondiv.org

Los Angeles Division: www.ladiv-nmra.org/

San Diego Model Railroad Museum: www.sdmodelrailroadm.com

San Diego Rail: www.sandiegorail.com



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**San Diego
Model Railroad Museum**

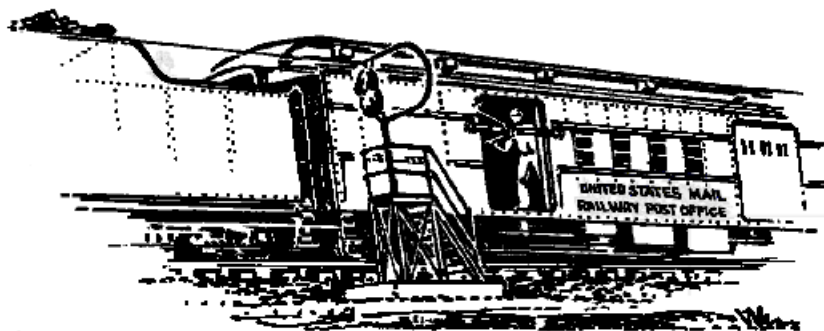
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Museum

1649 El Prado, Balboa Park

Open to the Public

Tuesday through Friday 11:00 - 4:00
Saturday - Sunday 11:00 - 5:00

Admission: Adults \$5, Students \$3, Seniors \$4
Military \$2.50, Tuesdays free to all



MAIL HOOK

LOOK INSIDE FOR THE LATEST NEWS!

- Spring Meet Preview
 - Breaking Out of the Same Old Loop
 - Layout Tour Info
- Look Inside!



MAIL HOOK

c/o Gary Robinson, Editor
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Escondido, CA 92026



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