

THE MANIFEST
December 2019-January 2020



*Volunteers are not paid because they are
worthless but because they are PRICELESS*

GREETINGS ALL:

I hope this newsletter finds everyone well. The winter has gone by quickly; we are just about two months away from another run year!

I apologize for the lack of a December newsletter; I was out of town and then came down with a very bad bronchial infection that had me down for about a month. However, I am up and going and feeling good now.

Once, again I am including our donation PDF, Allen has updated it from the last newsletter. We really, really need your help in this so:

**PLEASE FEEL FREE TO PRINT A
ND SHARE**

**The Southern
Oregon Railway
Historical Society**



**NEEDS YOUR HELP TO
FINANCE THE DEVELOPMENT
OF A TOURIST RAILWAY IN
BUTTE FALLS, OREGON**

We Need Funds To

Purchase Rail, Ties, Switches, rail components, & building materials.

**To donate or volunteer go to
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(Or talk to a Society member)

Your donations are tax deductible.

We are a 501c3 non-profit organization.

Thanks to all those who have already donated

A Trip to See Josephine By Bill Ainsworth



A single column of oil smoke rises from a venerable SP 2-6-0 numbered 1744 at the Sacramento General Shop's locomotive servicing area. The early morning rising sun is casting long shadows as the day begins and the old steamer is being readied for a very special day. The photo, taken by Bob Church, introduces you to our feature article. Sit back, read and enjoy.

In 1958 I was almost through with my junior year in high school as I was eagerly awaiting a trip on Sunday, May 4th of that year. I was going to visit Josephine. Right about now you are probably saying to yourselves; the articles in this publication are supposed to be about railroads, not a story about a high school kid's visit with a girlfriend. Well you can rest easy. I didn't slip one past the editor. In fact the editor will be part of the story, so read on. Josephine was not a who, it was a where!

The reason for my eagerly awaited trip to Josephine was a farewell to steam excursion, sponsored by the Pacific Coast Chapter-Railway & Locomotive Historical Society.

Fred A. Stindt, chairman of the Excursion Committee, had put together a trip to Southern Pacific's Knight's Landing Branch that had been completed by the Cal-P (California Pacific Railroad) in 1869.

Josephine was located in the Sutter Basin; south of the Sutter Buttes, west of Yuba City and was about 23 miles north of Knights Landing. The Josephine Branch, also called the Sutter Basin Branch, diverted north from what remained of the old Cal-P line at Merchant, 3 miles beyond Knights Landing. Henry Bender states there was never a depot at Josephine. The only things there were a run around track, a short spur, an agriculture warehouse and unloading ramps.

I believe it was Greyhound Bus Lines that had the advertising slogan, "Getting there is half the fun": Well that slogan certainly applied to this excursion day. The whole day would be a steam event. Our excursion train and patrons from the bay area would be attached to Southern Pacific's Train 224, *The Senator*, to Sacramento. This day, *The Senator* would not be pulled by a diesel locomotive. Assigned to our train would be a GS-6 Class 4-8-4, No. 4460, a 1943 Lima built wartime locomotive.

The 4460 had been stored serviceable at Roseville in late 1956. The engine was serviced there and would pick up its train at the Oakland Mole for the trip to Sacramento for the meet with the Knights Landing excursion engine, SP 1744. Getting from the Bay Area to Sacramento and return behind that 4-8-4 truly proved to be, "half the fun" on this excursion day.

We were picked up at SP's Berkeley Depot at the foot of University Ave. at 7:53 AM and departed shortly after. The ticket price for this full day of steam railroading was \$10.75. My fellow rail fans for the day would be my dad and a co-worker of his, Erik Jacobson. Erik was the one

who got me interested in rail fanning. He was an avid still and movie railroad photographer. This would be the first of many rail fan trips that I would take with Erik.

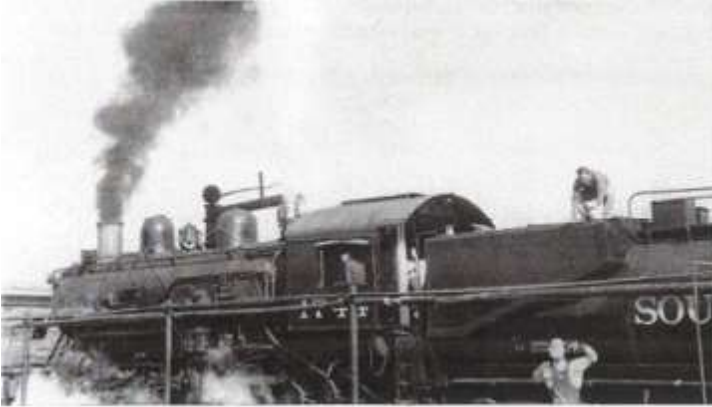
Skirting the shores of San Francisco and San Pablo Bays, we would make stops at Richmond and Crockett before crossing Suisun Bay on the Martinez - Benicia Bridge. This double track railroad bridge is 5597 feet long and was open for service on November 1, 1930. The cost of construction was 12 million dollars and took 18 months to build. The train ferry steamers *Solano* and *Port Costa* that shuttled trains between Port Costa and Benicia were now retired. The delays inherent in a ferry service had been eliminated.

Leaving that impressive bridge with its modest 0.6 percent grade approaches, we were now running through the marsh lands along Suisun Bay. We passed the town of Suisun and then Fairfield; the junction with SP's Napa Branch. We were now entering the fertile farmlands of the Sacramento Valley. Tomato, onion and grain fields on either side of the tracks rushed past. Soon we passed the towns of Dixon and Davis. Shortly after leaving Davis we were crossing the Yolo Bypass on a series of fills and wood piling trestles approximately three miles long. Arrival at SP's "I" Street Sacramento Depot would see a change in head end power.

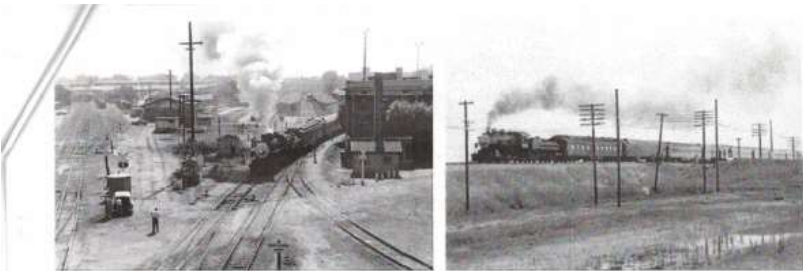
Engine 1744, a 2-6-0 Mogul with 57 years of service throughout the SP System, was simmering as pretty as could be on a side track at the depot and would take us to Josephine. It was built by Baldwin in November 1901 as a four-cylinder Vaucrain Compound but was simplified at Sacramento in January 1915.

The timetable for the day's excursion allowed for a Twenty-minute window for the exchange of engines to take place at Sacramento. The adherence to passenger schedules was a source of pride for train crews and was

demanded by officials in the SP Passenger Service Department. Today would be no different and would cause a serious problem for myself, my dad and our friend Erik.



The 1744 is now hot with a full head of steam. The "pop" (safety valve) is going off, and the fireman is opening the injector to send in a small shot of water to stop losing steam. The fellow on the ground is throwing up chemical balls to be put into the tender tank to soften the water. Water in many places in the Central Valley is naturally hard, and the inherent chemicals can cause boiler water to foam. That made firing and keeping a good head of steam very difficult. Note the bigger and smaller boxes on the tender deck. Respectively, they carried rear marker lights and the extra chemical balls. Bob Church photo



Left - Departing Sacramento for Davis and the Westside Line to Woodland and the branch line. All the buildings seen here are now gone. Right - No

trouble keeping up with the 1744 going all out with its 63" drivers! Note the El Dorado and train are running in reverse, all the way to Josephine. Photo nearing Davis along old US Hwy 40. All photos this page, Bob Church.

When we arrived in Sacramento, Erik was checking his film supply and felt that he needed to buy more film for the day's photo stops. I indicated that with the timetable schedule we probably didn't have enough time to go on a film hunting trip by foot and get back before the train departed for our first stop, which was to take on water in Davis.

My concerns were duly noted, but I was overruled, and took off quickly to walk and look for film. Finding the needed film we headed back to the SP Depot in time to see the end of our train crossing over the double decked highway railroad "I" Street Bridge over the Sacramento River into West Sacramento.

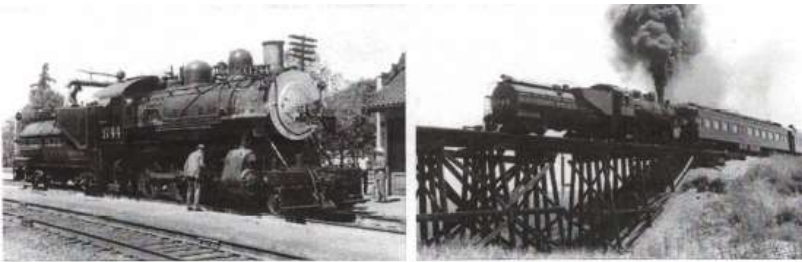
We didn't want to believe our eyes. We had missed the train! Deep down I had the urge to say, "I told you so", but decided to keep my thoughts to myself. Somehow we had to get to Davis. A taxi to Davis would be our only option, and fortunately there was a taxi parked outside the station which we commandeered. Instead of telling the driver to "follow that car;" we explained our predicament and told him to "follow that train:"

Getting to Davis from Sacramento is a snap today with the improved freeway systems. In 1958 all major roads in and out of Sacramento followed city streets. We had to wind our way through downtown Sacramento and cross the Tower Bridge to reach West Capitol Avenue and then on to the old Yolo Causeway to Davis.

The highway causeway ran parallel to the railroad

causeway. When we got on the causeway we could see the exhaust from the 17 44 way ahead of us. Our taxi driver did a great job in getting us to the depot in Davis. The 17 44 was taking on water when we stepped out of the cab. Happy and relieved to be reunited with our excursion train, we boarded for the trip to Josephine.

Leaving Davis we would be on the SP's West Valley main line which runs from Davis to Tehama where it rejoins the line out of Sacramento through Roseville and Chico. Back then, West Side line was the route used by SP's Shasta Route streamlined name trains, the *Shasta Daylight* and the *Cascade*. The *Klamath* had been downgraded on September 23, 1956 to mail only, - with the name dropped.



Left - The 1744 has reversed and is taking on water at the Davis wye. The road foreman is giving the engine a good look over.

Right - The Mogul operated tender first from Davis to Josephine. It is here crossing one of the trestles on the Josephine Branch.

Woodland is where our train would switch on to the Knights Landing Branch. Freight traffic on this line consisted of inbound loads of sugar beets and farm machinery. Covered hoppers filled with rice and other processed grains constituted the bulk of outbound processed loads. A couple of miles out of Woodland we passed Sugarfield and the sidings for the Spreckles

sugar beet processing plant, and headed on towards Knights Landing. There, the Knights Landing Volunteer Fire Department filled our tender for the trip out and back through Knights Landing.

The 17 44 had been pulling our train tender first from Davis to Josephine, as there was no way to turn the engine there. The consist was rail fan friendly with open vestibules on the coaches and a baggage car with barred protected open doors. All the photo stops were scheduled on the return trip from Josephine as the engine was then in the correct position with the open-end observation car *El Dorado* on the rear. We paralleled a canal and Reclamation Road to the trestle over the Tisdale Bypass, about 6 miles from Josephine. The only town on the branch was Robbins.

The timetable scheduled a forty-minute layover at Josephine to take pictures and observe the 1744's run around. While I was on the ground watching all the activity, I overheard a group of the passengers talking about two teenaged young men who were seen around the Tisdale Bypass trestle as the train was approaching. I remember thinking to myself they must be some real rail fans.



A pumper fire truck gives the 17 44 a drink at Knights Landing as a good crowd looks on. Bob Church photo.

Below a beautiful shot of the train on the long trestle crossing of the Tisdale Weir, an overflowwater way between the Sacramento River and the Sutter/Yolo Bypass that directed high water away from Sacramento and other Delta river towns. The train was made up of two-tone gray commuter coaches except for the last coach and the El Dorado. Frank Maffei photo.



Left – End of line at Josephine, not much there at this time. A depot was never here. The 1744 has cut off the train and is doing the run around.

Note the short spur with small unloading ramps in the foreground. Right- Bill Ainsworth took this locomotive portrait on the runaround. The head brakeman is hopping a ride on the cab ladder to the switch.

Many of you may remember news commentator Paul Harvey's vignettes called "The Rest Of The Story." The segments were about five minutes long. He would give you little known facts about some famous person, then after a commercial he would give a few more facts and then reveal the name of that person. There was a "rest of the story" involving the two late-teen aged boys around the trestle.

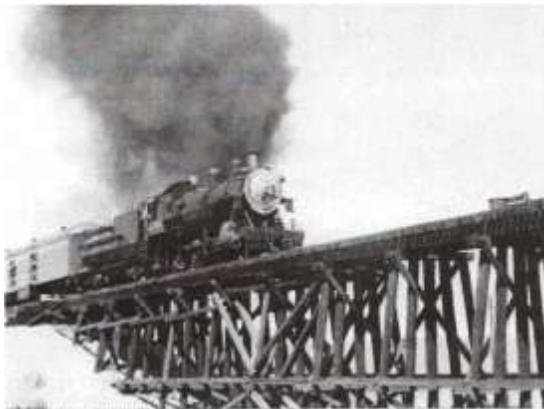
Yep, you may have already guessed. One of those two young guys was in fact our WRR Editor, Bob Church. Bob and I met years later in the 1980's as engine crew volunteers on the Sacramento Southern Railroad at the California State Railroad Museum. One day we were discussing rail fan trips we had been on, I was relating my seeing two young fans at the trestle story when to my amazement he revealed that he was, in fact, one of those two photographers

Finally, after 35 years, I had the rest of the story. Bob said he and his friend, Rich Freeland, both first year students at Sacramento City College, had taken shots of the 17 44 being readied in the hop area and then chased the excursion train all day in Bob's first car, a '46 Plymouth.

Bob was a serious model railroader but was a total neophyte regarding steam excursion trains. Rich was just interested in photography. They were trying to find locations that they thought presented interesting options. The trestles on the branch line looked like good places. Rich was a camera whiz and had modified the aperture width on his 8mm camera so it would take wider images,

like what would become the super 8-format camera. So at the trestle, he had a "Cecil B. de Mille" moment and was going to shoot footage by holding his movie camera up between the trestle ties from below, while standing where the slough embankment dropped off the fill. Bob said he took a photo from below off to the side, looking up at the train. Then he turned around to see Rich crouching below the track on the embankment, reaching up and holding his camera on a tie. He had to hold the camera as he had no cable trigger. Bob says his artistic attempt lasted until most of the engine got over him, and then he jerked his camera down and slid down the embankment on his rear. Rich's remarks were, "That was the worst noise I've ever heard, the trestle was shaking, dust coming down on me and it scared the h--- out of me!"

The photo opportunities for those of us riding the train occurred on the return trip to Woodland. There was a run-by at the Tisdale Trestle, the water stop again at Knights Landing, and a couple of other picture stops.





There were many trestles crossing the Sutter Basin's waterways. Bob Church took the photo at the left on its return trip to Davis. The photo on the right was taken by Bill Ainsworth at a photo run-by for the train's riders at another trestle.



The excursion train has arrived at Davis and the 4460 and its three car Senator were waiting. I can only imagine the anxiety of the engineer and conductor on No. 223! The 1744 quickly cut off the train and headed forward to clear the wye track so the 4460 and train can go forward and back to pick up the excursion train. Frank Maffei photo

Arriving at Davis a bit late, the 4460, with No. 223, *Senator*, was waiting. The 1744 cut off our train and went ahead to clear the way for the 4460 to come forward and then back down into the west leg of the wye to our train. The 1744 then backed on the main to alongside the depot to clear the westward main. The 4460 took that 13 car train out of Davis as if it were a short peninsula commute train. The engineer was going

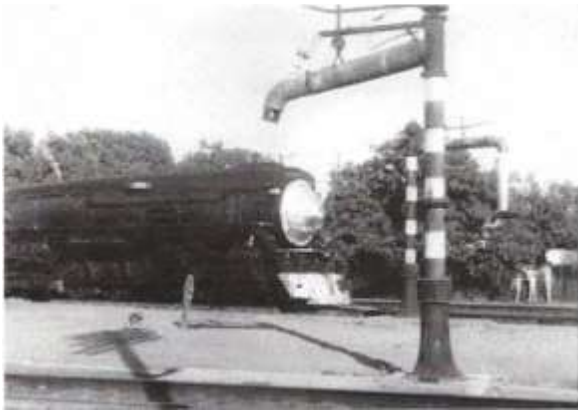
to make up the lost time! The 17 44 took on water, turned on the wye and headed to Sacramento for its final shutdown in SP service.

And, we did make our scheduled arrival time back at Berkeley at 6:46 P.M. We walked to Spenger's Fish Grotto for dinner and the end of a wonderful day. The success of the event was due to the planning of the Pacific Coast Chapter and the cooperation of Joe Haggerty and Tom Norman of SP's San Francisco District Passenger Office.

The line from Sugarfield to Robbins was abandoned in October 1972. The California Northern now operates the West Valley Line from Davis to Tehama and services a short remaining section of the branch north of Woodland.

The "star of preservation" must have been shining on the Josephine excursion train consists. The *El Dorado* survives as part of the 40 pieces of equipment the Pacific Coast Chapter donated for the formation of the CSRM. The 4460 now resides in the National Museum of Transportation in St. Louis, Missouri, and the 17 44 was donated by the SP to Corinne, UT, on May 9, 1959. That is a significant and good percentage of equipment saved from one "End of Steam" excursion train!

Thanks Bill, and the others who contributed to this article about an excursion with steam, over a little known SP branch line. I will feature the wanderings of SP's 1744 later.



The 1744 has just cut off the train and has moved west, so Bill Ainsworth caught the 4460 waiting for the engine to get in the clear.



The 4460 with No. 223 and the excursion train immediately departed Davis. Bob Church photo.

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UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

If you know of any other events that should be added to our newsletter, please email, me at (chrismanleysteam@gmail.com)/ call, (541-591-8579), with the details.

Our next meeting is Tuesday February 11, 2020

Allen Dobney will be presenting a slide show: "Burlington Northern in Washington, Volume 3"

*Meetings are in the **Model Railroad Building** and begin at **7:00 p.m., on second Tuesday of the month.***

If you have never been to the park, it is at 799 Berrydale Avenue in Medford (Behind Fire Station) off Table Rock Road. The model railroad building is at the far end of the parking lot.

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