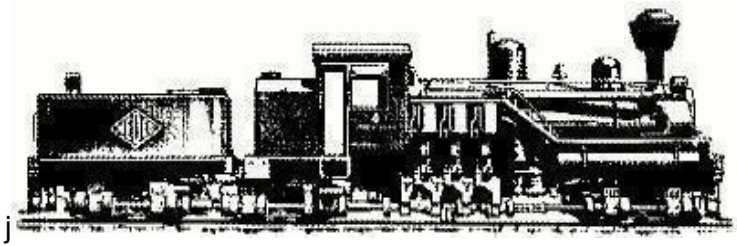


THE MANIFEST

Fall 2023



Greetings All:

I hope this newsletter finds you all well and enjoying the summer. I apologize for my long absence; therefore, I am combining the last three months into this one newsletter.

We only have one more run day ahead of us this year, **October 22, 2023**. I hope to see many of you there. Our annual railroad show for Thanksgiving weekend will not take place this year. The park may be open one or both days of that weekend; however, I do not have firm information on that as of yet. I will let you know as soon as I know.

Tonight, October 10, 2023, is our monthly board of director/member meeting at the model railroad club, beginning at **7:00 p.m.**

In addition, we have an event commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Tunnel 13 train robbery on **October 11, 2023, 5-8 p.m. at the Ashland Hills Hotel, 2525 Ashland Street, Ashland, OR.**

I am attaching an article on the Tunnel 13 Robbery by Trent Stetz, who has graciously given permission to share his article with us. This article was in the latest issue of the Trainmaster and I am sure you will find it interesting reading. Thank you Trent

TRAGEDY AT TUNNEL 13 - CENTENNIAL

By T. Trent Stetz



SP Tunnel 13 (north portal) near Siskiyou, near the site of the robbery, as depicted on the model railroad of the Willamette Valley Model Railroad Museum (WVMRM) at Powerland

Heritage Park. Visit their recreation of the Southern Pacific Railroad "Riches that Ride the Rails", showcasing Oregon geography, railroads, towns, agriculture, and industry. www.wvmrm.org (Photo by T. Trent Stetz on Sep. 13, 2023)

October 11, 2023 marks the Centennial of the attempted train robbery of the Southern Pacific (SP) Railroad by the three DeAutremont brothers; Roy, his twin Ray (age 23), and younger brother Hugh (age 19).

SP Train No. 13, the *San Francisco Express*, traveled from Portland Union Station, leaving at 9:00 pm, with an arrival time at the Oakland Pier of 7:41 am on the second morning; SP ferries provided connection for the rail passengers to the San Francisco Ferry Building for an 8:10 am arrival . The train traveled south in daylight through the Siskiyou Mountains in southwestern Oregon. Normal safety procedures called for slowing the train at the top of the Siskiyou Pass to test its brakes before the steep descent of 3.67% into California. This train was rumored to be carrying gold and cash payroll in the "mail car". This train and location became the brother's choice for their train robbery.

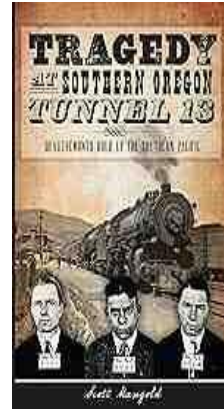
The DeAutremont brothers explored the area around Siskiyou summit in their 1918 Nash Touring Car, to plan their robbery. This exploration was made easy by the fact that the 1600 mile Pacific Highway, from Canada to Mexico, was completed through Oregon in 1913 to 1915. This highway made use of the previous existing toll roads in the region. The paved road ran very near the Siskiyou Summit where the train would stop for its brake test before descending. The brothers thought that the road will also make a good escape route in their car with their stolen gold and cash after the train robbery. They planned to hide their car about 1/4 mile before the summit.

October 11, 1923, the day of the robbery, was a gorgeous fall Oregon day, as Engineer Sidney Bates (age 52), Fireman Marvin Seng (age 23), and brakeman Charles Johnson (age 36) left

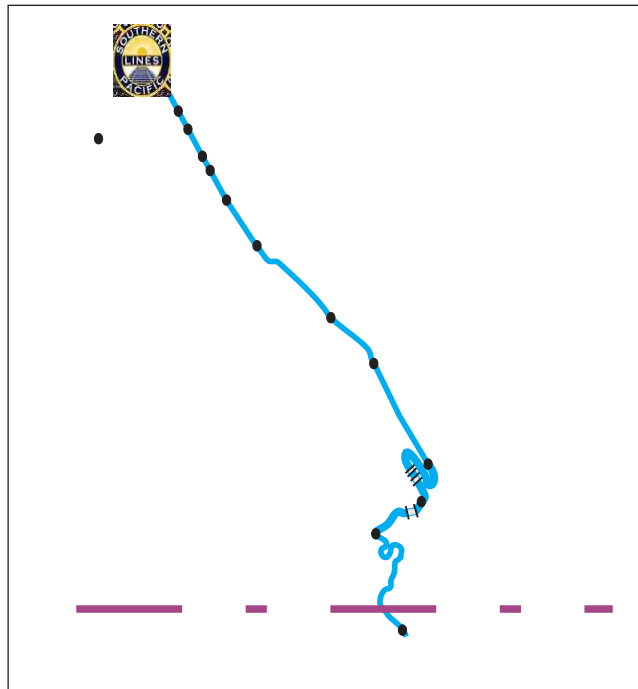
Ashland about 11:30am, with a locomotive helper, to continue Train 13 southward toward California. Elvyn Dougherty was the US Mail Clerk onboard the baggage-mail car that day.

That day, SP locomotive No. 3626 Baldwin-built in 1919, a "Deck" type 2-10-2, [Editor's Note: SP called the 2-10-2 "Decks", while typically a "Decapod" is a 2-10-0] began pulling the eight-car train in Ashland, with a helper. The baggage-mail car, O&C No. 5037 (Pullman Class 60-BP-30-1), with its 30 foot-long mail compartment, was immediately behind the tender. That day the train was broken into two sections to go over the pass, since the train was running "heavy", with some fresh iced fish among other cargo. The first section of Train 13 was noted as Train 1-13 with its eight cars; including the baggage-mail car, four baggageexpress cars, two coaches, and a chair car. A second section, 2-13 pulled the Pullmans, which would follow Train 1-13. The helper locomotive was cut off at Siskiyou about 12:30 pm.

The express Train 1-13 was only a few miles from the Siskyou station (milepost 412.2) when two of the brothers boarded the train; with Roy and Hugh jumping onto the tender, while Ray waited outside of the tunnel portal with the dynamite. They forced the engineer Sidney Bates to stop the train at the south portal while most of it was still inside the 3,108-foot long tunnel No. 13. Their plan was to use persuasion or dynamite to enter the mail car, hoping the tunnel would muffle the sound. The dynamite, blasting caps, wire and a Dupont No. 3 plunger-type detonating machine were stolen from a construction site near Oregon City.



Dougherty saw them and immediately shut and locked the mail car door. Roy then attached a dynamite charge to the mail car's door sill and ran for cover with his brothers. He used ALL of the dynamite which they had stolen. A terrific explosion shook the mountain, and filled the tunnel with dust; Dougherty was killed instantly. The mail car was destroyed. Their



robbery plan had unraveled. Johnson was killed by Ray and Hugh

when he came to investigate the explosion. Roy killed Seng to eliminate further witnesses. The brothers wanted to move the train out of the tunnel to get at the destroyed mail car, but engineer Bates refused. Hugh shot the engineer.

The brothers abandoned their search of the mail car and fled into the woods. A large search party immediately hurried to the scene to begin the search. The brothers hid in the woods for twelve days before beginning to leave the mountain.

It turned out that there was neither a gold shipment nor anything of extraordinary value on the train.

Tragically, three trainmen and a railway postal clerk were killed in the this tragedy.

Dr. Edward Heinrich, a chemistry professor at the University of California, was brought in and was able to use early forensic methods to accurately provide a description of the suspects for police. The brothers evaded capture for four years before being arrested and tried for their crimes in Jacksonville, Oregon. All three were sentenced to life imprisonment at the Oregon State Prison in Salem, Oregon.

References: *Tragedy at Southern Oregon Tunnel 13: DeAutremonts Hold up the Southern Pacific* by Scott

Mangold, History Press, 2013.

Oregon's Great Train Holdup, by Bert Webber, Ye Galleon Press, 1973.

All for Nothing, by Larry Sturholm & John Howard, BLS Publishing, 1976.



Medford (441.8)

Kane (440.7)

Jacksonville Voorhies

(438.8)

Gas Works

Phoenix (437.0)

Southern Pacific acquired

Talent (434.6)

Henry Villard's

Oregon & California Railroad

the line on May 12, 1887, completed to Ashland on

was main line into Oregon Ashland (429.1) May 4, 1884. until the Natron Cutoff

was

completed in 1926.

Bellevue (426.2) Southern Pacific

completed the line over Tunnel 15 Steinman (419.1)

the Siskiyou on Dec. 17, Tunnel 14 Siskiyou

1887, joining the line Siskiyou (412.2) Mountain from California Deter **Tunnel 13**
summit is 4122 feet elevation.

Oregon Photo of SP No. 3626 on Train 13 at Ashland, Oregon in June 1924, just 8 months after her fateful day at Tunnel No. 13. This photo by H. L. Arey, California Hilt (401.8) would have looked on October 11, 1923. Right behind the tender is a mail

car just like the one blown up by the DeAutremont Brothers. From Martin Map Adapted from *Railroad Atlas of North America: Pacific Northwest*, by Mike

E. Hansen posting on *Trainorders* on Apr. 29, 2013. Used with

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