

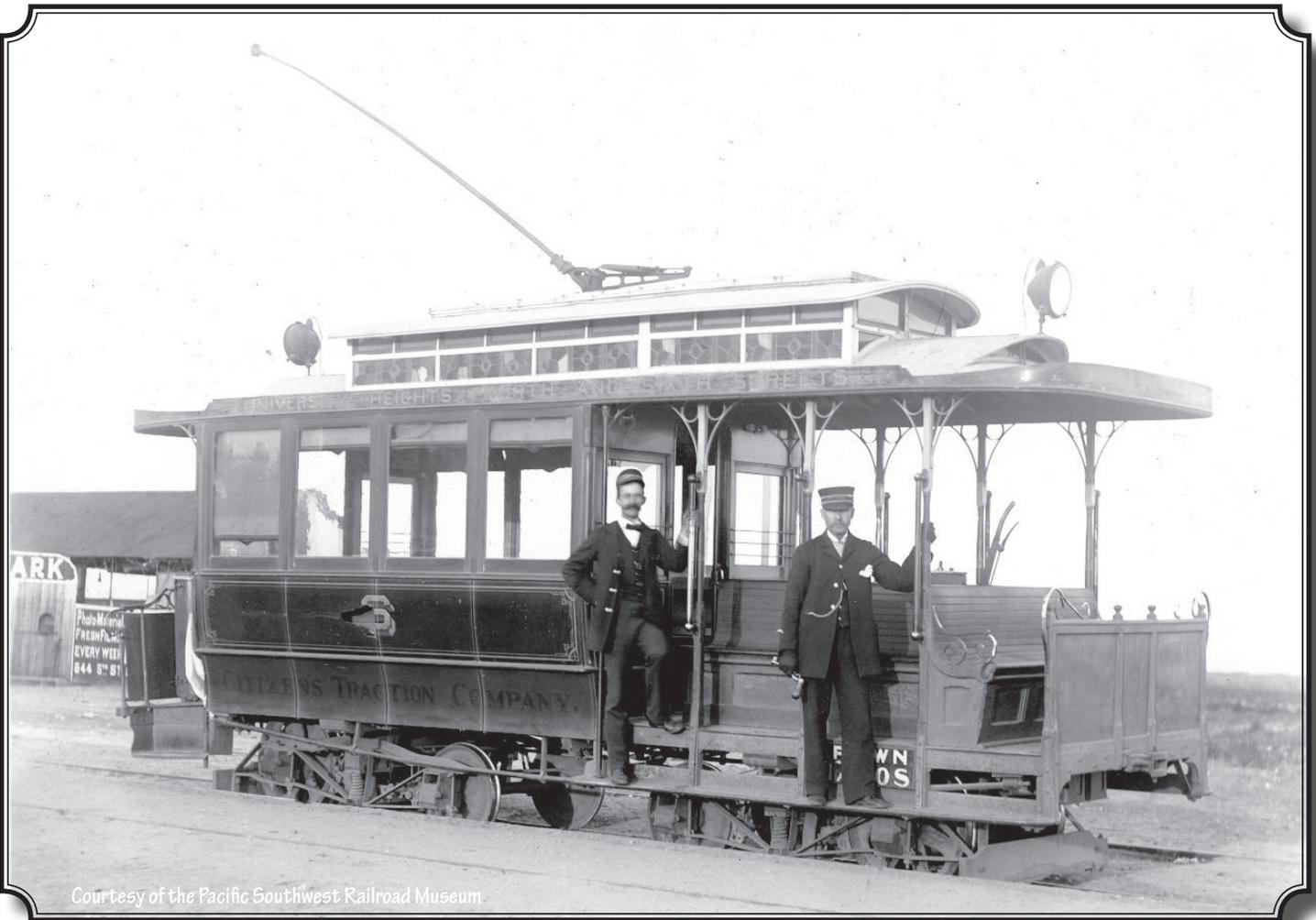
SAN DIEGO ELECTRIC RAILWAY ASSOCIATION



Trolley Lines

April 2017

THE END OF SAN DIEGO'S GRIP CARS



Courtesy of the Pacific Southwest Railroad Museum

On January 2, 1896, the remnants of the cable road's properties were sold to Mr. George B. Kerper, of Cincinnati, Ohio, for the sum of \$17,600. Kerper planned to convert the system to electric operation. He adopted the name The Citizens Traction Company for the enterprise. Nine or ten combination cars were equipped with new trucks, motors, pole trolleys, etc. and wiring. The two cable winders in the Power House were replaced with bipolar generators. Poles and overhead were installed. Electric street car service began on July 28, 1896.

Story on page 4

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hello again! We have been busy this year with a lot of small and somewhat unseen projects around the depot. These projects are meant to upgrade and improve our exhibits, inside and out and to present a fresh face to our visitors!

Richard Finch has been developing a traveling exhibit that can be modified to show what Trolley and Rail lines were like in the different areas of San Diego and surrounding cities. This display has been well received at the different venues we have shown it at, the latest being the Great Train Show at the Del Mar Fairgrounds and at the latest swap meet at the San Diego Model Railroad Museum in Balboa Park.

We are also looking for more volunteers to help with these different displays and to give us more ideas for display items that would be transportable to these locations.

SDERA has been offered one of the San Diego Trolley's original U-2 LRVs and we are awaiting word from MTS regarding this car. If it is donated, then we will add more permanent track in the south lot and rearrange the equipment on display. We hope to move the PCC car to the southwest corner of the lot to better display this piece of restored equipment with the U-2 car placed on the west side of the yard.

Coming in the future, we want to continue with some work projects around the property, finishing the leveling and ballasting the track in the car barn and to begin a project to build window frames for the Birney car and get it sealed to the weather.

We are always looking for new members and volunteers to help work on these projects and as docents at the depot! We look forward to ALL of you coming down to the depot and helping us to improvement our museum and its displays!



San Diego Electric Railway Association
DBA San Diego Electric Railway Co. Inc
922 West 23rd Street
National City, CA 91950
(619) 474-4400

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SDERA operates the historic
National City Depot museum
which is located at
922 West 23rd Street, National City,
CA 91950 and is open
Saturday and Sunday
from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Or visit us on the web at:
www.sdera.org

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Outdoor **MOVIE NIGHT**

Bring the family and your lawn chairs to Free movies at the
Historic National City Railroad Depot
922 W. 23rd St, National City, CA 91950
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Movies start
After SUNSET

SAN DIEGO'S GRIP CARS

By
Richard V. Dodge

Part six

TOIL AND TROUBLE

Following the auspicious opening, trials and tribulations soon began to plague the company.

Ordinary maintenance of the road and equipment, including the laborious oiling and greasing, was costly. The wood strips used for the track brakes had to be replaced every week or so. On the California Street line, the dies of the cable grips had a life of about three weeks.

Bills came in for the paving of Sixth Avenue covering the areas between the rails and two feet on either side,

Mr. Samuel A. Hammons began suit for \$15,487 on account of injuries sustained in a fall from a scaffold, M. K. Hill, a tinner, fell off the trestle which had been built near Palm Street.

Seriously injured, he lay in the canyon all night.

Gripman W. T. Laird told about the dangerous difficulties that may arise when a strand of cable breaks and buckles around 'the grip. Sometimes it would be impossible to "let-go" the cable and this was a single track road.

Once, when this happened, in a desperate effort to avoid a head-on collision, he slammed on both the wheel and the track brakes and, at the same time, released the cable grip with his foot. Fortunately that worked and the strand broke loose. Mr Enneking mentioned that he had rigged up a detector device in the Power House so that broken wires would strike and ring a bell.

In July 1891 "A construction car (probably a small car carrying a track crew) came down through University Heights at high speed. It struck some obstruction and all the men aboard were thrown off. Thompson's head hit the rail and was cut open. The car sped away and was not caught for several blocks."

Another time, in September, a disabled grip caused a car to "prance about". It was rounding the last curve before reaching the straight run to the Pavilion. "The grip acted strangely. The front end of the car shot up, coming down solidly as

eight tons of iron and wood usually do."

(Note: the cars weighed about four tons.)

The gripman was thrown out. There was a delay until the next car came along and pushed the disabled one back to the Power House.

A horse became frightened at one of the cars at Fourth Avenue and Palm Street. The carriage was hurled

down the bank into the canyon.

THE CONJUNCTURE

Thus things rolled along, steady by jerks, until a financial crisis developed when the California National Bank of San Diego closed its doors in November 1891. It had failed suddenly and disastrously. Collins and Dare had made "Wild Cat loans" and indulged in reckless speculation. It had been rumored that the cable railway did not get all the money due it on the sale of the bonds. Dare was in Europe when the bank failed and he did not return. When gross mismanagement was revealed, Collins committed suicide in the Brewster Hotel.



Gripman in their grey wool uniforms gather at the power station in 1890



The bank was backing the cable railway. In December, F. N. Pauly of Los Angeles was appointed Receiver for the bank. The continuity of cable car operation was interfered with during the turmoil. Then creditors of the railway began to take action. Spreckels Brothers Commercial Company filed a claim of over \$4,000 but continued to furnish the indispensable coal. Others included the Coronado Foundry and the Pioneer Truck Company. Sheriff John H. Folks was appointed as Receiver of the San Diego Cable railway Company. He soon resigned and George B. Hensley succeeded him. He held the office until April 23, 1892 when C. W. Pauly of San Diego was elected "Assignee". "The old bills can wait," he ruled. Hensley was asked what the results had been of some experiments in curtailing service by taking off the night cars. He was in favor of keeping them on. Taxes became delinquent on Monday night, April 25.

The employees wanted their wages. Salaries would be paid out of the first monies. Pauly did not know then what the policy would be. The 10,000 pounds daily coal consumption had been reduced to 5,600 pounds. The expectation was that the cables would be good for eight to ten months longer. (The average life of those of the California Street Cable Railroad in San Francisco was only 330 days.) A few days later Pauly informed that the road is running behind \$1,100 a month. He was endeavoring to raise funds on Assignee's Certificates.

By mid-May 66 claims had been filed but the real contest was the one of the California National Bank for \$104,358. Notice was given that the road will have to shut down August first, 1892, unless a \$400 subsidy is raised by the patrons. The ultimatum was "Subscribe or Climb the Hill".

Desperate efforts were being made to continue cable car operation until the new electric car line of the San Diego Electric Railway is running on Fifth Avenue. \$300 was subscribed and Recreation Park was sold.

On July 29, Mr. Bennett, an employee, was struck by a car and injured. He was standing too close but the gripman assumed that he would jump out of the way. The cars continued to run and advertisements were published for the events scheduled at the Pavilion. Sacred concerts were given by a full orchestra on Sundays.

Other attractions were provided: swings, a merry-go-round, and a shooting gallery. "Cars every 10 minutes" the notice assured. Picnic parties were suggested to help the finances. On August 17, the bond holders again asked for a Receiver, and Mr. Hensley was reappointed. It will be known in a week if a new cable has to be put in. It turned out that both had to be replaced and operation on the uptown division had to be suspended. Hensley reported that conditional contracts had been drawn up for the purchase of the two cables. Judge Puterbaugh gave court permission to proceed and the cables were ordered by telegraph.

On September 21, information was released that the new cable for the pavilion end was expected daily. The slots were being cleaned and the pulleys serviced.

The San Diego Electric Railway made the initial run with one of its double-deckers on that date, up Fifth Avenue, but its cars would operate to University Avenue only.

The cable, 27,000 feet long, for the uptown run, was shipped from San Francisco and had arrived at the Southern California Railway depot on October fourth. The reel or spool had been considerably damaged in transit, presenting a problem of how to handle the 54,000 pound load.

It had been planned to install it on Saturday the eighth.

Threading it through the conduit would require only two hours as the old cable was still in place.

Continued on page 8

AT THE DEPOT

A look at the SDERA booth at the Great Train Show located at the Del Mar Fair Grounds. The show was from February 18th and 19th.



On January 28, 2017, member Jim Price installed an informational card about the history of car 54 in its window. Jim took on the task of researching, writing and having the car printed for display in car 54. Thank you Jim for all your efforts!

Photo by Jeff Trimble



On Sunday, January 22, 2017 the National City Depot received the donation of 2 steam engine bells. These items were picked up by Mike Reading, Scotty and Tim Lewis. The bells have an unknown history, but the person who preserved them worked for Santa Fe in his earlier years. There is no guarantee these are from Santa Fe though. If anyone has any insight on the, please let us know
Pictures and story by Jeffrey Trimble, JEFFT2007@cs.com

Two San Diego U2s for Orange Empire Railway Museum



Photo and story by Jeffrey Trimble

To open the new trolley operations in San Diego in 1981, 14 U2s trolleys were ordered from Siemens/Duewag of Dusseldorf, Germany by San Diego Trolley. The first 30 units were made in Germany and the later 41 U2s came from a new Siemens plant in Sacramento, California. July 23, 1981, the original 14 U2s trolleys started service between downtown San Diego's Santa Fe station, and San Ysidro at the border. January 26, 2015, all 71 of the U2 trolleys were retired, with many of them having operated 34 years! Since retirement, many of the units have moved to service in Mendoza, Argentina, while others have moved to Rockhill Trolley Museum in Rockhill Furnace, Pennsylvania, and the Western Railway Museum in Suisun City, California. Yet two more have gone to USDHS in San Antonio, Texas to be used to train drug sniffing dogs.

In March, 2016, one of the original order of trolleys, the 1008 moved to its new home at the Orange Empire Railway Museum in Perris California. The unit is fully operational, and having an air conditioned trolley in the hot summer days is a welcome addition!

In 2017 word was received from Christopher Baldwin, who works with Ron Fishburn of the Orange Empire Railway Museum maintenance department. They are going to be receiving another unit, 1003 which is also from the original order. Once spare parts have been loaded inside the 1003, it will also make the journey to Perris. This unit is also fully operational!

Grip Cars

Continued from page 5

The announcement was made that the fence is up again at Recreation Park, now owned by Philip Morse of the San Diego Lumber Company, and as soon as the new cable is in, the games of baseball will be resumed.

But the cherished hopes of having the cars running to the Pavilion on Sunday were dashed. Time ran out.

On October 15, 1892, E. W. Britt, as attorney for the California Title Insurance and Trust Company, the largest bondholders of the cable road, appeared in Judge Puterbaugh's Court. He stated that one new cable was here and another was on its way from Worcester, Massachusetts.

As there was no money to move the ropes and put them in and as no Receiver's Certificates could be disposed of, he asked for and Judge Puterbaugh signed an order to stop operation of the road on the grounds that there are no funds.

Then came the gloomy but terse pronouncement: "The Cable Road is shut down." Mr. Enneking served in the capacity of gripman on the last car.

POST -OBITS

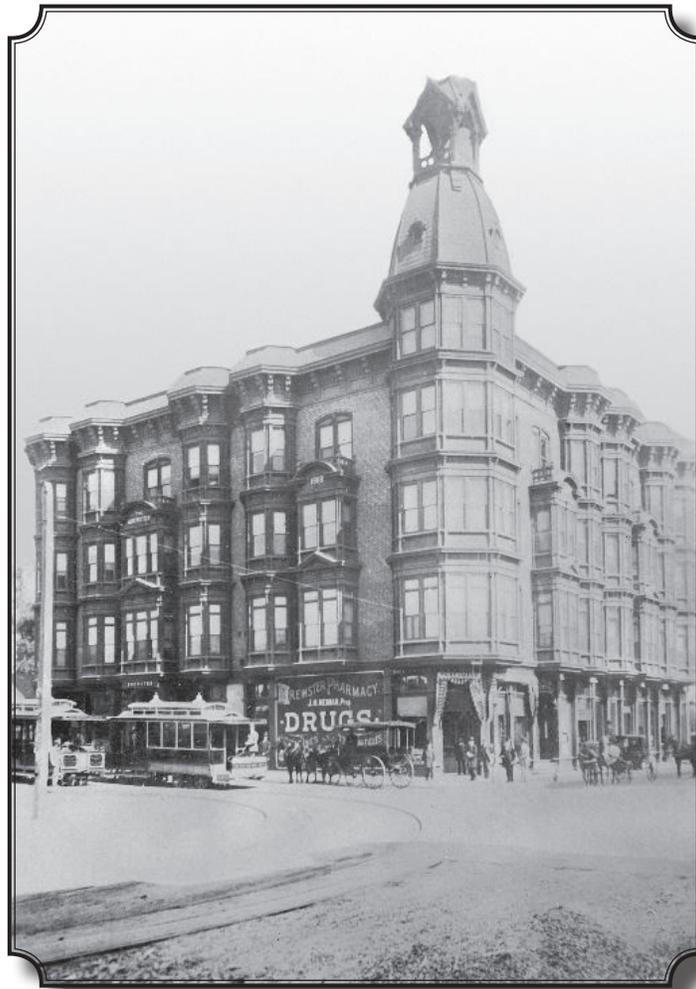
For a time, a resurrection was hoped for. The San Diego Sun of January 16, 1893 disclosed that "The two ropes in the cable bed were operated yesterday in order that they may be kept from rusting." Eventually the old ones were sold to Madame Katherine Tingley, head of the Theosophical Society, and were used for the

fencing of the grounds of the Institute on Point Loma.

The litigation dragged on for several years. Some properties were sold. The case of Pauly, Receiver of the California National Bank, versus Pauly, Assignee for the San Diego Cable Railway Company, resulted in a judgment rendered to the plaintiff of \$9,444.

A respected citizen recalled that, on one Hallowe'en, a group of juvenile pranksters broke into the Power House, attempted to push out a car and start it down Fourth Ave. Several other cars were damaged, a couple beyond practical repair, by vandalistic "brats".

On January 2, 1896, the remnants of the cable road's properties were sold to Mr. George B. Kerper, of Cincinnati, Ohio, for the sum of \$17,600. Kerper planned to convert the system to electric operation. He adopted the name The Citizens Traction Company for the enterprise.



The inaugural parade stops at the Brewster Hotel on the southeast corner of 4 th Avenue and C Street in 1891



Nine or ten combination cars were equipped with new trucks, motors, pole trolleys, etc. and wiring. The two cable winders in the Power House were replaced with bipolar generators. Poles and overhead were installed. Electric street car service began on July 28, 1896.

Attachments were filed in 1897, followed by a receivership. The properties were sold through a Commissioner's Deed March 21, 1898 and were acquired indirectly by San Diego Electric Railway Company. Trackage from Fifth and University Avenues to the "Bluffs" was changed to standard gauge, and the route of the cars on the Fifth Avenue line was extended to furnish through service.

Parts of eight former cable cars were utilized by the San Diego Electric Railway to construct four California type, closed center compartments with open end sections, electric street cars. The body of one of the latter has been rescued by Railway Historical Society of San Diego and, at this writing, is being restored as a railroad museum specimen. [Editor's note; this is as of May 1962. The car that Dodge is referencing to is our car 54]

IN RETROSPECT

Foreseeing rapid progress in the development of urban transportation, the following quotation from Street Railway Journal of January 1891 has been submitted by Addison Laflin, Jr.: "Mr. Frank Van Vleck, of Los Angeles, recently read a paper before the American Society of Mechanical Engineers in which he said The writer, although connected with the development of the cable system, cannot but conclude that the day of usefulness for the cable..... has forever gone and that the electric road stands champion in the field."

Looking back to the grand opening day of San Diego's only cable car line, Philip Morse composed an appropriate ditty on the occasion.

It is repeated here, in part, as it appeared in the

National City Record:

***We greet you all today with a welcome in our song,
For this is the day we've longed to see;
So we'll get aboard the car and swiftly glide
along to the table lands that overlook the sea.
Then let the big wheel turn that hauls the cable
round, And everyone will make the trip;
And over all the world the chorus shall
resound:
San Diegans never lose their grip!***

CREDITS:

Valuable assistance has been rendered generously by Addison Laflin, Jr., Secretary of the Bay Area Electric Railroad Association, Berkeley, California. He is Editor of the Bay Area Electric Railroad Review and the Circuit Breaker.

His article in The Circuit Breaker of November 2, 1947, entitled "Today's Cables in 1893, based on C. B. Fairchild's account in Street Railway Journal, contained helpful information. He furnished considerable technical data which are included in this story.

Newspapers: The San Diego Union, San Diego Sun, National City Record

Historical Society

San Diego Historical Society quarterly, Jerry MacMullen, Editor, January 1956: article by w. c. Enneking and car drawing by Jerry MacMullen

Westways, article by Jerry MacMullen, Files of the Junipero Serra Museum.

Cable Car Days of San Francisco, by Edgar M. Kahn

The Cable Cars of San Francisco, by Phil and Mike Palmer

Street Railways, Their Construction, Operation and Maintenance by C. B. Fairchild.

Anatomy of a San Francisco Cable Car by Frank Parker
The Cable Cars of San Francisco by Municipal Railway of San Francisco and for the courtesies extended by its employees.

Frederick W. Reif of San Diego, for data and photographs.

Union Title Insurance Company of San Diego for the use of photographs from its Historical Collection.

Here ends Richard V. Dodge's "San Diego's Grip Cars" re printed from the May 1962 issue of the "Dispatcher" from the Railway Historical Society of San Diego.

A jagged profile of Richard V Dodge

[Reprinted from the Dispatcher issue# 24, March 10th 1959]

A descendant of the "Damn Yankees" the Block Island, Rhode Island, branch of the Dodge family and of Sir Francis Drake on the mother's side. A native son of San Diego, having arrived on January 2, 1889, at the northwest corner of state and ash streets.

The first recollection of riding in the cab of a steam locomotive was on one of the Coronado railroads dummies from the ferry landing to the racetrack on Fifth street.

Obtained primary and secondary education in Middleton school and Russ (San Diego) high school. Began railroading in 1900 and on the Southern California railway and now Santa Fe and as a trespasser. Graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute of Troy, New York, in 1912 with a degree of mechanical engineer.

Work on the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, Mt Claire shops, Baltimore, in charge of the dynamometer car and as material inspector, in 1916 and 1917

Employed by the Southern Pacific Company in 1920 at Stockton, California, and the Maintenance Of Way and structures department, transferring in 1924 to the main office in San Francisco.

Returned in that year and was tolerated by the San Diego Gas & Electric Company for 29 years. Retired in December 1953 to devote more Time & Energy to riding the rails, photographing steam locomotives and delving into local railroad history.

Note: the above profile was prepared by Dick Dodge in 1959 at the request of Eric Sanders who was editor of the dispatcher newsletter of the Rail history society of San Diego in 1959. Dick also helped establish an accurate roster of equipment of local railroads.

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The vehicle will be picked up by a local, licensed tow company at no cost to you.

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Within 30 days of the sale of the vehicle, you will receive a thank you letter which you may use as a tax receipt. If your donated vehicle sells for more than \$500, we will mail you an additional receipt known as "IRS Form 1098-C". Your Donation will help us with the operation and maintenance of the museum, plus help with our many restoration and preservation projects.

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<http://www.careasy.org/nonprofit/san-diego-electric-railway-association>

*Movies start
After SUNSET*

Outdoor MOVIE NIGHT

Bring the family and your lawn chairs to Free movies at the
Historic National City Railroad Depot
922 W. 23rd St, National City, CA 91950
619-474-4400

May 20

Johnnie loves two things: his train
and the lovely Annabelle Lee.

When the Civil War breaks out he enlists as a soldier, but it is decided that he is too valuable as an engineer. Annabelle thinks it is because he is a coward.

When Union spies capture "The General" with Annabelle on board,
Johnnie must rescue both his loves.

After the romanticized opening, the film becomes a delightful thrill-a-minute chase adventure. Keaton's trademark split-second timing and grace under pressure are in standout form as the beleaguered, underdog hero.

It's important to remember that this 1926 movie used no miniature models or CGI. When a train wrecks in a particular spectacular gag it's the real thing, and Buster Keaton's crew had only one chance to get it right.

Staring: Buster Keaton, Marion Mack, Glen Cavender



June 17

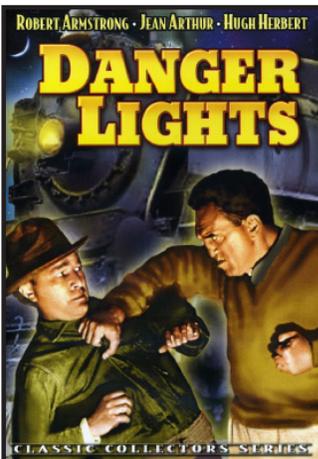
Head railroad man Dan is as ugly as he is honorable.

When he spots a drifter who'd hopped a freight held up by a landslide, Dan offers the man a job; then he finds the man was a railroader, too, and takes him under his wing.

Engaged to Mary, Dan doesn't notice the growing attraction between his protégé and his intended, but focuses instead on running the railroad.

Filmed in 1930 on the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroads, the movie was largely filmed along those railroad lines in Montana.

The railway yard in Miles City, Montana was a primary setting, while rural scenes were shot along the railway line through Sixteen Mile Canyon, Montana.



Bring a comfortable chair and Join us this summer as the Depot will be hosting free movie nights on the third Saturday of the month. Depot Opens: 7:00 PM for social time, Business Meeting 7:30 PM, Feature Movie starts about 7:45 PM



San Diego Electric Railway Association
d.b.a. San Diego Electric Railway
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off I-5 at Mile of Cars Way - take Bay Marina
Dr. west, right on Cleveland, go one block and
left on W. 23rd St and straight into the Depot
Open Saturday and Sunday, 10AM — 4 PM.
Depot phone: call (619) 474-4400

To submit items to the Newsletter, contact : Richard Finch via e-mail (editor@sdera.org)
Items need to be submitted by the 10th of the month prior to publication. -- Next issue in July
Please send all photos in the largest size as possible. 2 or 3 meg file (about 1000 pixels on the longest side)
also include the names from left to right of people in the photos.

Attention Members: Please look carefully at the mailing label. If your membership has expired, or will expire soon, and you wish to renew your membership, or become a new member, we offer the following levels: Life,(for a single member) \$400; Family, \$35(please include names); Regular(or Individual) \$25; Senior age 60 and up, \$15; Junior for ages 17 and below, \$15. Checks can be made out to, SDERA and mailed to
SDERA, 922 West 23rd Street, National City, CA 91950

Upcoming Events

Hello All,
The times for the May 20th meeting
will be;
Depot Opens: 7:00 PM for social time
Business Meeting 7:30 PM
Feature Movie, "The General:"
7:45 PM

As of now, the meetings will be on
May 20, August 12, and
November 11, 2017.

Please let me know if you would like to present a
program and the month that you prefer.
Thank you!

Board of Directors Meetings

All members and the general public are
invited to attend the Board of Directors
meetings at the National City Depot.

The meetings begin at 7:00 PM on the second
Monday of each month.

YOU CAN NOW FIND US ON:



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San-Diego-Electric-Railway-Association/
241154262614173](https://www.facebook.com/pages/San-Diego-Electric-Railway-Association/241154262614173)

