

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

December 10, 1959

### **Historic Railroad**

The Western Railroader, a publication of the Western Railfans, has recently issued Volume 22, No. 10, which deals with the Monterey-Pacific Grove Railroad.

Earl C. Hanson is the editor who compiled the roster from old records, State Railroad Commission and old timers of the era. He begins with a roster of equipment of the Monterey-Pacific Grove railroad, giving the number and date of each from 1891 to 1904 and ending with the Del Monte (1905), stating that it originally was a private car of the St. Louis Car Co., later used as a sightseeing car. Ten of the original cars used on the line were once horse drawn, all dated 1891. Others were originally either open motor cars for single track, or combination motor cars, all built by the St. Louis Car Co.

Mr. Hanson writes as his opening paragraph: "One hundred eighteen miles south of San Francisco lies the picturesque city of Monterey. Historically famous as California's first capital having the first theater in the state, and for its many adobe buildings and state landmarks that may still be seen, Monterey also has a colorful history connected with its local street railway system. From 1890, until its abandonment in 1923, the Monterey & Pacific Grove Railway ran between Pacific Grove (the Chautauqua of California), Monterey, and the Hotel Del Monte. Starting out as a narrow-gauge streetcar line on Aug. 12, 1890. when Juan Malarin and his associates, L.C. Allen and M. V. McQuigg were granted the right under city ordinance No. 27 to lay narrow gauge (three feet, 2 inch) tracks on certain city streets. This was signed by T. J. Field, chairman of the board of supervisors. "

The line was to be a single track for its entire length, having passing tracks at intervals. Commencing in Pacific Grove on Lighthouse avenue and 17th street and continuing along Lighthouse, Fountain, Central, private right-of-way, Lighthouse to Decatur street in Monterey, then to Alvarado, Munras, Pearl, Washington, to Perry street (Del Monte avenue), and on to Ocean avenue to 7th street and to the west gate of the Del Monte Hotel grounds on Sloat avenue.

A car barn was built at Del Monte terminus and also on Central avenue at 2nd in Pacific Grove. Malarin had great ideas for this railroad, not having the faintest idea

that electric cars and automobiles would soon take over the transportation problems of the Peninsula population. He ordered ten new double end horsecars from Fitzgerald Co. in San Jose and rushed the final work to completion in August. The cars as they arrived, received last minute preparations, and were numbered 1-11 inclusive. On August 5, 1891, service was officially started. Each car was drawn by two horses, and soon became a familiar site on the streets of both Monterey and Pacific Grove. The cars were trimmed in apple green and yellow, Mr. Hanson reports.

The road continued to operate with great success and on June 3, 1893, (Monterey's 123rd birthday), the company was reorganized under the name Monterey - Pacific St. Ry. & Electric Power Co. This increased the number of directors from five to seven. Harry A. Greene took over as president: Juan Malarin as secretary. Though cars rarely ran on schedule, the road was satisfactory as an investment, for from the outset it declared regular dividends to its stockholders, we are told.

In 1902, plans were made to electrify the entire system. It has been said that without a doubt, the greatest factor in the building of Monterey and Pacific Grove was the conversion of the old horsecar line between the two cities into a modern electric street railway. L. C. Martin was appointed as manager; F. M. Hilby became vice-president. The name remained unchanged and new electric cars were ordered from St. Louis, in addition to the ten horsecars that were rebuilt into single track electric cars. The original narrow-gauge track was retained as the roadbed. The only changes in the route were in downtown Monterey where new rails were laid from Munras to Webster, Figueroa and Perry street (Del Monte Ave.), and on Lighthouse avenue between Decatur and Alvarado street. The routes on Pearl, Washington and Decatur streets were abandoned. In addition to the rebuilding of the suburban line between Del Monte Hotel and the Grove, a crosstown line was built from the S. P. depot at Perry and Adams streets, via Adams, Franklin, to and into Monterey Presidio, then known as Ord Barracks. Work was completed in August 1903.