

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

June 10, 1964

Railroad Excursions

The Monterey County History and Art Association is sponsoring a "Romeria" into the Santa Cruz mountains with stops at Roaring Camp, the Big Trees and Bear Mountain. The date is next Sunday, June 14, when a chartered bus will leave the Greyhound Depot in Salinas at 10 a.m. and returns there by 7 p.m. Thirty-eight tickets are available for the bus. Reservations are on "first come, first served" basis.

A small narrow-gauge railroad carries passengers to Bear Mountain and Bear Valley. Bus round trip and train tickets sell for \$300. Those attending are to bring a sack lunch to be eaten in the woods at noon. Evening dinner will be available in Santa Cruz.

Sounds interesting

In recent years the only activity of the last steam engines of the McCloud River Railroad has been an occasional excursion run. Believing that the public will respond favorably to a short run on the southern slope of Mt. Shasta, the railroad management has contracted to run these trains July 1-5 and again Sept. 4-7.

Old No. 24, a Baldwin 2-6-2, is the iron horse which pulls the train up the 4 per cent grade of the McCloud River Railroad to the summit. There old No. 24 changes positions and eases the happy crowd down the grade to the station at Mt. Shasta.

Another interesting item is the fact that the controversy over which railroad is the oldest in California was settled in 1954, with the disclosure of records proving that the tiny Arcata & Mad River line through the redwood county near Eureka was then exactly 100 years old - now it is 110 years old.

The "Annie and Mary" as the line is affectionately called, runs for seven and a half miles through the Mad River Valley of Humboldt County. It was founded in 1854, and logging trains still run the route.

Until 1954 it had been believed that the West's first operating train line was the Sacramento Valley railroad between Sacramento and Folsom which started operating in 1858.

The Arcata & Mad River centennial celebration was held May 29, 30 and 31, 1954, by the Coast Railroad Club, a San Jose organization of rail lore fans.