

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

June 26, 1964

Ancient Engines Rescued

It was Gilbert H. Kneiss, author of "Bonanza Railroads," who saved the two old locomotives, "C. S. Abbott" and "Monterey", formerly on the run from Salinas to Monterey on the old narrow gauge railroad.

He wrote: "One May day on a solitary rail fan's pilgrimage, I drove into Battle Mountain and started to explore the terminal facilities of the Nevada Central. It was a bonanza to a lover of railroad history. Three ancient locomotives, cold and waiting, stood inside the shops, their diamond stacks showing how little time had changed them. Outside were the remains of two others; one had run from Salinas to Monterey on a long-forgotten line in the dim-remembered past."

Mr. Kneiss arranged for the aforementioned two to be saved as museum pieces.

Finally, as assistant director of "Cavalcade" at the San Francisco Fair on Treasure Island in 1939, Mr. Kneiss secured another of the remaining Central locomotives for this production, and with the "Silver State" it appeared on stage, representing the Central Pacific-train in the "gold spike" scene.

The "Silver State" and another of the locomotives now belong to the Railroad and Locomotive Historical Society. Still another, the "Sidney Dillon," was, at last reports, owned by Ward Kimball, who drew Mickey Mouse cartoons in Hollywood.'