

UP to halt train operation in area

10/19/69

Cut service to Ave. 36 on Oct. 31

By Roger Swanson

Union Pacific Railroad will abandon 8.7 miles of its tracks through northeast Los Angeles Oct. 31 following approval of its petition to quit operation beyond Ave. 36, it was announced Friday.

The Interstate Commerce Commission voted to permit abandonment of the line Sept. 23.

Glenn A. Cunningham, UP general manager said trains will be removed from the line Oct. 31 and the tracks cut near Ave. 36 the following day. There is no timetable for the removal of tracks along the 8.7 miles.

Freight customers will continue to be served by the railroad's trailer freight service which moves consignments between local industry docks and UP piggyback trains at East Los Angeles, said Harry Bartlett, the road's general traffic agent at Pasadena.

The line is also giving up its 1903 passenger station on Colorado Blvd. in Pasadena and a freight station on South Vernon in Pasadena. Both stations are in the path of the proposed Long Beach Freeway.

Cunningham last July said the state's proposal to acquire segments of the UP right-of-way and adjacent industries makes continuance of rail service on the branch beyond Ave. 36 "uneconomical and unrealistic."

He said that portions of the railroad presently ending at Howard Street wanted by the state for the Long Beach Freeway extension in Pasadena include those between Howard and Lincoln Avenues and between Orange Grove Avenue and Palmetto Drive.

In its petition for abandonment filed with the Interstate Commerce Commission, UP sought to quit operation from Milepost 3.10 to Milepost 11.87 which is from French Avenue in Lincoln Heights to the line's terminus.

FEW CUSTOMERS

Cunningham said that because of a lack of trackside freight customers between Palmetto St. in Pasadena and Ave. 36 in Lincoln Heights UP requested the line cutback to Ave. 36.

Currently, the railroad runs a freight train on the line in mid-morning, Monday through Saturday. The railroad's abandonment is the result of lengthy negotiations with the state division of highways. Thomas Hammill, the road's chief negotiator with the state, said one of the requirements of the negotiation was that the railroad file for abandonment with the ICC.

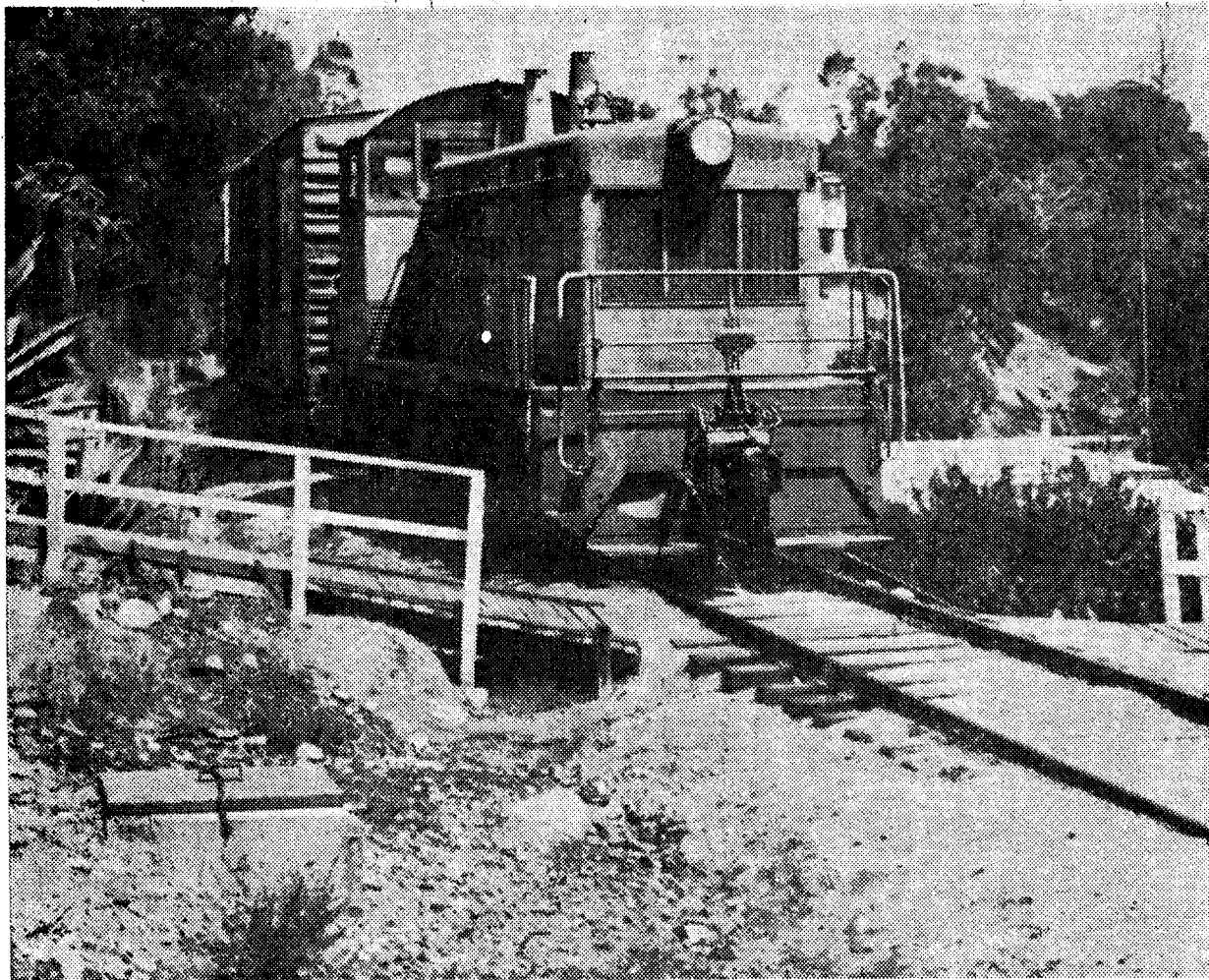
Railroad officials said UP will continue to cater to Pasadena freight customers with its trailer freight service. Highway trailers loaded at local industry docks are piggy-backed on cross-country trains from the road's East Los Angeles yards.

Passenger service on the line, which totals 11.9 miles in length, was discontinued in 1929. Connecting daily bus service now provided between the Pasadena station and UP passenger trains at the East Los Angeles station will operate from a new traffic office when it is selected.

ONE OF OLDEST

The branch is one of the oldest sections of Union Pacific in Southern California. It was built in 1887 as the Pasadena Railway, operating between Raymond and Altadena. It was consolidated to form the Los Angeles, Pasadena and Glendale Railway through Highland Park with connections to Los Angeles in 1889, and acquired by the Los Angeles Terminal Railway in 1890.

This, in turn, became part of the San Pedro, Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad in 1901. Union Pacific, half-owner of SP, LA and SL, acquired complete ownership in 1921. The Arroyo Park-Altadena section was abandoned in 1900.



Retires at age 82

Final run is Friday for the little Union Pacific train that has been rolling along tracks in Highland Park and Pasadena since 1887. Train will be removed from service in the area tomorrow, and the tracks cut near Ave. 36 on Saturday. The local track abandonment covers 8.7 miles. Freight customers will continue to be served by the railroad's trailer freight service. Lack of trackside freight customers between Palmetto Street in Pasadena and Ave. 36 caused the cutback, which was approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission last September. Passenger service on the line was discontinued in 1929. The local line was built in 1887 as the Pasadena Railway and then changed ownership several times until 1921 when Union Pacific acquired complete ownership.

Final run made over Union Pacific rail line

The Union Pacific train to Pasadena made its last run last Friday, with a locomotive and caboose full of railroad officials and other dignitaries.

UP final run

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Los Angeles, picking up a few cars remaining at sidings along the way. Once it cleared Pasadena and French Avenues, the sign was implanted.

The UP spokesman said that there's been no passenger service on the branch since 1929, when the railroad began bus-sing travelers between Pasadena and main line trains at East Los Angeles station.

HISTORY

The branch was one of the oldest sections of the Union Pacific in Southern California.

It was built in 1887 as the Pasadena Railway, operating between Raymond and Altadena; consolidated to form the Los Angeles, Pasadena and Glendale Railway, with connection to Los Angeles in 1889.

It was acquired by the Los Angeles Terminal Railway in 1870, which in turn became part of the San Pedro, Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad in 1901. Union Pacific, half owner of SP, LA and SL, acquired complete ownership in 1921. The Arroyo Park-Altadena section was abandoned in 1900.

Closure of that section of the line was authorized Sept. 23 by the Interstate Commerce Commission.

After the train returned beyond the new terminal point in Lincoln Heights, at Pasadena Avenue and French Avenue, a sign was placed marking the end of the route, and a rail pulled up.

The 8.7 miles of track was abandoned for two reasons, according to UP officials; Long Beach and Foothill Freeway construction will cut through the railroad right of way, and there was an increasingly small number of freight customers served by the railroad.

CUSTOMERS

A railroad spokesman said that most of these customers will also be moved or affected by the Freeway's requirements. He said that the railroad will also offer highway trailer freight service to the road's East Los Angeles yards.

Crew on the last run was engineer Frank W. Glass, conductor John E. Comer and brakeman S. T. "Scotty" Staggers and Earl J. McGraw.

Passengers included assistant terminal superintendent W. J. Roche, road foreman of engineers William T. Sandlin, Howard E. Bagley of the Pasadena Historical Society, and Donald McLain, of Altadena.

McLain, 82, rode on the line as a boy in 1899, when it was known as the Los Angeles Terminal Railway.

After the train reached the end of the line at Howard St., Pasadena, the crew worked back down the track, toward



END OF THE LINE — As Union Pacific's last train to Pasadena waits on the other side, railroad officials and guests mark the new terminus of the rail line at Pasadena and French Avenues. The railroad ended service beyond that point Oct. 31. Shown are (from left) Howard E. Bagley, actor and member of the Pasadena Historical Society; W. J. Roche, assistant terminal superintendent; two workmen: Donald McLain, Altadena resident who rode the line in 1899; and conductor John E. Comer.

Final traces of old UP ⁶⁷⁻⁷⁰ railroad line disappear

By Nelda Thompson

Patrons enjoying a leisurely breakfast at a Figueroa Street restaurant used to become very literally "shook-up" every morning. Newcomers screamed "earthquake," but, old-timers knew that the Union Pacific train was making its daily appearance at the very back steps of the cafe.

Where was the old U.P. going? Nowhere. What was its cargo? Nothing. It was making its dutiful "dry run" as prescribed by the Interstate Commerce Commission and being very noisy about it.

Until such time as the petition to discontinue the mission was granted, the nowhere-train had to keep its franchise alive

by pretending to be on official business between Avenue 36 and Howard Street in Pasadena.

It's quiet along the old right of way now except for heavy equipment pulling up rails and ties, some of which have been there since 1900. Permission to lay the old train to rest was granted on Sept. 23, 1969 and everything stopped rolling about a month later on Oct. 31.

SLOW DEATH

Now all remnants of the old line which began its career back in 1887, are being obliterated. Death of the old railroad was not sudden. It was a slow demise, aggravated by age, rejection and the general senility that is befalling most locomotives.

In its hey day the old UP

which began as the Pasadena Railway (between Raymond and Altadena) had taken holiday-bound city folk into the "country," passing over the narrow trestle that spanned the Arroyo Seco. So popular was the line that it soon expanded its service and its name, becoming the Los Angeles-Pasadena-Glendale railroad back in 1889 and became a part of the San Pedro, LA and Salt Lake Line in 1901.

One of its most joyful duties at that time was to pick up early risers on a New Year's morning and take them to the Tournament of Roses and the posh hotels that had made Pasadena the mecca for easterners who were wintering in California.

UNION PACIFIC

Union Pacific assumed ownership of the SP-LA-SL railroad in 1900 and both passenger and freight traffic progressed at steam engine tempo.

Although freight continued to be carried on the line until recently, its journey was short-haul; being intercepted in East

Los Angeles and placed aboard piggy-back cars en route to Eastern centers.

Passengers quit using the old UP in 1929.

When a railroad becomes old and useless and can no longer "pay its freight" it can't just pull over to the siding and say "I've had it."

Before it can legally pass to its reward and have its death certificate signed in due legality, it must make many appeals for respite.

Ill for many years, the old line didn't plead for euthanasia until July 24, 1969 and has been trying to die ever since.

When the Long Beach Freeway needed a little extending, a portion of the Howard Street (Pasadena) end of the line was amputated to make room for progress. With the state taking over this segment, the rest of

the eight mile course still remained.

All that is left of the once-pretentious railroad short line between Ave. 36 and Howard Street in Pasadena is a narrow strip of weed-flanked right of way, strewn with a few rejected ties, broken tracks, and an occasional spike. Even this junk-yard-museum is being swept away for the new owners.

At this time, the identity of those new owners is not known. According to Union Pacific the old right of way is for sale. Anyone want to buy an eel-shaped parcel of land that once housed a railroad?