

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 25, 2012



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Scholar Symposium at California State Railroad Museum on Friday, September 28 *Nationally-Known Scholars to Discuss Lasting Significance of Transcontinental Railroad*

SACRAMENTO – The California State Railroad Museum and the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society invite interested observers to a discussion among four eminent historians on Friday, September 28. This Symposium event will take place at the California State Railroad Museum beginning at 1 p.m. and ending at approximately 3 p.m. There is no cost to attend the special Symposium but regular Museum admission fees apply on this day.

The Symposium will explore such questions as the following: Was the transcontinental railroad built too soon? Was the Southern Pacific really “the octopus” of muckraking literature? Were the railroad builders good businesspeople, even in their own terms? And do the answers to these questions continue to influence the relationship between government and big business?

The scholars in this discussion have spent their lives researching these issues. They will offer their views in a roundtable discussion, followed by Q&A from the audience. The panel will include:

- **Maury Klein** -- professor emeritus at the University of Rhode Island, author of a massive three-volume history of the Union Pacific Railroad, and biographer of rail barons Jay Gould and E.H. Harriman;
- **Richard Orsi** -- professor emeritus at California State University East Bay and author of *Sunset Limited: The Southern Pacific Railroad and the Development of the American West, 1850-1930*;
- **T.J. Stiles** -- San Francisco-based independent scholar and winner of the National Book Award for *The First Tycoon: The Epic Life of Cornelius Vanderbilt*;
- **Richard White** -- professor at Stanford University, winner of the Parkman Prize and author of *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America*.

The discussion will be moderated by Peter A. Hansen, editor of *Railroad History*, the scholarly journal of the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society. For more information about the Museum, including admission price and driving directions, please visit www.californiastaterailroadmuseum.org

About the California State Railroad Museum

Operated by California State Parks with financial assistance from the non-profit California State Railroad Museum Foundation, the California State Railroad Museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Widely regarded as North America's finest and most popular railroad museum, the complex of facilities includes the 100,000-square foot Railroad History Museum plus the reconstructed Central Pacific Railroad Passenger Station and Freight Depot, 1849 Eagle Theatre, and Big Four and Dingley Spice Mill commercial buildings in Old Sacramento. For 24-hour information, visit www.californiastaterailroadmuseum.org or call (916) 445-6645.

About the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society

Founded in 1921, the R&LHS is America's oldest organization devoted to the study of railroading and its effect on national life. Its Pacific Coast Chapter was instrumental in the founding of the California State Railroad Museum, donating an extensive collection of rolling stock, photographs, and historical documents.

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