



# SOCIETY FOR INDUSTRIAL ARCHEOLOGY

## NEWSLETTER

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### No. 299: A HEARTWARMING REPATRIATORY SAGA



299, the second of Paterson's wandering boys to see the error of his ways and return to his native soil, following in the footsteps of American Brake Shoe & Foundry No. 1

who came home last year (as told of in *SIAN* Nov. 78). Paterson Dept. of Community Development photograph.

Yes, you can go home again . . .

"The Panama Canal may belong to the Panamanians now, but the last remaining locomotive engine that helped to build that waterway belongs to us," remarked Paterson, N.J. Mayor Lawrence F. Kramer, beaming enthusiastically before a crowd of supporters. The controversy over Engine 299, one of 100 Mogul types (2-6-0) built in 1906 by Paterson's Alco-Cooke Locomotive Works for the Isthmian Canal Commn., came to an end 6 June at a celebration marking her return to Paterson.

Three years ago Paterson officials began searching the world for Paterson manufactured locomotives (see *SIAN* Nov. 78). Some 60 were located, including several in South America. Mayor Kramer, Community Development Director Sidney Willis, and the Panama Canal Co. met in Panama last year to discuss a transfer of 299 to the U.S. Panamanians and the Natl. Legislative Council initially condemned the transfer as a flagrant violation of the Panama Canal Treaty signed by President Carter. Negotiations resumed, however, and Mayor Kramer and Panamanian officials agreed in February of this year on the locomotive's repatriation.

Engine 299 will be exhibited at the Paterson National Museum of Industry currently under construction in the 119 acre Great Falls National Historical District. *W.P.*

### REUSING ABANDONED RAILROADS

Since the 1920s, over 70,000 miles of American RRs have been abandoned. The great monuments of RR engineering — early tunnels and notable bridges — are listed in the National Register and the ASCE's Civil Engineering Landmarks list. But the actual roadbeds and rights-of-way also are impressive works that in many cases still exist. Several ex-narrow-gauge lines in Colorado now are driveable dirt roads; over 50 other lines have been converted to hiking and bicycling trails. The Heritage Conservation & Recreation Service is funding eight of these projects. Their cultural significance is enhanced by their value as recreation and transportation linkages. Acquisition costs have run \$5,000 to \$25,000 per mile, with paved trails and bridge work adding as much as \$40,000 per mile. While Federal support is not expected to continue, there are many railroad grades throughout the country that deserve exploration and possible reuse. *S.H.M.*

#### CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

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