



Preserving "The Feather River Route"

The Train Sheet

SEPTEMBER OCTOBER

ISSUE No. 39

\$1.50



Western Pacific No. 177 stopped briefly south of Sacramento at MP 127 to check a hot box in the train on October 5, 1945. The engine is carrying green flags for a following section of No. 77, a through freight from Salt Lake City. Norman Holmes, with less than two months seniority as fireman, snapped this relatively rare shot of 171 class locomotives in freight service.



FRRS

Feather River Rail Society

Preserving
"The Feather River
Route"

PO Box 8
Portola, California 96122

The FRRS, a tax exempt public benefit California corporation, is the historical society for the *Western Pacific Railroad* and operates the *Portola Railroad Museum* in Portola, California. The FRRS is not associated with or supported by the *Western Pacific Railroad*.

FRRS Tax id number is 68-0002774

Board of Directors

Bruce Cooper
Norman Holmes
Jim Ley
Wayne Monger
Hank Stiles
Gordon Wollesen

Train Sheet Editor

Membership

Associate	\$ 15.00
Active	\$ 25.00
Family	\$ 30.00
Life	\$300.00

Dues are paid for 12 months from time of receipt. All memberships have one vote, except Associate.

PRESIDENT'S DESK

On October 28th, we had the opportunity to attend the 19th annual Virginia & Truckee Symposium in Carson City. The afternoon program had Stephen Drew telling about and showing slides of the V&T in Reno. Slides & reports from Nevada Northern, Pacific Locomotive Assn., Northern Counties Logging Museum and our Feather River Rail Society were also presented. After the evening banquet, awards were given to volunteers belonging to Friends of Nevada State Railroad Museum and we saw a slide program, V&T Country, presented by Shirley Burman.

We were pleased to be asked to attend and to show & tell about activities at the Portola Railroad Museum during the past year. We are fortunate to have such a nice group like the Friends nearby. We are all in the same business of preserving railroad history, equipment and artifacts. It's great when we can work together...

CALENDAR

- Dec. 9 Santa Train 12-2 PM
Christmas Social 7:30 PM City Hall
- Jan. 6,7 Great American Train Show at
Los Angeles (Sales & info.)
- Feb. 3,4 Great American Train Show at
Oakland (Sales & info. booth).



WP 501, shown here as demonstrator EMC 906, its appearance is the same as when it made its first trip on WP at Elko over 50 years ago. We will be placing the WP heralds on the cab and lettering on the hood next spring.
-photo Norm Holmes

ACQUISITIONS

LMC Metals in Richmond and Sacramento have scrapped a large number of SP diesel locomotives over the past two years. LMC management, particularly Joe Cataldo and John Drusma have been very generous in allowing us to trade bad batteries for good and to remove small items from the locomotives before scrapping.

Early this year LMC bought a GP9 for scrap, the 567C engine appeared to be good so we inquired about its purchase as a replacement for the 567B in 708 or 805A. Dave McClain and Norm Holmes both inspected the engine and all seemed to be in order. A reasonable price was quoted so we decided to buy the engine when the unit was cut up.

Finally in late September the GP9 was scrapped and the engine was available. A trucker was hired to haul the 34,000 lb. engine to Portola. We unloaded it with our Little Giant crane which taxed it to its capacity. We were only able to lift it free of the trailer. The trailer was then pulled sideways from under the engine using 707. Blocks were placed under the engine and it was lowered. There it will stay until we get the 50 ton WPMW 90 operational. (Its being worked on.)

Helping with the unloading were: Brian Challender, Bruce Cooper, Norm Holmes, Jim Ley, Hap Manitt and Gordon Wollesen.

In January, 1987, we purchased a fork lift from government surplus. This unit has proved to be very useful around the shop, in fact we could not get along with out one. Its only drawback was the hard rubber tires. (It would get stuck easily once off concrete.) Bruce Cooper suggested we try to locate a pneumatic tired fork lift as a replacement. It so happened that Sierra Ordinance Depot in Herlong had just declaired a number of units surplus. Arrangements were made through the State Surplus office to purchase one. On Oct. 24th Norm and Hap drove the 60 miles to Herlong with a rented trailer behind the pickup and returned with a 7,000 lb fork lift. Bruce and Gordon went to work on it the next day and soon after some cleaning and adjustments it was running fine.

The purchase of the 567C engine and fork lift have seriously depleted our financial reserves. Nearly \$5,000 was spent for these items. If some of our membership could help make our checking account feel better, it would be greatly appreciated.

Union Pacific is now installing concrete ties in selected locations in the Feather River Canyon. (actually on the railroad not in the Canyon!) At present concrete ties are in place on Williams Loop and from MP 275 to MP 283 (Paxton to Keddie). The ties were installed using a special machine at a cost of \$48,000 per day.

Hap Manitt asked the job supervisor, who visited our Gift Shop, if it would be possible for our museum to have one of the concrete ties for an exhibit. He agreed to the request as he had one that was slightly damaged preventing its use in railroad service. Hap and Norm drove to Keddie, picked up the 680 lb tie and it is now on display in our museum. Who says museums contain only old items.

DONATIONS

Bob Mead delivered and donated a LCL freight cart from the WP San Jose freight depot, Bill Robinson donated a large movie screen for use in our meeting room, George Comer donated several amp. and voltage meters for use in converting one of our Lincoln welders to a battery charger.

Cash donations to the FRRS may be made through the United Way Campaign. Ed DeLozier who lives in Virginia uses this method and has pledged \$300 per yr. through payroll deduction. He says it is a "painless" method. Indicate that you want your donation to go to the FRRS. Ed also suggested we advise members to remember the Society in their wills. Often times survivors do not appreciate the value of one's railroad collection.

Cash, always needed, has been sent in by the following: Norman Anderson, George Bakalar, David Burton, Tom Carver, Russell Fike, Mike Flannery, Norm Gidney, Dan Heilig, Warren Richards, John Sheffler, Carl Sorenson and Jerry Williams. We thank you all.

WINNER

Michael Knight, who lives in Capitola, CA, won the raffle for a 15 day railroad tour of Chili for 2 people. The trip was donated by Trains Unlimited Tours of Reno with cooperation from LADECO Airlines and Latour both of Chili. Another tour will be offered next year. Proceeds go toward our Visitor Center.

RAILFANS' DAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1989

by Vic Neves

The theme for this years' event was the 50th birthday celebration for WP's first diesel, SW-1 501. Delivered to the WP as EMC 906, the locomotive was repainted to the original demo scheme by Norm Holmes and a group of members from Chico did some prep work prior to its painting. Hank Stiles did some mechanical repairs including the air brake valve stand. The number boards were made by Wayne Monger and installed by Jack Palmer.

The smoke from a fire near Sloat did little to discourage FRRS members and railfans alike from spending a day photographing our trains in the near autumn light of September. Almost 100 paid fans were treated to a well choreographed movement of trains throughout the day. Board member Wayne Monger working as planning/coordinator, using a computer, designed the days events by pre-staging all the trains in advance and assigning different locomotives to each train. Then by assigning trains to different departure and arrival tracks minimized switching delays during the days' events. As the weeks prior to the event came crawling closer, FRRS Trainmaster, Steve Habeck, with help from other crew members including Bruce Cooper and Gordon Wollesan started the task of assembling train consists in the order prescribed on Wayne's computer sheet. This job - a hearty thanks to Steve Habeck for a job well done. The day before the event found Vic Neves at the throttle of WP 707 trying to keep up with the switching moves from veterans Hank Stiles and Steve Habeck. An otherwise two days worth of work was concluded in record time with additional help from Jack Palmer, Ned Clary and Brian Challender. Brian and Jack also swapped throttle time while Vic stumbled over the ground work. With all train consists set, the balance of equipment not to be used on Saturday was then shoved out on the West Pass.

The month leading up to September 9th, found Wayne Monger working feverishly on Milwaukee Road U25B 5057, trying to make it move on its own and then over the Labor Day weekend, his dream was a reality. The evening before the 9th, FRRS First Sub Club members Walter Ozanick, Wayne Sheldon, Matt Goings, along with Dave Dodds and Vic reapplied the engine hood doors back onto 5057. Although still needing additional repairs including a very determined bad order "low water" relay switch that kept shutting down the prime mover, crew members were able to keep the GE running throughout Railfans' Day. A special thanks Head Brakeman, Fred James and the use of his "thumb" on the low water override switch while making the necessary photo run-bys complete. Tickets that were duplicates of passenger coupons used on the California Zephyr were printed by John Walker.

Early morning of the 9th had Wayne Sheldon, Larry Van Horn, John Donovan and Jack Palmer working security at both gates. These First Sub Club members were assisted with ticket sales at the gate by Lynda Monger, Kent Stephens, Dave Dodds, Matt Going and Walter Ozanick. A hearty thanks for the great work.

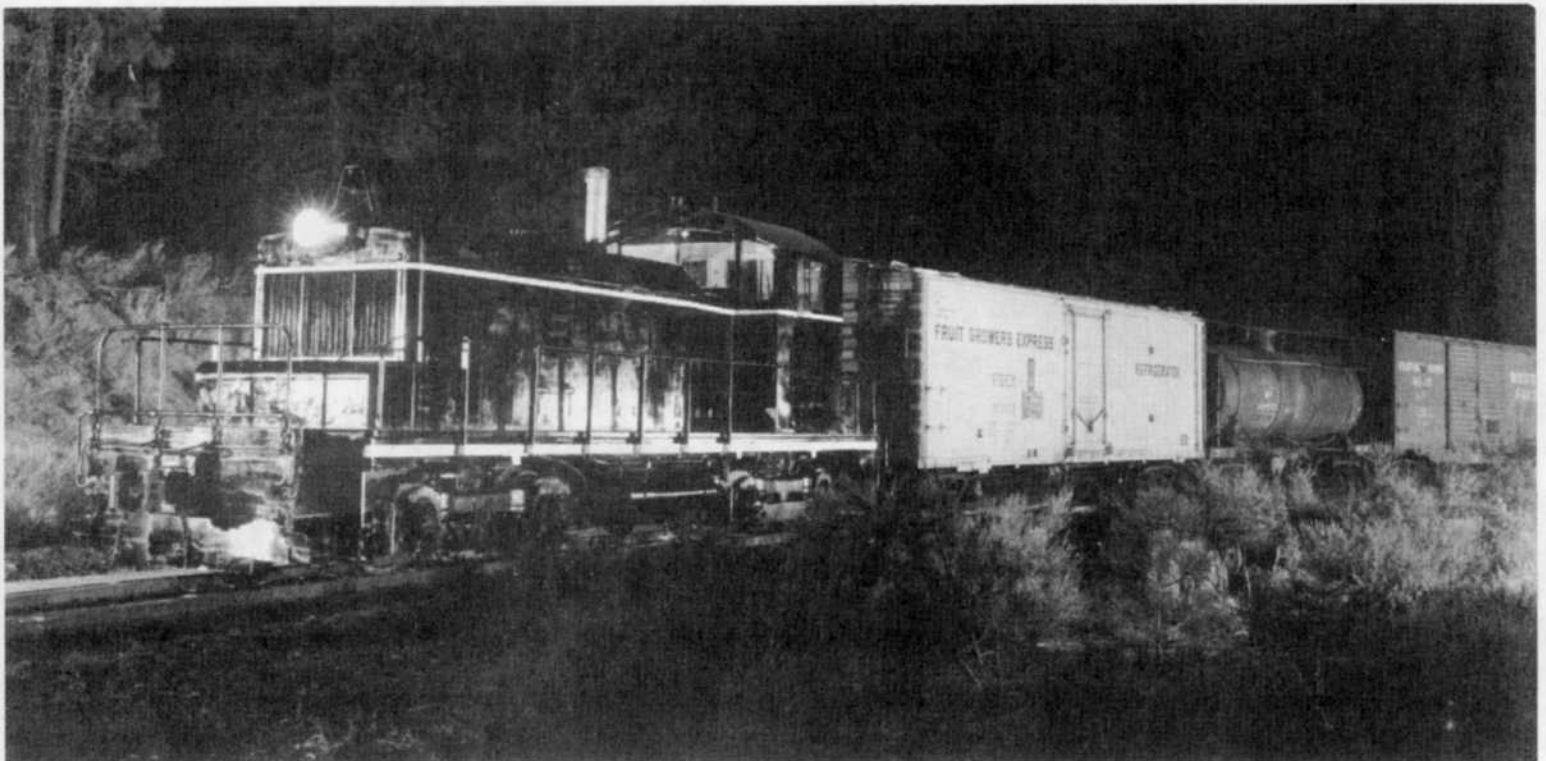
Vic Neves and Hank Stiles conducted the orientation/safety meeting for the visitors before the 11:05 AM departure of Feather River Shortline #8 with caboose load of fans to Milward switch to start the days runs. With Vic Neves at the controls as Dispatcher, crew members worked the schedule of movements with clock work precision and kept things rolling with no delays. FRRS Trainmaster Steve Habeck, helped coordinate all the moves with the Dispatcher and also worked the dubious position as Malfunction Junction Herder.

Conductors Gordon Wollesan, Jim Gidley and Steve Milward made sure Engineers Dave McClain, Bruce Cooper, Hank Stiles, Jim Ley, Wayne Monger and Jim Boyton kept things moving smoothly. Fireman on these runs were John Marvin, Larry Hanlon, Ned Clary, Jack Palmer, Bruce Cooper and Dave McClain. Head Brakeman on all runs

were Dave Waters, Brian Challender, Fred James and Mark French. If we left anyone out of the crew listing, you probably weren't there. The noon time whistles from FRSL #8, and diesels UP 849, WP 512, WP 921, WP 501, WP 707 and Milwaukee 5057 left no doubt to Plumas County that the museum was open for business that day.

Everything ran smoothly throughout the course of the day, even after radio equipment began to give use problems, crew members kept the lines of communication open. A fine spaghetti feed was served up by Sue Cooper and company. After dinner Chris Skow and Trains Unlimited Tours treated the fans with a slide show and a drawing for two to Chile. Wayne Monger treated the fans with a slide show of "SP in Siskiyou County". All photographers than gathered near Milward switch for a night photo session of SW-1 906 (WP 501) and the 40's train. Two sets were made as a very patient group listened to Vic Neves blast out instructions through the PA radio. Mark French, Wayne Sheldon and Walter Ozanick operated the flash bulb guns under Vic's direction. Thanks to Ken Rattenne for additional exposure info during the shoot. A slide followed for the few remaining fans on "Oliver Brothers Salt RR".

Special thanks go to John Walker and his three years experience from past events. Wayne and Vic certainly know now what needs to be done in the future. Thanks to Norm and Barbara Holmes for operating the gift shop and keeping things operating smoothly throughout the museum. Thanks to Hap Manit for making all the necessary requirements to keep the facilities operating. Thanks to Hank Stiles, Bruce Cooper Gordon Wollesan and Steve Habeck in the fueling of FRSL #8 and Jim Boyton for operating her for Railfan Day. Thanks to Wayne for running the ads in Pacific Rail News, Lark and Flimsies. A special thanks from all the operating department to all personnel that were involved in Railfans' Day. If we missed your name, our sincere apologies. See you all next year.



EMC SW-1 (WP 501) is illuminated at Milward switch during the night photo session during the 4th annual railfan day at the Portola Railroad Museum.
-photo by Vic Neves

WP'S MOUNTAIN CLASS LOCOMOTIVES

Nineteen thirty six was the middle of the great depression: Western Pacific was in receivership. With the court's permission the railroad embarked on a badly needed \$37 million rehabilitation program partially financed by a \$10 million loan from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Rail, roadbed, locomotives and shop facilities all needed improvement. WP's passenger trains were being hauled by a fleet of 36 ten-wheelers built in 1908/1909. As trains were getting heavier and the engines were getting older, new passenger power was sorely needed.

Because of the depression, the Florida East Coast Railroad had defaulted in paying for some twenty 4-8-2 Mountain type locomotives, built by American Locomotive Co. in 1924. As the cost of new locomotives was out of the question, this equipment appeared attractive.

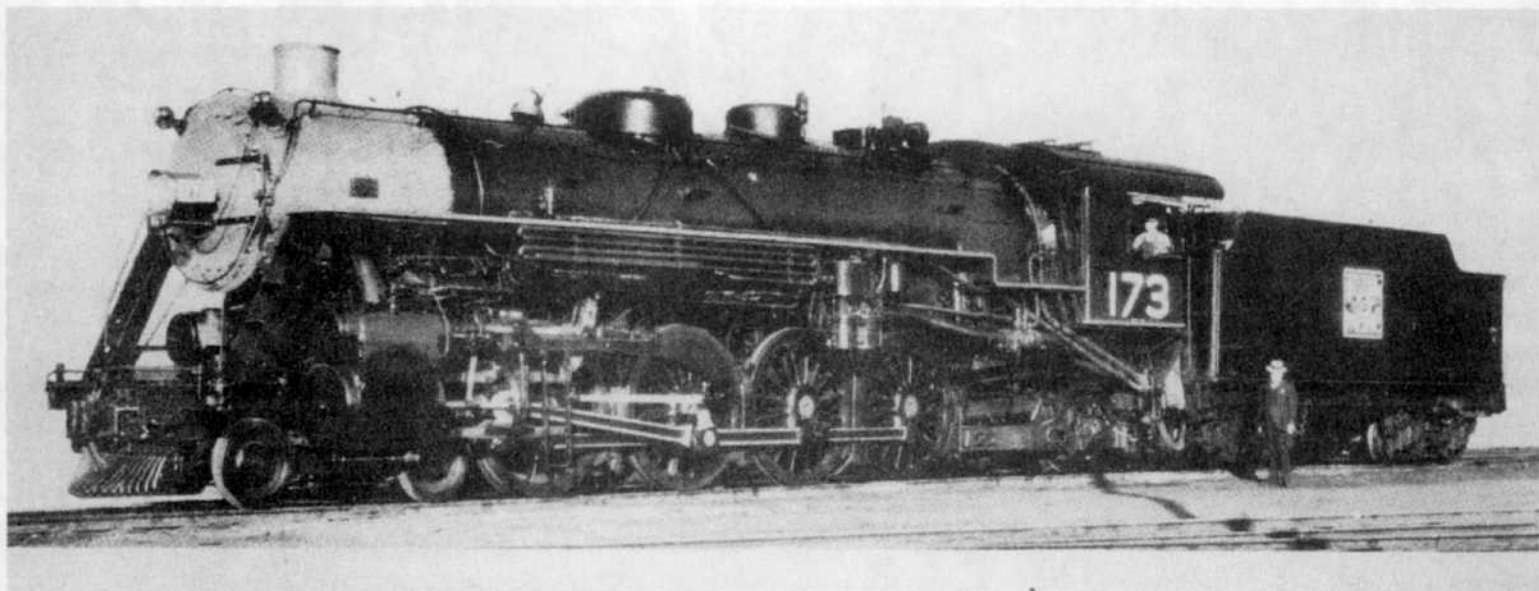
Carl Moll, a WP official, was sent to Florida to inspect the locomotives and reported back to the master mechanic that WP should buy all 20. Although they were in poor condition due to being out of service for some time, the \$12,500 each asking price was a bargain. The only thing he didn't like about them was the wooden cabs (sic)!

With the help from the \$10 million loan, WP was able to buy ten engines. They were shipped from Jacksonville in August, 1936, three going to the D&RGW shops at Salt Lake City for rebuilding, the other seven were delivered to Jeffrey Shops in South Sacramento.

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During the rebuilding changes in appearance were made to conform to WP's style. Pilots were replaced and the headlight placed in the center of smoke box. WP's distinctive enameled numbers were placed on the cab and the WP herald was located on the tender. As they were already oil burners, no change in fuel was needed. The ten Mountains were the only second-hand steam power bought by the railroad, except for some small steamers acquired from the B&L in early years and the four six wheel switchers.

As soon as the rebuilding was completed the engines were placed in service on the Scenic Limited running between Oakland and Salt Lake City. As WW II approached troop trains were being assigned to WP, the 171 class locomotives were used in this service whenever possible. The ten Mountains were the premier passenger power until the 4-8-4 Limas arrived in 1943. They were also occasionally used in freight service until their retirement in 1952. All were scrapped. Information for this article from Guy Dunscomb's Western Pacific Steam Locomotives and from remembrances of retired WP engineer, Bud Taber. - Norman W. Holmes



FALL WORK PARTY

Our fall work party, Sept. 23-24 accomplished much with few. Due to lack of much advance notice (some members received their Train Sheet after the event), the turnout was small. However most of the work we wanted to do did get done. Brian Challenger, Gary Cousin and Hap Manit replaced all but 5 remaining broken windows, Gordon Wollesen and his kids worked on the roof leaks (they are almost eliminated - the leaks not the kids), Bruce Cooper and Gary Cousin built porch roofs over the north side doorways, Dean Hill and Norm Holmes built shelves in a box car to better store our Alco & GE parts, Barbara Holmes rearranged the gift shop store room (Hap & Barb also waited on gift shop customers), Kent Stephens put back engine rocker arm covers on 6946 that some curious visitor removed and along with Mark French did other work. Sue Cooper cooked hamburgers and hot dogs for lunch, provided a chicken dinner for the evening meal, biscuits and gravy for Sunday breakfast and leftover chicken for lunch. Pat Cousin and Diane Wollesen helped Sue. The food was enough for one to come for let alone the camaraderie of working with fellow members - getting things done. This will be an annual event - the last weekend of Sept. plan for it next year.

AROUND THE MUSEUM

Ken Roller has completed Rip 4 track. This 200' + storage track now has 4 - 50' box cars on it. This one man track gang does nice work. Bruce Cooper has completed the roofing on the porches, Gordon Wollesen continues to hunt down the few remaining water leaks in the roof and Hap Manit finished the window replacements. The locomotives have been located so as to be available to power for battery charging. We are now ready for winter!

AUCTION

We have a copy of John Ryczkowski's Western Pacific Pictorial, a 372 page, 1000 photo classic, also a copy of David Myrick's Railroads of Northern California & Eastern Nevada Vol. 1. Both books are new and are out of print. The auction will be conducted in the same manner as Colorado Railroad Museum does its successful auctions: books will be sold to highest bidder at one dollar over the second highest bidder price. Deadline for bids will be December 31, 1989.

GIFT SHOP NEWS

We now have a good supply of WP & UP sewed on herald caps @ \$6.50. Most colors available. We have Nylon caps with WP heralds in silver, black, lt. blue, royal blue, navy and tan @ \$6.95.

Our popular nylon jackets are now available with a UP herald on the back. sizes M-L-XL-XXL, blue or yellow \$29.95 (XXL \$30.95)

Brass tank cars, WP 1201 series. \$95.00 K or AB brake system.

New T Shirts: a new design has been developed which shows a WP 4-6-0 going through a bridge (black & green), with Portola Railroad Museum in red. This is on a lite blue shirt. Sizes Children 2-4, 6-8, 10-12, adult S, M, L, XL & XXL @ \$7.95, \$8.95 and \$9.95 resp.

Our navy blue T Shirts with FRRS/WP logo are now also available in green. The FRRS/WP logo is black, the feather gold. Size S, M, L, XL @ \$8.95. We also have our Portola Railroad Museum FRRS caps in green or orange @ \$4.95.

Postage is \$1.50, CA res. add tax.

Portola Railroad Museum Visitor Guide: 12 pages, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2 folder listing all museum equipment, map of museum and mile-by-mile guide to Feather River Canyon. 50¢ + 45¢ postage. Send us a dollar, we'll mail one to you.

We will try to get a new catalog in the mail this month.

RENT A LOCOMOTIVE

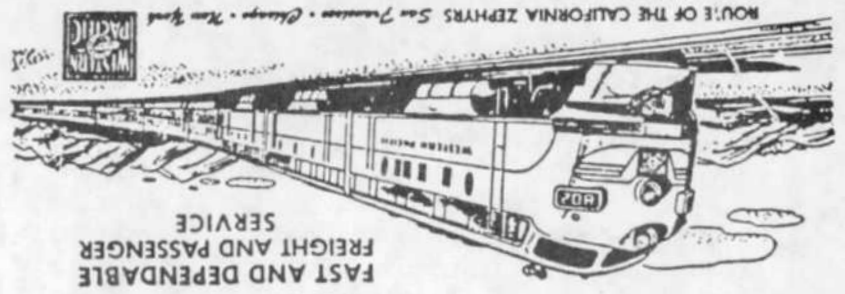
We are offering an opportunity to operate one of our diesel locomotives for one hour for only \$60.00. You will be instructed in its operation and be supervised. Operation will be back and forth around the balloon trackage. This is your chance to be an engineer for an hour. For more information call Bruce Cooper 916-832-4532 or the museum.

NAME TAG

If any of our members would like a personalized name tag with their name and Feather River Rail Society on same, send \$4.50 to Pat Cousin, 855 Mission Sierra Ct., Redding, CA 96003.

CORRECTION

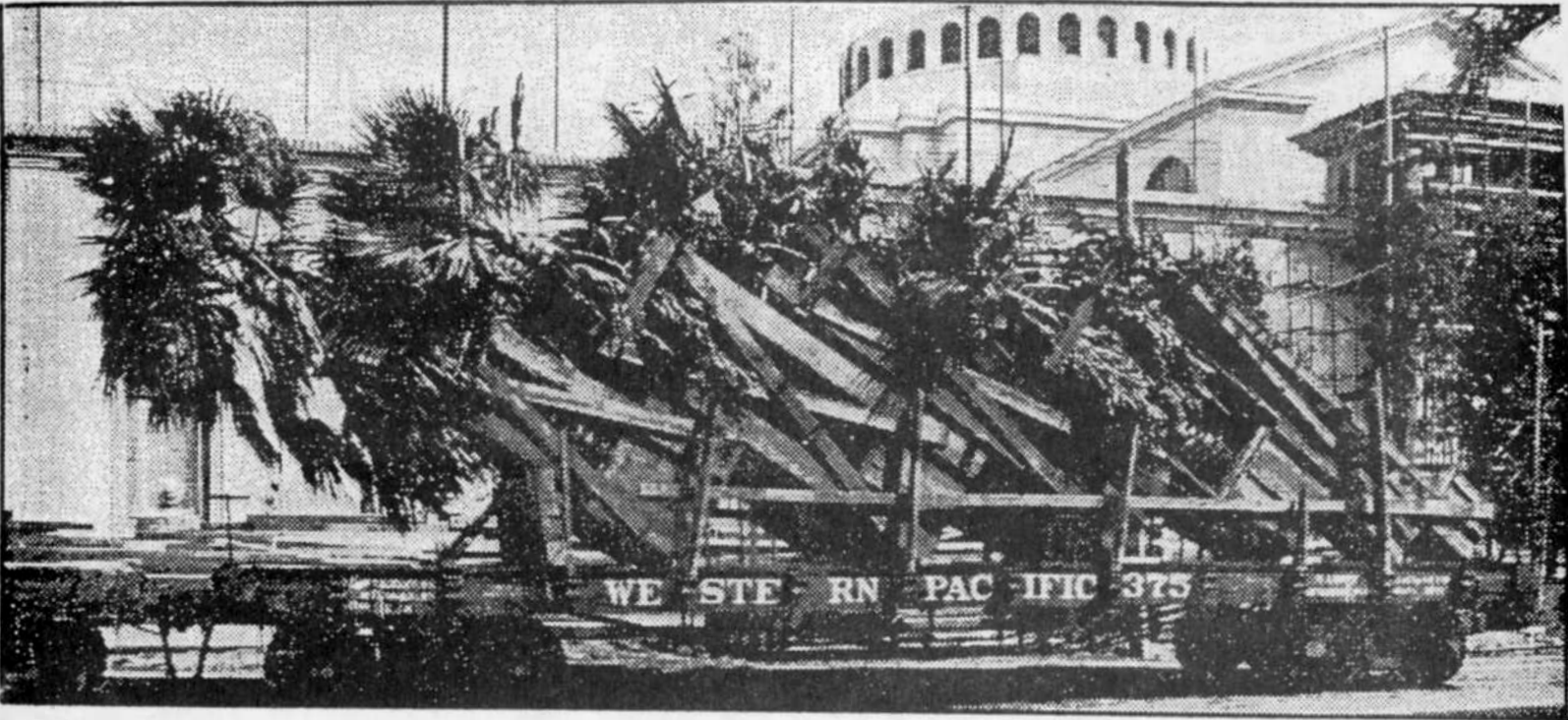
We never make mistakes, however, the cover photo on issue No. 38, WP 486, was not taken at Keddie by Chris Skow, but taken at Quincy, Jct., by Vickie Krois. Sorry.



Address correction requested.....Dated do not delay

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U.S. POSTAGE
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THE TRAIN SHEET
FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY
POST OFFICE BOX EIGHT
PORTOLA, CALIFORNIA 96122



A western Pacific flat car delivered palm trees from Niles to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco prior to opening - February 20, 1915. Zerox from San Mateo Times 7-27-89.