



Preserving "THE FEATHER RIVER ROUTE"



# The Train Sheet

ISSUE 103

September/October 2000

News from the Feather River Rail Society and the Portola Railroad Museum

## FRRS Participates in Truckee Railroad Days

By Doug Morgan

The locomotive engineer on the Western Pacific GP-7 707, pressed the tone button on his radio and waited for a response. A moment or so later a voice crackled back from the radio, "Dispatcher". Next the engineer pressed the mike of his radio and said clearly, "this is WP 707 east requesting clearance to enter the main line at Portola from the west pass and proceed east, over". The dispatcher responded, in a moment or so, with an air of old pride "Western Pacific 707,..... you have authority to enter the main line at Portola and proceed east". The time, September 2, 1977..... or was it? No, it was September 2, 2000. The WP 707 was on its first outing on the mainline of the Union Pacific under its own power since 1983 and leading a strange consist of 12 other pieces of equipment from the Portola Railroad Museum. The destination was Sparks and then Truckee for the 3rd annual Truckee Railroad Days. What made this all so amazing was the fact the train was under its own power provided by the 707 and the SP 4404 and crewed by active members of the Museum.

How did this amazing event occur? The adventure started back in April of this year with a wild proposal by the Truckee Downtown Merchants Association to use the



Displaying her California Zephyr heritage proudly FRRS FP7 805-A sparkles in the warm Truckee sun to the delight of visitors.

photo by Vic Neves

### Inside this Issue:

From the Chairman	3
Mechanical Department	3
Volunteer Facilities	4
Membership Cards	4
Operating Department	4
Upcoming Elections	5
Facilities Report	6
Publications Update	6
WPRRHS News	6
ARM Convention Report	7
Slowly Slipping Away	7
Obituaries	7
SD-9 Painting Poll	8
Board Meeting Minutes	11

Portola Railroad Museum's equipment as the center piece display for Railroad Days 2000 in Truckee. The idea was received with cautious enthusiasm.

Unfortunately, many factors played a role in the project not being pursued by the Truckee Railroad Days Committee with due diligence until the last moment. Within two weeks of the movement of the equipment to Truckee, our participation in the event was still very much in the air. Finally, all obstacles to an agreement were resolved and the museum volunteers jumped to the task.

In the history of the Feather River Rail Society, there have been but a few opportunities to take the museum or a semblance of it to some other venue even on a temporary basis. For four years, a locomotive and some freight cars were shipped the few miles from Portola to Loyalton to participate in the Loyalton annual Logging Days celebration.

(continued on page 9)

**- The Train Sheet -**

News from the Feather River Rail Society and the Portola Railroad Museum  
 Editor – Frank Brehm (916) 334-4470 trainsheet@wplives.com  
 Contents Copyright © 2000 Feather River Rail Society, All Rights Reserved.  
 Contribution Deadlines: Last Day of February, April, June, August, October and December.

**- Portola Railroad Museum -**

P.O. Box 608  
 Portola, CA 96122-0608  
 Museum: (530) 832-4131 Fax: (530) 832-1854 General Office: (530) 832-1657

The normal operating season for the museum is the first Saturday in March through the first Monday of November. The grounds are open from 10:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. daily. The museum building is open from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. daily. During the non-operating period the museum is closed except for special events in which arrangements have been made in advance. If you wish to visit during the non-operating period it is advisable to call in advance and find out if the museum grounds will be open.

Entrance to the museum is free, although a suggested donation of \$2.00 is greatly appreciated.

*The Feather River Rail Society, a tax-exempt public benefit California corporation, is the historical society for the Western Pacific Railroad and operator of the Portola Railroad Museum in Portola, California.*

***The FRRS is not associated with the Union Pacific Railroad.***

FRRS Tax ID number is 68-0002774

Member of the Association of Railway Museums and the Tourist Railway Association, Inc.

**- FRRS Board of Directors -**

Andy Anderson	President	(530) 832-4131	aa@firedept.net
Frank Brehm	Publications	(916) 334-4470	frrsbod@wplives.com
Pat Brimmer	Director	(801) 943-4435	brimmer@wwdb.org
Doug Morgan	Contracts Officer	(530) 832-1657	dbmorgan@jps.net
Jim Murphy	Director	(530) 832-5202	jmurphy@psln.com
Vic Neves	Advertising Manager	(510) 352-4373	vicneves@home.com
Hank Stiles	Vice President	(916) 363-8572	flatiron@calweb.com
Eugene Vicknair	Director	(530) 832-4131	EVicknair@StudioRed.com
Ed Wagner	Secretary	(510) 790-2321	lonleyscarecrow@aol.com

**- FRRS Membership -**

Associate \$15.00 Historical \$22.00 Active \$30.00 Family \$35.00 Sustaining \$75.00 Life \$300.00 Family Life \$450.00  
 These are the dues for the duration of one year, with Life and Family Life being a one-time payment.

**Associate** memberships do not have a vote, receive The Train Sheet but not the Headlight and are for one person only.

**Historical** memberships receive only the Headlight, do not vote and are for one person only.

**Active** memberships receive both The Train Sheet and the Headlight, have voting rights and are for one person only.

**Family** memberships receive both The Train Sheet and the Headlight, have one vote and include all members of ones immediate family.

**Sustaining** memberships receive both The Train Sheet and the Headlight, are for a maximum of two persons with one vote each.

**Life** memberships receive both The Train Sheet and the Headlight, have voting rights and are for one person only for life.

**Family Life** memberships receive both The Train Sheet and the Headlight, are for a maximum of two people and have two votes (one per member) for life.

Send all applications, renewals and address changes to:

**Feather River Rail Society**  
**Membership Dept.**  
**P.O. Box 608**  
**Portola, CA 96122-0608**

**Web Pages of Interest**

FRRS and Western Pacific	www.wplives.com	PRM	www.oz.net/~samh/frrs
WPRRHS	www.wprrhs.org	SN Page	www.people.virginia.edu/~ggg9y
Tidewater Southern	www.wplives.com/tidewater	Tidewater Southern	www5.pair.com/rattene/WP/WPPages.htm
CZ Virtual Museum	calzephyr.railfan.net	WP Virtual Museum	wpmuseum.railfan.net

## From the Chairman

By Andy Anderson

As the winter season moves in there are several projects in the works that we will be pursuing that will hopefully improve the inner appearance of the museum building. I am pleased to report to you that the roof of the engine house has been completely refurbished recently. A "Great Thank You" is extended to the City of Portola and the County of Plumas for this accomplishment. Without their participation and interest in our museum this project could still be in the planning stage.

As I mentioned above our Facilities Manager Ken Iverson has several projects to keep him busy this winter and with luck bring to completion. Among them are refinishing the floors in the Beanery and the Gift Shop, replacement of two of the large roll up doors as well as upgrading the heating system in the Gift Shop. The doors are especially important because of safety concerns with the present doors. Other areas that will receive attention are compliance with ADA requirements and clean up of the oil house and the engine pan. As you can see there are many areas that will receive attention and I'm sure Ken would like to have any and all help you may be willing to give.

The Society is in the process of establishing a "Grant Writing Team" which will be in charge of writing grant proposals for submission to the many organizations that support 501(c)3 groups like ourselves. We are hopeful these submissions will lead to approvals, which will enable us to receive grant money. With grant money we are hoping to accomplish some of the goals and objectives that up to this time have been in the "I wish we could state".

One project nearing completion is the movement of Magnolia Tower from the Bay area to the museum grounds. Some unexpected delays have postponed the dismantling and movement of the tower but we are hopeful that this portion of the project will occur in the very near future. We must again thank the community for the support they have shown by having the insight and willingness to help save this historic building from the wrecker's ball.

We have many exciting projects that have been discussed but have languished for lack of volunteers. Some just need a push with a member volunteer to assume the lead in planning, coordinating, working, and seeing the project through completion. I am hoping this will improve in the next year with many more members becoming involved with the Society.

In closing I would again stress that volunteer help is the backbone of our Society and efforts. I would like to remind you that any and all members are encouraged to participate and be a part in any area that is of interest to them. My slogan has been '**Lets Do What Is Best For The Society**' and participation of our members is indeed what is best for it.

As the saying goes "you don't have to call – just show up" and I guarantee you a hearty and warm welcome.

## Mechanical Department

By Hank Stiles

The Portola Railroad Museum made a giant step forward in September when we took 14 pieces of equipment to Truckee Railroad Days. We have taken equipment to Railfair at California State Railroad Museum twice before, but this was the first time we have attempted anything like this.

We only had a handful of days to get all the work done so we could make the move to Reno via the Reno branch and then to Truckee via the old Central Pacific route. I had my doubts that we could get all the work done on time. I talked to Doug Morgan and he thought that we could do it. I thought that he was crazy, but I trusted Doug and we started to work. With the help of a long list of members and many 14 to 16 hour days we finished the morning we left Portola.

With the WP 707 on the point, Steve Habeck as engineer, myself as conductor, the train left town. After many stops to check the equipment, we made the last move over the old WP/SP interchange and into the yard at Sparks. The next day the UP tore it out to rebuild it. About a week later, UP took the whole train to Truckee.

After a great show in Truckee the UP moved everything back to Reno. When the interchange was re-installed, Rod McClure and Steve Habeck, with a lot of help, including the Reno local got it all back to Portola.

We showed the flag and made hundreds of dollars doing it. This was an extremely successful outing for our museum. Many thought that we could not do it, but once again we proved what the Feather River Rail Society is made of. We should all be proud of the members that stepped forward to accomplish this Herculean task.

So many people stepped forward to help, and I was so busy that I failed to keep track of the names, so I will not attempt to name everyone. You know who you are and you have my heartfelt thanks, along with thanks of the membership.

At the museum the equipment is well. Not to say that there are not things that I would like to upgrade. I don't think we will ever reach a time that we have everything done that we would like to do. I think that that would go against the natural order of things. We just keep moving ahead at whatever pace we can, given the manpower that we have. (Small hint to come up and help out.) Things are pretty well shut down for the winter. We will continue to do rentals as long as we can.

Soon we will have a blanket of snow. I like the time of year when the snow is on the ground, the sun is shining and everything is dead still. What a sight. Then you remember that you have to get out the backhoe and plow the pretty stuff. I guess that we cannot have everything, but it is nice to have the beauty that winter brings us.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

## Volunteer Facilities

By Tom Graham

Completion of the Lounge Car and a Locker Car are planned next for use by volunteers working at the museum. As you know there has been considerable discussion about the use of the Lounge car and what work is to be done on it. At this time, although not cast in stone, most of the discussion approves the use of the Lounge Car for member use.

The alterations proposed will be along the same lines as were done on the Sleeper. Some electrical upgrade and the installation of air conditioning. A wall and some seats will be removed. Nothing planned will destroy the integrity of the car or it's ability to be moved.

I will be available on Saturday the 11th to answer any questions and time permitting, go through the car with anyone who wishes.

The locker car will be a place where members can have space to store their belongings for a weekend or season. The present plan is to use the Santa Fe caboose that has been stripped. Nothing planned will destroy the integrity of the car or it's ability to be moved. It needs a thorough cleaning and repairs to the floor, walls, windows and interior paint. Some lights will be installed but not a major electrical project.

The Society has a number of lockers that can be repaired and painted for use on this project. The caboose would then be placed next to the Sleeper for easy access with the approval of the Facilities Manager and the Yard Master.

As the caboose has already been gutted and we will not be changing the outward appearance, the feeling is that the Board can approve this use. Projected cost for the Lounge is \$7,000 and for the Locker car \$900.

## Membership Cards, Info Signs

By Eugene John Vicknair

In the coming weeks, FRRS members will begin receiving brand new membership cards as they make or renew their memberships.

The will come as a tear-out on a new membership welcoming letter, a move designed to make the work of creating new cards easier while giving members valuable information about the FRRS and its programs.

This letter will also include museum information such as phone numbers, hours, special events, and a location map. Member Eugene Vicknair with guidance from membership chairman Kerry Cochran designed the cards.

Also, prototypes of new equipment information signs debuted at the Railfair in Truckee. These signs give historical and technical information about our collection and close an important gap in our presentation to the public. The signs were warmly received and

answered the questions of many eager visitors. The prototype signs will be replaced with all-weather vinyl signs in the spring. About 20 pieces of equipment, mostly locomotives, will have the signs initially. They will eventually cover the entire core collection.

The signs were also designed and created by member Vicknair, who also donated the materials for the prototypes.

A majority of the historical information for them was provided by Norman Holmes, Doug Morgan, Vic Neves, Frank Brehm and Eugene Vicknair. The portable stands for the signs were constructed by the members of the FRRS crew at Truckee, including Norman Holmes, Vic Neves, Dwight (whose last name I misplaced), Doug Morgan, Ed Powell, and Jim Ley. Welding for the stands was arranged by Shioban Smart of Truckee.

Thanks to everyone who contributed!

## Operating Department

By Jim Gidley Sr.

Caboose trains were difficult to run this last operating season when on some week-ends only two people would show up for duty. Unfortunately about all we could offer our visitors on those days were push-pull rides using the Missouri Pacific caboose. We need a lot more involvement from the membership in all areas of museum activities.

Completing qualifications for new positions this year were Rick Edwards moving up to Brakeman and Ed Wagner stepping up to Fireman. Congratulations to both of you on attaining these positions through your hard work and dedication to the Society.

A very big thanks go to Bob Larson, retired WP engineer, who came by on some of the troublesome week-ends and worked as engineer so trains could be run for our guests. Thanks Bob.

Operating department thank you's also are extended to the following personnel for their participation on train crews throughout the season. Andy Anderson, Tom Andrews, Lew Barard, Dave Bergman, Don Borden, Pat Brimmer, Bob Carr, Eddie Chase, Richard Citrino, Kerry Cochran, Jeanne Collins, Terry Decottingnies, Rick Edwards, Paul Finnegan, Kenneth Finnegan, Jim Gidley Sr., Tom Graham, Steve Habeck, John Hittner, Norman Holmes, Ken Iverson, Robert Kane, Dave Kanfoff, Bob Larson, Tom Miller, Judy McGarth, Melissa McGrath, Will McGrath, Don Nelson, Vic Neves, Jack Palmer, Mat Parra, Tom Parra, Ken Roller, Mary Stallings, Bob Stalling, Hank Stiles, and Ed Wagner.

Crew training for the 2001 season is planned slightly different from previous years and is scheduled for May 5th and 6th, 10am to 3pm each day. As a reminder members of the Operating Department are required to take and pass the annual rules exam. This is an open book test.

I invite all members to join us this next season.

## Annual Election and By-Law Amendment Process 2001

Submitted by the respective committees

In order to avoid the the mailing problems encountered last year we will be using first class mail in 2001.

This will add to the cost of the election but it is important for all that want to participate in the election process.

There are three Director positions to be elected for three-year terms.

If you or some member you believe would be a good candidate for one of the Directors positions please feel free to contact one of the members of the Nominating Committee (listed below) with your recommendation and the requirements in item #3 of the election calendar below are met.

All candidates for Director may prepare a one sheet campaign statement.

The statement will be produced by the candidate on a 8 1/2 x 11 inch sheet of white paper not to exceed "20 lb. weight".

The statement shall set forth the candidate's views on relevant Society matters; it should not contain photographs, art work or slanderous comments about Society matter and must conclude with a disclaimer that is:

"NOT PREPARED OR REPRODUCED AT THE SOCIETIES EXPENSE AND DOES NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT SOCIETIES POLICY AND POSITIONS".

Failure to conform may cause the material to be returned for rewrite if time permits or omitted from the consolidated mailing.

The Committee will reproduce the statements with the candidates sharing the cost of approx. \$.04 per copy. Nominations may be mailed to;

FRRS Nominating and Election Committee  
6200 Gates Road, Santa Rosa, CA. 95404-9676

Tom Graham:(707)539-538-3722

tomghm@ap.net

Ken Iverson:(530)832-0770

shade2@plsn.com

Don Borden:(530)4563

dborden@jett.net

Gary Hall: ( 707)538-0737

Gary@macnetworks.com

Pat Brimmer:(801)943-4435

brimmer@wwdb.org

### By-Law Amendments

A petition to change the Bylaws of the Society must be signed by one member in good standing and the requirements in item #4 of the election calendar below are met.

Proponents of amendments from any source may prepare a one-sheet statement. One author will sign the

statements; other supporting names maybe included as part of the statement and must conclude with a disclaimer that it is:

"NOT PREPARED OR REPRODUCED AT THE SOCIETIES EXPENSE AND DOES NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT SOCIETIES POLICY AND POSITIONS".

Statements will be produced on a single 8 1/2 x 11 inch sheet of paper of white not to exceed "20 lb weight".

Failure to conform may cause the material to be returned for rewrite if time permits or omitted from the consolidated mailing.

The Committee will reproduce the statements with the authors sharing the cost of approx. \$.04 per sheet.

Amendments may be mailed to the committee chairman at;

FRRS By-Laws Committee  
P.O.Box 911, San Bruno, CA 94066-0911

Kerry Cochran (650) 952-7127 KC6NT@CompuServe.Com

All campaign statements and bylaw arguments and rebuttals will be combined with the ballot and election instructions into one consolidated mailing with costs paid by the Society.

Members are permitted to distribute their own election material at their own expense.

There is no grace period for the due dates.

1 - Nov. 11, 2000 -Nominating and Election Process confirmed by the Board

2 - Dec. 1, 2000 -Nominating Committee mail notice

3 - Feb. 15, 2001 -Petitions of Nomination and all candidates statements received at Election Committee's address

4 - Feb. 15, 2001 -All proposed Bylaw changes and Bylaw proposal statements to be received at the Bylaw Committee's address

5 - Feb. 25, 2001 - All proposals for amending or repealing Bylaws with arguments are available to members from the Election Committee with a self-addressed stamped envelope

6 - Mar. 1, 2001 -All statements requested to be revised must be received at the Committee's address

7 - March Meeting 2001- All candidates names and statements and All Bylaw change and arguments presented to the Board

8 - April 20, 2001 -Consolidated mailing (ballot, statements, and arguments).

9 - May 25, 2001 - Ballots received by 5:00 P.M. at 604 Ridgewood Dr.

Portola CA 96122-9110

10 - June 1, 2000- Election Committee meets to conduct vote counting.

The above dates and procedures have been approved by the Board of Directors and are considered to be official notice to the membership.

## Facilities Report

By Ken Iverson

Fall has again proven to be a busy time around the museum. Earlier this year the roof was re-coated and repaired thanks to the generosity of Plumas County and the City of Portola. A few leaks were discovered after the first rains, which were quickly repaired. We now await the next precipitation and the eventual snow to see if everything is OK. Our entry road into the grounds is now completely paved out to Main Street. This much needed improvement came through the generosity of the folks at Gold Mountain.

Yearly servicing of all fire extinguishers has been accomplished and all are good condition and certified for another year. In preparation of the coming winter weather Norm Holmes and Ken Roller moved the tables in from the picnic grounds and the "Dock". Member help is now needed in repairing and painting them (mostly paint). Plans are in place to paint the Beanery floor next Spring when it is warmer. Help will also be required for this project. Tables and chairs will have to be removed from the room and the floor thoroughly cleaned in preparation of painting. This will not take place until after the Santa Trains in December.

Major improvements that will be noticeable to all when completed are new rollup doors for the West end of the engine house. On order now we are hoping for completion before any major winter storms hit our area.

Radiators and engine blocks on the locomotives have been drained, stacks capped, and batteries removed where needed. Steve Habeck and Norm Holmes have accomplished some switching in order to put the yard in "Winter Formation".

With cooler weather settling in we have seen a decline in visitors to the museum. Although still dry and pretty warm, if you stay in the sun, winter is just around the corner which will bring snow and colder temperatures. With the inevitable snow approaching we are preparing the backhoe for snow clearing service.

## Publications Update

With this issue of The Train Sheet you should see what I consider major improvements. Layout of the pages has been changed with the articles and columns now continuing in the next column or on the next page. This will allow for easier reading. Graphics should also be much improved. This improvement adds to our production cost slightly but the finished product I believe will justify this. Printing of our bi-monthly newsletter is now being accomplished by Feather Publishing in Quincy, California.

As mentioned in the WPRRHS news column the search is on for a new production manager for the *Headlight*. This publication, although receiving the full attention of the staff, has as you know fallen far behind schedule. We continue to work diligently in our efforts to bring the *Headlight* back to a regular schedule.

## WPRRHS News

By Thom Anderson, WPRRHS Administrator

"Where's the *Headlight*?" seems to be the question of the day (aside from "who won in Florida?", as this is being written!). *Headlight* Production Manager Mike Mucklin reported recently that Issue #17 is close to the point where proof copies are distributed to staff members for final corrections. Once those corrections are made, it is sent to the printer and then mailed to the members. Barring any additional delays, the current estimate is you should be receiving #17 by mid-January.

I am as disappointed as the rest of you with our performance this year. I'll make no excuses other than to remind everyone that the **entire** staff is doing this as a volunteer effort. Unfortunately, our hobby sometimes has to take a back seat to our professional and family life. On a related note, Mike recently informed me that due to a number of issues in his personal and professional life, he will be relinquishing the position of *Headlight* Production Manager. I want to thank Mike for his efforts over the past 5 years and hope things settle down for him soon so he can enjoy the hobby again. A search to fill the vacancy left by Mike's resignation is currently in the process of being done. If you are interested in volunteering for this position and have experience in desktop publishing, please contact me at [tjanderson@dalycity.org](mailto:tjanderson@dalycity.org).

We have a recent donation of several ICC accident reports that took place on the WP from the mid-1920s through the mid-1940s from Mr. David Williams, of Poughkeepsie, NY. We also have been loaned a copy of an issue of the Baldwin Locomotive Works magazine which has an article on the WP's VO-1000 switchers and the facilities built to maintain them from Mr. Charles Roth, of St. Louis MO. Both of these contributions will see print in the *Headlight*.

The society recently purchased a group of photo negatives from the W.C. Whittaker collection. These cover several WP subsidiaries, including Alameda Belt Line, Tidewater Southern, Central California Traction Co., and Deep Creek RR. Many of these photos will eventually appear in FRRS/WPRRHS publications, and once a procedure is in place, prints will be available for purchase.

Please remember to mark your calendar for April 27-28, 2001 for the WPRRHS Convention at the Modesto Holiday Inn. Convention chairman Steve Hayes is looking for clinic presenters, or material to use as presentations. Contact Steve at [HAYESWP@hotmail.com](mailto:HAYESWP@hotmail.com) or phone 209-536-1847 if you can help. The convention theme is a tribute to the late Guy Dunscomb, author of several WP books, and the "hometown railroad", WP subsidiary Tidewater Southern.

The WPRRHS/Headlight staff wishes all of you "Happy Holidays" and a prosperous New Year.

## ARM Convention Report

By Norman Holmes

Barbara and I spent two weeks in the east, flying into Newark NJ, renting a car and first attending the ARM convention in Scranton PA. About 200 people attended the 5+day convention. Met some new friends and renewed connections with old friends. After the convention we drove through New York State and ended back in Newark. Two days of "seeing" New York City finished the trip.

Wednesday, Sept 20. Our first day started with a review of the restoration and reuse as a hotel of the beautiful 1908 passenger station. This was the "convention hotel." (We stayed at the Howard Johnson Motel near the Steamtown facility.) We had a train ride up the line stopping at three stations, two restored and one waiting restoration. In the evening, we visited the vendor's tables.

Thursday, Sept 21: Scott Becker, president of ARM, gave an opening talk and mentioned that this is the 40th convention. They also have a web site, [www.railwaymuseums.com](http://www.railwaymuseums.com). John Hinkley's talk centered on the fact that we should no longer look to the railroads for support. We need to know what we are, where we are and we need to look ahead 50 to 100 years. Next Walter P Gray III said most importantly museum trustees are responsible for the preservation of the collection. Any changes in items during restoration must be documented, some items should be left unrestored. Visitors are important, we need to provide a memorable experience for them to leave with. Barbara Pahl with the National Trust for Historical Preservation stated that we should compare our railway preservation to other forms of industrial preservation. As an example, we took a trip to the Lackawanna Coal Mine as well as the Anthracite Heritage Museum. A tour of the coal mine, going down 300 feet was offered and accepted. (I would never want to be a coal miner!)

Friday, Sept 22: The first session was on resources development, in other words fund raising. The Board of Trustees must give, get or get out. It is best to have a board with corporate people on it as this impresses those in charge of foundations that give money. Fund raising must have a specific need, do not take no for a final answer and obtain visitors names and addresses following through with a fund request. Memberships are generally money losers. Next was a two-hour session on the legal basics of collections. Here the legal status of collections was analyzed as well as how to acknowledge donations. There is no such thing as a "permanent loan." The Board must approve any loan of equipment. There is a need to have professional management. In the afternoon, the first session was "Telling the Modern Story." "History is everything that has happened up to today." We need to keep our railroad history up to date. David Conrad talked about preserving steam into the 21st century wondering if there will be people who will have the knowledge to repair the steam locomotives in the future. This was followed by a session dealing with buying, selling,

and the exchanging of trolley parts. Not much for us here.

Saturday, Sept 23: We met at Steamtown NHS, in the theatre where a panel discussion on the new FRA steam rules was Q&A'd. Then in the same location another panel discussion on how we can explain railroad history in relation to our exhibits. In the afternoon, we were pretty much on our own to explore the exhibits at Steamtown and the new Electric City Trolley Museum. That evening we attended the banquet with speaker, Don Phillips, Washington Post and Trains Magazine (Washington Pundit) writer. He said that not many period freight cars have been saved, I'm going to write him a letter.

Other railway museums we visited: Tioga Scenic Railroad, an eleven-mile tourist line that also hauls freight between Owego NY and Newark Valley. Operates on weekends leaving at 1pm. The ride takes one hour each way, costs \$9. A lunch on Saturday and dinner on Sunday at \$22 and \$29 respectively is also offered. Our train was pulled by a SW-1, had a diner where food was prepared, a coach converted to a diner, an open car of ancient vintage and 2 EL MU cars as coaches one with original seats, one with park benches along both sides. A 30 minute layover at Newark Valley made possible a visit to the village. The freight house station contained a model railroad layout, snack bar and souvenirs. There was nothing particularly scenic about the ride that one could not have seen in the surrounding area by car, but it was a train ride (at 10mph!).

We were going to stay in a caboose motel (5 PC cabs) at Avoca, but they wanted \$80 for the night so decided to press on. This motel is off the main highway and in this off-season wonder why they wanted to charge so much? Maybe they saw my hat!

New York Museum of Transportation, located south of Rochester. They were closed as they open only on weekends. I was able to drive in and see equipment stored outside and only on leaving noticed the No Trespassing signs. Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum at the same address in the Tourist Railway Guide was no where to be seen.

Cooperstown & Charlotte Valley Railroad at Milford, 8 miles south of Cooperstown was again only a weekend operation. The equipment stored at Milford consisted of a number of different types of coaches and cars, some of which had no seats etc. An EMD switcher headed the train. No where to be seen was the "museum" that reportedly has 2 GG-1's, a big hook etc.

At Oneonta we found the D&H caboose where the Brotherhood of Railway Brakemen first organized. This four-wheel bobber is protected in a glass enclosure in a city park. Union Station in downtown Utica has one of only 2 saved NYC steamers, this one an 0-6-0. Also there was an Adirondack RSD, a Santa Fe coach and a caboose of PRR vintage. We visited the Schenectady Museum, which had a number of exhibits from the area's largest employer, General Electric. Not much on its railroad activities, howev-

er. A photo of an Alco built UP Big Boy was shown but nothing else on Alco. Outside a freshly painted Alco RS-3, in Great Northern paint, was on display.

The Catskill Mountain Railroad, at Mt. Pleasant (no town, nothing but a train station, try to find this on a map!) advertised hourly trains from 12-4pm through Oct 9, but nothing was operating. A sign on the station said weekends only. They had a 50-ton Porter side rod diesel, 2 open cars and a caboose. Wonder what they do when it rains as it frequently does in this area? Other equipment listed in the guide must have been located elsewhere.

The Trolley Museum of New York at Kingston was locked up behind a high fence. We could see lots of equipment rusting away in the damp atmosphere. Could not see where they would have a "2 1/2 mile, 40 minute round trip.

New York City Transit Museum is located in Brooklyn in a no longer used subway station. Stored on the two tracks were at least 25 cars of various vintages. Also on display were various fare collection devices, bus and trolley models, parts, and a history of how the subways were built including a movie showing same.

A nice trip, but it is also nice to be home.

### Slowly Slipping Away

By Eugene John Vicknair

The San Jose area recently lost some major portions of its quickly fading WP heritage. Perhaps the most noticeable and tragic was the demolition of the downtown freight house on The Alameda, one block west of the famous SP Cahill Station. The freight house, one of only two which remained from the WP (the other in Elko, Nevada) was built when the branch to San Jose was constructed in the early 1920's. It served until 1971. In recent years, it had fallen into a terrible state of disrepair, but still sported a Western Pacific Freight Depot sign until the end. Efforts to preserve the building as part of downtown redevelopment fell by the wayside some years ago as local preservationists chose to focus on the nearby Del Monte warehouse and the rail community focused on the SP roundhouse.

The major shipper on the end of the San Jose Branch, the Del Monte cannery, finally closed early this year. Now, the last shippers spur, located just north of the WP line's crossing of the ex-SP Vasona Branch, has been tied into the former SP line and the WP branch beyond Monterey Road has been embargoed. This line was notable for tiptoeing through the backyards of the historic and pricey Willow Glen neighborhood.

Finally, the WP's Seventh Street spur, which took off from the branch near Spartan Stadium, is being torn up. Once a major line of an extensive industrial district where SP and WP tracks meshed and crisscrossed each other, the spur had one rail pulled over in recent weeks, a fate also befalling some SP trackage in the district. UP is rapidly pruning the San Jose Branch and very few customers remain.

## Obituaries

### *Bruce Lee Cooper 1943-2000*

We lost a very dedicated member when Bruce Cooper died August 22, 2000 from complications resulting from diabetes. He was born in Redding, California on April 1, 1943 was a fire fighter for the City of San Rafael for 15 years and after retirement on disability moved to Grass Valley.

In 1987, Bruce and his wife Sue visited our museum and found it so interesting that they moved to Portola and joined the Society in August 1987. Bruce and Sue became active volunteers, Sue in the Beanery and Bruce in the operating department. Bruce was elected to the Board of Directors in 1988 and in 1989 started the now famous run-a-locomotive program. This program has made the public aware of our existence through TV, newspaper, and magazine publicity. The R-A-L program had done more for the museum's financial welfare than any other one thing.

Bruce was also responsible for obtaining our first land acquisition, a 3.46 acre donation which included our picnic area. He also obtained supplies and equipment from Government Surplus at Herlong.

A memorial is being established with the American Diabetes Association, 10445 Old Placerville Road, Sacramento CA 95827.

### *Guy Dunscomb 1915-2000*

While not a current member of FRRS, Guy Dunscomb supported our Society with photos and information. Guy authored a number of books on the Western Pacific in addition to his extensive Southern Pacific works. Guy could always come up with a photo or roster information when asked. He was a fine gentleman. He passed away on September 1, 2000.

### *George L. Bates*

We were recently advised by Mrs. Bates that George passed away on September 23, 2000. Retired and living in Amirillo, Texas we regularly received donations from him in addition to his membership dues. Our condolences go to the family.

## Unofficial Poll Results

The following FRRS poll held on our EGroups mailing list site is now closed. This was not an officially sanctioned poll by the FRRS. Here are the final results:

POLL QUESTION: If repainted, which paint scheme should the Southern Pacific SD-9 be repainted into?

CHOICES AND RESULTS

- Black Widow (Black/Orange/Silver), 15 votes, 75.00%
- Bloody Nose (Red/Grey), 5 votes, 25.00%



## Truckee Railroad Days

(continued from page 1)



Looking from trailing unit 4404 WP 707 East pulls past the Portola Yard Office towards the main and Reno.

photo by Vic Neves

Once PRM shipped the GP-7 WP 707 to Railfair '91 held in Sacramento, CA, to represent the museum's collection and the museum sent the GP-20 WP 2001 to Sacramento for Railfair '99. It was a great hit and helped to galvanize some positive emotions about the notion of sharing the museum's collection at places other than Portola.

Comes now the third annual Truckee Railroad Days 2000 held on September 9th and 10th. The FRRS sent not just one piece of equipment to this celebration; it sent 14. The gathering of so much equipment, moving it to Truckee, displaying and returning it to Portola was without a doubt the single biggest accomplishment this organization has ever done. Moreover, all preparation and movement to Truckee was accomplished in the short time frame of two weeks.

The train that was selected and sent included the WP locomotive 707, prime motive power for the move and lead unit, followed by SP SD-9 4404 as trailing power unit, followed by WP CZ FP7 805A, WP(FRRS) F9B 925C, WP SW-1 501, the first diesel electric purchased by the WP, the Yreka Western MRS-1 244, the California Zephyr Dome lounge car 832, Silver Hostel, VIA lounge 754, VIA sleeping car "Edenwold" 1112, and UP business car 105. Completing the consist were three cabooses, SP 4107, UP 903005, and at the back of the train WP 484, replete with red marker. Included in the celebration as well was FRRS GP-20 WP 2001, which came from the Yolo Shortline where it has been stored since its presentation at Railfair 99. The 2001 was brought over the hill from Roseville to Truckee by the new UP locomotive SD-70M 4167 along with an SP flanger, also included in the displays.

Several days prior to the move, Portola was a beehive of activity. The friction bearing locomotives were our big worry. We did not want any failures on the road. WP 501

received a repack to four out of its eight journal boxes. YW 244 needed very little as all its journals looked great. All the locomotives received traction motor inspections with crater grease compound added as necessary. Journal oil was added to all oil bath roller bearing boxes on all roller bearing equipped locomotives while all cars received inspections for safety device defects.

The entire train was assembled by FRRS Yard Master and UP locomotive engineer, Steve Habeck and FRRS Train Master Jim Gidley. It took approximately 2 days to dig out the equipment, spot them for inspection and repairs, and spot them in such a way that they could be set over to the west passing track when required by the UP. By sunset on September 1, all was in readiness.

Crew call was 4 AM, Saturday, September 2nd. Associate Train Master Kerry Cochran and TM Jim Gidley got the locomotive fired up and did some initial moves in preparation for setting the train over to the west pass in sections. Our hostess from Truckee, Siobhan Smart, arrived about 5 AM with trophy sized pastries with which to fend off the early morning sleepies. Member and locomotive engineer for the UP, Marty Anderson, helped with the set over to the pass.

It was not until the last minute that the Union Pacific announced that they had no motive power to spare to haul our train to Sparks. Quickly, Steve Habeck and I decided that the 707 had to go because it was in good working order. By departure eve, UP had selected PRM Chief



Signal indications confirmed the dispatchers intention to put us in the siding at Hawley and allow faster revenue trains to pass by.

photo by Vic Neves

Mechanical Officer, Hank Stiles to be the conductor on the train and chose our Yardmaster, Steve Habeck to be the locomotive engineer. It was the perfect compliment of competency, in both the mechanical and operational areas along with a strong bias towards making sure we got the job done without any, or at least with as few, hitches as possible. By 8 AM the "Train of Odyssey" was ready to roll. With the 707, the 4404, flagship locomotives, and a menagerie of passenger cars and cabooses, it was a strange sight not to be forgotten.

Track warrants in hand, the Manager of Train Operations (MTO) for the UP, Marv Dunn, gathered all around those that were going with the train and explained the rules and procedures. Jim Gidley and I were assigned the rear caboose while Hank was assigned the head end. The passengers, who included a small contingency from Truckee, were assigned to the 105 or the three passenger cars, all of which were en suite.

Union Pacific selected a route to Truckee that was the shortest and one that would afford the least possibility of tying up their mainline tracks. The train was to proceed to Reno Jct via the former WP, then down the ex WP branch to Reno where it would proceed to Sparks yard on the former SP. From Sparks, it was planned to turn the entire train on the Sparks wye and then head to Truckee. From the beginning, it was apparent that the Sparks to Truckee leg wouldn't happen until later so Sparks was our destination for the day.

At 8:05 AM, Steve blew two longs on the 707's five chime horns, exclaimed into the radio, "Here we go" and the adventure was under way. Blistering the ballast at 10 to 15 mph, our train proceeded eastward via Rocky Point, past the remains of B & L junction (Boca & Loyaltan), and then through Hawley, where we stopped long enough for the journals of the two friction bearing engines to be checked. They were running cool and normal. Then we moved on to Vinton and Chilcoot and then through the tunnel at Beckworth pass. At Reno Jct we halted to once again to check the bearings on the 244 and the 501. Everything appeared cool and normal.

Once on the Reno Branch, the train progressed following the course of the old narrow gauge, the Nevada California Oregon Railroad, towards Reno. Up Peavine Hill, the 707 and 4404 rumbled and roared, now being chased by photographers eager to catch a frame of the action of the passing of this bizarre train. Many of the passengers in the 105 had now abandoned the plush environment of the business car for the "windy seats" of the Silver Hostel so named by engineer Habeck because there is not a sheet of glass in the car.

Twisting and turning down the branch, the view from the back of the "Train of Odyssey" towards the head end was to say the least, unique. WP & SP locomotives, fully blue carded, were operating on a class one railroad after being off the main line for fifteen to twenty years. The train slipped past Panther Valley and Parr yard, wound its way through the University of Nevada, Reno campus and finally past the old but



Taking the siding at Hawley allowed for inspection of the train to ensure the well being of our equipment during the move.

photo by Vic Neves

approached the SP from the north and swing around to the west then the east via a pair of very radical double 20 degree curves, first to the right and then to the left. Our train approached this with extreme trepidation. Several of us were on the ground, with our two-way radios on the alert, monitoring the very slow advancement of the units and the cars around these curves. Inch by inch we made our way safely to the tangent track without mishap except for some minor damage to the buffer on the A end of the UP 105. Once we cleared the junction switch, we headed through the crossover switches and on to the yard at Sparks where we were routed into the rip track area. Here we tied down our train, removed horns, locked up the cars and went to dinner at the Nugget as the guest of Siophan Smart. At dinner, all agreed that the day had been one for the memory book. Nevertheless, more work and movement uncertainties lay ahead before we reached our ultimate destination of Truckee. And, time was running out.....

Next time: The movement of the train to Truckee, setup, Railroad Days and coming home. Stay tuned.



An impressive and colorful train, our movement of equipment recieved many second looks from all who witnessed it.

photo by Vic Neves

## Minutes of Past Meetings

### SEPTEMBER 2000

No meeting was held due to the special event in Truckee.

### OCTOBER 2000

The meeting of the Feather River Rail Society Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 2 p.m. in the Beanery, Portola Railroad Museum. Directors present were: Brimmer, Morgan, Stiles, Murphy, Wagner, Vicknair, Brehm & Anderson. Others present were: Gary Hall, Tom Graham, Judy McGrath, Norm Holmes, Don Nelson, Rod McClure, Steve Habeck, Eric Stephens, Susan Scarlett, Fran Roudebush and Treasurer Dan Brady.

#### CORRESPONDENCE:

A donation in the amount of \$1000.00 was noted from Mr. & Mrs. Dirk Wightman of Portola.

#### FINANCE & TREASURER REPORT:

Treasurer Brady gave an in-depth budget report outlining possible financing for proposed projects. Projects for the year included inventory and updated ownership of all non museum owned equipment. Also upgrading the gift shop, possible painting of locomotives and making the museum ADA compliant. Funding is in proper order. Printouts of report are available at the museum.

Plumas County Supervisor Fran Roudebush was present and expressed her desire to see cooperation between and County, City and Museum go forward. The Board expressed their gratitude to her for her assistance in acquiring the funding for the roof project, which is complete. The Board also expressed their appreciation for her lead in acquiring the funding for bringing the Magnolia Tower to the Museum.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**ORGANIZATIONAL.** Gary Hall made a presentation as to the progress being made by the Organizational Committee. He solicited Board input and indicated that a presentation at the November Board meeting will give an indication of the progress this committee is making. The committee is endeavoring to determine the goals of each department.

**TRAIN SHEET.** Director Brehm gave a short update of the publication and indicated that he had contracted with Feather Publishing for printing of future issues.

**DECK & MOBILE EQUIPMENT.** Under the leadership of Crew Leader Tom Graham the deck between the shower car and sleeper car is completed. He also gave a report on the condition of the mobile equipment.

**ELECTION COMMITTEE.** Tom Graham reported election material will be sent out by 1st class mail.

**DUNSMUIR DAYLIGHT.** Director Morgan presented a recap of the expenses of the defunct Dunsmuir Daylight endeavor. Total cost to the Society was \$2672.30.

**TAMPER CONTRACT.** Director Morgan also reported that a payment of \$4200.00 had been received and the contract will expire

November 1, 2000 at which time the Tamper Machine is to be returned to the Museum.

**A & D COMMITTEE.** Director Vicknair, representing Chair Tom Mueller, presented a list of rolling stock which they felt could be disposed of with no affect on the organization and also a list of locomotives available for acquisition. A copy of this report is available upon request.

**TRUCKEE.** Director Morgan reported that to date receipts from the Gift Shop were \$771.60 and Silver Hostel donations were \$714.00. To date reimbursable expense totaled \$503.58 and the non-reimbursable amount is \$259.89. Truckee is also supposed to furnish 500 gallons of diesel fuel to the Museum. A complete report and total receipts and expenditures should be available by the next Board meeting on November 14th.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

**SILVER HOSTEL LITIGATION.** Director Morgan reported that he was in receipt of communications from the law firm handling this litigation and indicated it was working its way thru the legal process toward a final resolution and disposition.

**MASTER PLAN.** Director Vicknair gave a positive report on the Master Plan indicating he was pleased by the participation of the City of Portola and the Society. This is a continuing process and Director Vicknair asked that anyone with comments regarding this should send them to him.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

Communication from Kerry Cochran, Membership Chair, requesting funding for new membership cards and corresponding letter. MOTION 59-10/2000 authorized funding of this project to be not more than \$800.00.

Director Brehm gave a report on the WPRRHS CONVENTION site which will be held April 27 & 28, 2001 in Modesto. A check in the amount of \$500.00 was forwarded to the Site Chairman in order to secure a site for the convention. This is a budgeted item.

Director Murphy gave an in-depth report concerning the "Old WP Hospital Property" adjacent to the Museum property. The Board was of the opinion that it would be a good acquisition and it would be in the best interest of the Society to attempt to procure it from the Estate Heirs. Director Murphy felt that it would be a conflict of Interest for him to be involved and the Board directed the President to pursue the possible acquisition. MOTION 60-10/2000.

Director Morgan in response to inquiries regarding ownership of Engine 244 produced a contract signed by himself and former owner and director Norman Holmes. Final sale of these locomotives is forthcoming.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

November Board meeting will be November 14, 2000 at Portola City Hall beginning at 1 p.m. Being no further business the Board adjourned into Executive Session regarding the issue of Director Misconduct.

**PRESERVING "THE FEATHER RIVER ROUTE"*****WP Lives, in Portola!*****Mission Statement**

The mission of the Feather River Rail Society is to preserve the history of the Western Pacific Railroad. The secondary mission is to preserve the history of the subsidiary and interchange railroads within the territories it served.

**Mission Goals**

To preserve and interpret the history of the WP, the "Willing People" as a vital link in the development of the rail industry on the West Coast, including the steam and diesel evolution, WP's influence in the passenger tourism industry, the impact of freight competition between neighboring railroads. WP's influence in the lumber, mining and agriculture industry from Plumas County throughout California, Nevada and Utah



Helpers on the "Hill" are still needed as evidenced here with a set of ex SP locomotives departing the yard westbound after assisting an eastbound manifest up the grade. Activity was all around as we prepared our equipment for display.

photo by Vic Neves

NonProfit  
U.S. Postage Paid  
North Highlands, CA  
95660  
Permit No. 278

**The Train Sheet**  
Feather River Rail Society  
P.O. Box 608  
Portola, CA 96122-0608  
Address Service Requested