

Western Pacific Railroad Historical Society

2000 Convention Dates Set

Your Western Pacific Railroad Historical Society asks that you please mark your calendars now to join us at the historic Feather River Inn in Blairsden, CA June 10-12 next year for our annual convention.

The Inn was a favorite destination for travelers on the WP. In fact, the Inn was a flag stop for WP passenger trains for many years. Now serving as a conference center for the University of the Pacific in Stockton, the main lodge has been nicely restored and has a great meeting room and a fantastic dining room where the food is simply excellent!

The grounds are quiet and peaceful, except when a UP train rolls by on the other side of Highway 70! The Inn also has dormitory style lodging in cabins that are just up the hill from the main lodge. As part of the convention package, all meals and overnight lodging will be included. While the initial price may seem much higher than our normal convention registration, please remember that this includes rooms and meals. When you add it all up, it's cheaper than running around trying to find a room or another place to eat. This way, there will be no reason to miss any of the great speakers and presentations on the schedule.

We will be mailing more information as the schedule and prices are firmed up. But please mark your calendars now so you will not miss this great gathering.

The convention committee is also looking to get started on the planning of the 2001 and 2002 conventions. We need suggestions from people who are willing to do the local legwork in finding a suitable site and making the necessary arrangements. The convention committee will help with registration, advertising, finding people to put on presentations, etc. There is money available to handle the deposits and expenses involved in setting up the meeting so please don't feel like you will be on your own. We have guidelines in place and we will be happy to discuss your ideas. The most important thing at this early stage, is to find someone in the local area where the proposed convention will be held who can find the right facilities and draft up a plan for our consideration.

Directing a convention will require a serious commitment of your personal time. You will have to put a few modeling projects aside for a month or two and you will spend a few hours on the phone with the convention staff. But, the results will be well worth the effort and greatly appreciated by your fellow members. Please give it some thought and give John Walker a call at 916-671-9584, drop him a note at the museum or contact via email at run8john@thegrid.net if you think you would like to give it a try.

1999 Convention Report

On April 16 & 17 1999, 92 people attended the third annual WPRRHS convention held at the Newark-Fremont Hilton Hotel. Convention directors Jim Dias and Thom Anderson did a great job of putting together a well-received group of presenters that resulted in a thoroughly enjoyable gathering.

Clinicians included John Walker presenting material from the Society archives detailing WP's plans for building their own line up the peninsula into San Francisco. Jim Providenza showed how to make era specific models of the F-unit fleet. Tom Mougovan and Don Marenzi showed slides from their collections. For an unusual viewpoint, Rich Forst showed slides taken during cab-rides as a WP employee. Bill Decker showed how to modify the Life-Like GP20 into a high-hood WP version. Dave Pires showed several easily modeled WP flatcars, gondolas and tank cars.

Norman Holmes showed slides he took in the Bay Area before his move to Portola. Dave Stanley presented slide shows on the Sacramento Northern, Tidewater Southern and Central California Traction Co. Vic Neves and Wayne Monger showed their ever-popular WP-theme slide shows.

Saturday evening, following a buffet-style dinner, those attending the banquet were witness to a rare treat in the form of Mr. Harold Meeker, who joined WP as assistant to President Christy in 1966. He regaled those present for over an hour with stories about the inner workings of the railroad that only someone who was there when it happened could tell. Mr. Meeker's presentation was thoroughly enjoyed by all present. The evening was closed out with a viewing of favorite slides brought by the attendees.

Norman and Barbara Holmes brought the PRM gift shop to the convention and did very well in sales. Norman also showed two company films he had converted to video, a training film and an introduction to the railroad containing footage shot in the 1950s and 1960s. It is planned to have the videos available for purchase later this year. The member's swap table also did well.

Compared to past years, the modeling displays and contest entries were tremendous! There were over 100 models on display and nearly every contest category had multiple entries. There were also a number of items of WP related railroadians on display for viewing, including paintings, timetables, passes and lanterns.

The WPRRHS would again like to thank Jim and Thom for their efforts in bringing us all a great convention!

- John Walker