



Preserving "The Feather River Route"

# The Train Sheet

September/October 1988

Issue No. 33

\$1.50

## Portola Museum Acquires Switcher Vintage WP Alco S-1 Donated By ST&E



WP Alco S-1 No. 506 in Oakland, April 16th, 1944

*Also:* Railroad Days in '88  
Operating Department News  
Feather River Short Line News

 **WP LIVES**



## Feather River Rail Society

Preserving "The Feather River Route"

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.

For information about the society or this newsletter, please write or call:

FRRS PO Box 8 Portola, CA 96122  
(916) 832-4131 or (916) 832-4737

The Feather River Rail Society is not supported by, or affiliated in any way with, the Western Pacific Railroad.

FRRS Tax id number is 68-0002774

member

# TRAIN



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The Train Sheet Volume 6 No. 5 Issue 32

### Yard Cut \*

Dave Waters

First things first. I'd like to apologize to all of you who read The Train Sheet for the lateness of the publication date. Life being life (and a failing computer disk drive) has caused me to slip the publication into November. I will be making every effort to get the next and subsequent issues out on time. Thank you for bearing with me while I get the format set up, and get used to the publishing business.

Now for the rest: I've taken over the editor's position from Shannon Smith, who has gone on to bigger and better things in the work world. Hopefully, I'll be able to keep The Train Sheet rolling along for awhile. I'd like to note to you at this point that I really need as much information as you can provide to help

\* An excessively long cut of unrelated freight cars, both full and empty!

keep this newsletter as full as possible. I live in the San Francisco Bay area, so I can't get as much information direct from the museum as I'd like to, so I'm relying on you the members for material to publish. The same goes for photos! Please send me any WP, UP or museum related pictures for publication. If possible, please note the date and location along with any other related information about the photo. I can be reached by mailing to the museum mailing address. Suggestions are always welcome!

### Railroad Days in '88

As in previous years, clean up activities became a frenzy as the weekend approached. It was necessary for us to move the equipment from the shop pit track, clean the floors and move everything out of the way to allow a clear area for two very large model railroad layouts. The pit was covered using



2x6's between the rails and placing 4x8 plywood sheets with carpeting over the top. Hap Manit has been collecting used carpet for some time, and now we finally know why. GP-20 2001 was placed in the paint booth and the combination coal flat was moved in to be used as a stage by musical groups.

Outside, the wheel track area was cleaned up by placing the roof sections back on ARR 1507 (F-7B) and various other items moved to out of the way locations. This gave us room to relocate our track motor cars from the shop to the wheel tracks. Garbage cans were labeled for 'trash' and 'cans' and placed at convenient locations. Those helping with the clean up effort were: Rod Butler, Ned Crary, Dean Hill, Norm Holmes, Hap Manit, Rick Merle, Steve Milward, Wayne Monger, Ken Roller and Errol Spangler.

Union Pacific brought E-8A No. 951 to Portola for display and requested that we loan them our UP Business Car No. 105 to be placed next to 951 along with a UP caboose to complete their exhibit. We had 105's carpets steam cleaned, and the air conditioning system charged (power problems prevented it from operating, however), and Peter Solym painted the kerosene marker lamps which were placed on the car with new locks and chains to prevent them from disappearing. We also placed three sets of stairs and platforms at the 105 and 951 for public access. Pat Cousin did research into the 105's history and volunteered to be in the car during its stay at the Portola depot. Union Pacific presented a program on grade crossing safety called "*Operation Lifesaver*".

Friday afternoon, members from two model railroad clubs arrived and began setting up the layouts. Before long test runs were made. The layouts (Thunder Mountain from Sacramento and Nevada Railroaders of Carson City) are made in sections so they may be set up at railroad shows and shopping malls to promote model railroading. Also on Friday, Steve Habeck "switched the yard", moving equipment to provide a clear right of way for operations, and to have our two passenger trains ready for the weekend's

runs. Three locomotives (608, 707 and 921/1506) were positioned and checked for supplies.

Saturday and Sunday's train rides were operated in the same manner as last year's with three locomotive and two train sets. Vic Neves was the dispatcher who kept everything moving smoothly. On Sunday afternoon, Feather River Short Line's steam engine, No. 8, pulled several trains in passenger service.

Operating crews for the weekend included: Jim Boynton, Bruce Cooper, Gary Cousin, Mark French, Jim Gidley, Steve Habeck, Larry Hanlon, Fred James, Jim Ley, John Marvin, Dave McClain, Steve Milward, Vic Neves, Jack Palmer, John Ryczkowski, Peter Solym, Cindy Spicer, Dave Waters and Gordon Wolleson.

Train ride ticket sales totaled \$1610. Not as much as last year, but a welcome contribution to our treasury. Helping with ticket sales, crossing protection, etc. were: Ed Crary, Lynn Hanlon, Ray Graham, Dean Hill, Norm Holmes, Vickie Krois, Hap Manit, Matt Parker, Ken Roller and Kent Stephens.

Our food/snack bar did a great business serving hamburgers, hot dogs, chili, iced tea (25 gallons!), soft drinks and candy. Emery Godard, Sue Cooper, Lynn Hanlon, Barbara Holmes and Mary Ryczkowski were kept busy feeding the hungry visitors.

It takes a lot of work to put on an event of this size. Everyone who helped has our appreciation for their efforts in making this year's Railroad Days safe and successful.

### **That'll Do!**

#### Operating Department News

Our operating season is now over. We wish to thank everyone who came to Portola to help keep the trains running. Without your help, we could not have a successful museum. This year was great, next year will be even better!

The operations room (OR) has become the nerve center for museum operations and is a convenient place for crews to rest between

runs as well as a place to gather before and after operating sessions. Thanks to Bruce Cooper, we now have a nice cabinet for our locomotive service and parts manuals. Steve Habeck made a crew signup board for operating weekends. It is mounted on the wall where crew members may sign up for positions. If possible, please sign up in advance so we will know who is on duty. Hank Stiles has a desk to keep crew and equipment records. Members working on equipment or on operating crews are reminded to fill out the appropriate forms each day as we need a record of what is being done and by whom. Thanks. Jim Ley moved the Portola operator's desk from the Silver Palace outfit car to the OR. It is now used by the dispatcher and operator. This desk was used for many years in the Portola depot. Hank has prepared a bulletin book for the office. Operating crew members should check this book before the day's runs. Also, our 1988 rule books are still available, if you are on and operating crew it is your responsibility to be familiar with the rules.

### News From Around The Balloon

An 8' by 16' wood frame structure is being built to house our oil supplies and related items. A concrete slab of this size is located between No. 2 and No. 3 tracks at the west end of the diesel shop and was used for this purpose when the WP used this facility. The former building was removed before we acquired the property and we are now replacing the structure. Andy McCarron, Rod Mc Clure, Phil Schmierer and Norm Holmes started the frame in August. It is expected to be completed soon.

The *Soroptimist International* donated four metal BBQ units to our Society for the picnic areas. Ground breaking was held on June 15th following their meeting in the Mike Flannery Room. Although the picnic area is incomplete, the area has been used by three groups for picnics. Further ground work is needed and we will still need picnic tables and a large BBQ pit for group use.

Ken Roller has painted a number of oil paintings of WP steam locomotives. They are on display in the Mike Flannery Room and are for sale. They are fine works of art and would be a nice addition to one's home. Ken is also our number one track man. He is again at work, building a switch on Rip 3 to allow Rip 4 to be built. The new 300 foot track will be parallel to Rip 3 and temporarily end at the ramp. Norm Holmes has been using this occasion to practice operating our Little Giant crane to move rail. Dean Hill assisted in the rail movement.

For the second year, John Marvin set up a window display at the Plumas County Fair in Quincy. The display was very well done and helps acquaint fairgoers with the museum.

### Membership

We wish to welcome Dale Meyers, Richard Severance and Peter Watkins who joined our organization as Life Members. This brings our total Life Membership to 32.

### WP Notes

Western Pacific's car ferry *Las Plumas* has been sold to Sea-Link Marine Services, Ltd. and converted to a barge for service between Vancouver and Swartz Bay, British Columbia for CP Rail. It has been redesigned to haul highway trailers (without tractors) between these points. The former self-propelled ferry was used by the WP to transport freight cars between Oakland and San Francisco and has been out of service for several years. Our museum has the log books from it's WP service era.

A free sample of a timely railfan newsletter can be obtained by sending two stamps to *Western Line Productions PO Box 6776-L, Orange, CA 92613*. Northwest Railfan covers CA, NV and AZ and is published twice a month. Mention your FRRS membership when requesting the free copy.



**Mike Hunter** of Bethlehem, PA is the winner of the free trip to Guatemala. Congratulations Mike! Chris Skow donated the cost of the trip through his *Trains Unlimited Tours* and raised \$1504.00 for our depot building fund. A two week trip for two to Chile will be offered next year. We wish to thank Chris for his generosity and all those who purchased raffle tickets to help our building fund.

This issue has a *new* look, Dave Waters is at the editor's desk. The Train Sheet will continue to contain museum news and be published every two months. A new publication named The Headlight, after Western Pacific's early employee magazine, will be published on a quarterly basis and contain historic and modeling items. Both publications will be mailed to all members. We hope you like the new look. You are also invited to submit articles for publication. Send news of historical info to the Society's address.

### Labor Day Operations

The three day Labor Day weekend operations were a little slow except for Sunday when 45 passengers from the Central Coast Chapter NHRS arrived from Reno for a day at the museum. Labeled "*The WP LIVES Excursion*", they left San Jose, CA on Saturday, rode Amtrak to Reno, spent Sunday in Portola and returned on Amtrak on Monday. A nice three day trip. Crew members for the Labor Day weekend were: Ned Crary, Jim Gidley, Ray Graham, Norm Holmes, Matt Parker, John Ryczkowski, Bill Rose, Hank Stiles and Gordon Wolleson. Emery Godard and Barbara Holmes worked the snack bar.

### Alco S-1 added to Portola Roster

After considerable work and planning for transportation, our latest diesel locomotive arrived in Portola August 17th. It is the former **Western Pacific 506**, a 1942 Alco S-1,

donated by the *Stockton, Terminal and Eastern Railroad*. The switcher fills in the Alco void in our goal for a complete WP diesel locomotive collection. We now need only a Baldwin diesel switcher to complete our WP diesel roster. Unfortunately, all the WP Baldwins have been scrapped. A substitute is being sought.

The 506 was out of service for a number of years and had been used as a parts source to keep ST&E's fleet of five Alcos operating. Brake parts, pin levers, handrails and two steps had to be replaced. Wheel journals had to be repacked, gearboxes oiled and the air system cut out so as to have air through the unit so it could be moved. Fortunately, unit 561 was available as a parts source. The 561 has now been scrapped by California Railcar Repair.

Five trips were made to Stockton to complete the work to bring 506 to Portola. Those involved were Larry Cope, Dean Hill, Norm Holmes, Jim Ley, Dan Robirds, Phil Schmierer and Hank Stiles. After inspection by UP mechanical forces approved the unit for movement, it was transferred to UP's Stockton Shops. Here it waited for two months for a final OK to haul it to Portola. It was brought to Oroville in a local freight and then up the Canyon in a transfer move which also relocated the Oroville derrick and outfit to Portola. Initial contact for the donation from ST&E came from Steve Jackson and Eugene Vicknair and was finalized by Norm Holmes. We are very grateful for the donation from ST&E and UP's transportation to Portola.

Coming along with the 506 was **ATSF 999414**. This is the Santa Fe's first steel caboose and was purchased by Vintage Railway Equipment Company. It is on long term lease to the Society and will be repainted to it's original scheme and renumbered 1500. The full story on this historic piece of equipment was published in our May-June Train Sheet.

## Equipment Departures

An item you seldom see in the Train Sheet is the departure of anything from the museum. In 1986, *Mountain Diesel Transportation* bought six Alaska Railroad F7 units. We agreed to store the units for an undetermined period. Last December, units 1510, 1512 and 1517 were repainted and leased to the *Wyoming & Colorado Railroad* for operation on that line. On September 13, units 1506 and 1508 left for operation in Idaho. That leaves only 1507, an F7B. It is in poor condition with body panels removed and parts borrowed. For awhile, we had the largest collection of F units in any museum. It was nice to have them, if only temporarily. Many visitors enjoyed a ride behind some of these Fs.

## Donations

As a result of a plea for funds in the last Train Sheet, the following individuals have donated to our general fund: George Comer, Harvey Duncan, John Fowler, William Levy, Brian Matsumoto, Jack Palmer, Mike Romiez, Richard Severance and Connie & David Thompson. Thank you. We need our membership's continued financial support to maintain and improve our valuable equipment collection.

*Pacific Gas and Electric* has a program of recognizing employees for their participation in community activities. Member Steve Habeck was presented with a check for \$100.00 for his outstanding service to our organization. We thank Steve and PG&E for their contribution.

Thanks to John Ryczkowski's T-shirt sales, the profits from that effort has bought us a sand blaster unit. We were borrowing a unit from time to time, but just when we needed it, it would not be available. Now we have our own.

Glen Mosely again repaired a number of spike mauls, replacing handles and tightening others. Guess you can't make an omelet without breaking a few eggs! Bud Taber donated a number of WP steam photos and timetables. Roland Haynes donated some oil filters for our Alco fleet and air brake valve gaskets. Matt Parker has revised and printed a number of report forms at no cost to us.

## Feather River Short Line

by Betty Boynton

Along with restoration comes frustration. In #8's case, the air brake system presented many, many months of work on the problems that defied correction. Jim Boynton and the restoration crew never gave up and during Railroad Days, with the efforts of Mike Tackett and Dick Feutz proving successful, Jim announced that #8 now has an A-1 brake system. They discovered that the rebuilt distributing valve wasn't!

Engine 8 was the subject of many photos during Railroad Days. Famed photo-journalist Ted Benson made a special trip with his family to take many pictures of the Short Line equipment. The left side of the engine is now painted with new lettering and our logo by Kevin Bunker. Jim and John Marvin washed and painted the surfaces for the job. Kevin plans to paint the right side in the near future. The lettering is styled after that used by the Baldwin Locomotive Works and met with much approval by visitors. The final touch will be to put gold leaf on the logo feathers.

Of the many pictures taken of #8 during the festivities were those by several persons running for public office, both locally and state-wide. Pictures of #8 may be seen in upcoming campaign ads.

Among #8's favorite people are the 'Santa Fe Boys'. With the group's red cabooses #999197 coupled to #8 and running around the balloon track, many people have spent enjoyable hours during the summer. Fred Seyferth, Tom Brann, Bob Lindley and Errol Spangler spent much time painting hard to

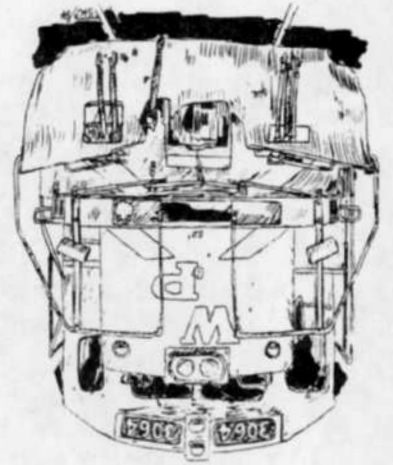
reach places on the engine in preparation for Railroad Days. Their help is much appreciated. Many problems have been solved thanks to their assistance.

#8 ran in August and during Railroad Days, and now Jim Boynton will be working on mechanical improvements on the tender. Bob Rohwer is making new armrests for the cab. As soon as the cold weather arrives here in the Sierras, the engine will be drained and 'bedded down' for the winter. Work will continue until then.

## **Coming in the Next Issue...**

- More on UP's E-9 No. 951
- Railroad Frequencies





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The Train Sheet  
Feather River Rail Society  
PO Box 8  
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