



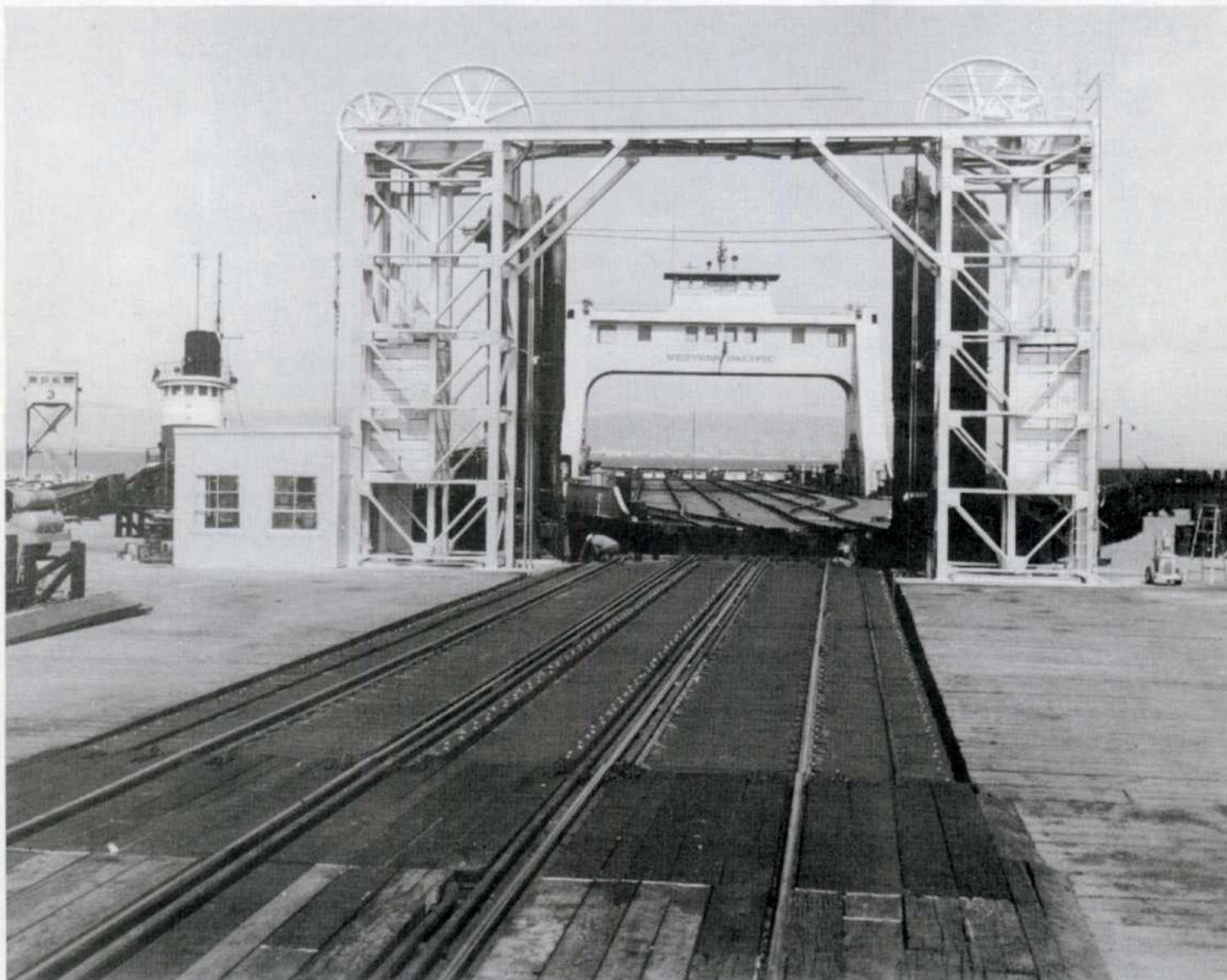
Preserving "The Feather River Route"

The Train Sheet

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 1989

ISSUE NO. 40

\$1.50



Western Pacific car ferry LAS PLUMAS waits for its next load of freight cars to take from WP's San Francisco 25th Street Yard. A tug and barge No. 3 are still on standby in this WP photo taken in March, 1960.



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



Tourist Railway Association (Inc.)

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Membership

Associate	\$ 15.00
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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

We occasionally hear of some discontent about our equipment acquisitions. We started the museum to preserve Western Pacific equipment and history. This is still our main concern. I believe we have done an outstanding job in this effort. We have nine diesel locomotives, forty-nine freight cars, a 5 ton crane, a 50 ton crane, motor cars and numerous other items from the Western Pacific. No other museum, with the exception of the Pennsylvania Museum in Strasburg has concentrated on one railroad as we have. Other equipment, as it has become available, has been added to our collection at very little or no cost to the Society. As our roster increased we felt a collection of railroad equipment from the 1950's era would be worthy of preservation and be of interest to our visitors. I know of no other museum that does not have items in its collection that do not necessarily "belong." For example the Pennsylvania Museum has a Virginia & Truckee steam locomotive and the Colorado Railroad Museum has a Los Angeles PCC street car. While we will continue to concentrate on Western Pacific, our collection will not be limited to that road. However, as track space becomes increasingly scarce, future acquisitions will be carefully evaluated.

MECHANICAL DEPARTMENT BULLETIN M-1, December 1, 1989

In keeping with paragraph four of the General Notice in General Code of Operating Rules, (The utmost care and diligence must be used in the maintenance and handling of museum equipment, due to its unique nature, age and historical significance.) the following will apply:

When performing mechanical work on museum equipment, manufacturers procedures will be followed whenever possible. In the event manufacturers repair manuals are not available, repair or modification procedures must be performed according to good mechanical practices and outlined to at least two directors for approval before work commences.

Quality Control will be supervised by all members of the Board of Directors. Any Board member may abort a project pending review by the full board of the necessity thereof and adherence to proper mechanical practices.

It is hoped that this policy will improve the quality of our repair, maintenance and restoration efforts.

/s/ Board of Directors FRRS.

THEFT OF EQUIPMENT

Pacific Locomotive Association sent us a notice that some mis-guided individual stole the headlight and bell from their M-200 "Skunk" railbus. The theft occurred about October 15-16 at their Niles Canyon equipment yard. Anyone having information about these items are asked to contact the Alameda County Sheriff's office.

GONE

The famous twin water tanks at Keddie are now a memory. Union Pacific forces demolished the aging redwood tanks in November.

CALENDAR

Jan. 6,7 Great American Train Show @ Los Angeles (sales, info.)

COVER STORY

LAS PLUMAS by NORMAN HOLMES

Prior to the time Western Pacific's car ferry "LAS PLUMAS" was placed in service, WP operated two steam tug boats to barge freight cars between Oakland and San Francisco. The tug and barge operation not only served 25th Street yard, but also delivered cars to the State Belt Railroad near Fisherman's Wharf and serviced Alameda Belt's slip in Alameda. Due to their age and limited capacity (11 cars on a barge), management arranged for construction of a new self propelled car ferry.

The new LAS PLUMAS passed under the Golden Gate bridge at 11 PM on July 10, 1957, on its way down from Portland, Oregon. It was believed this was the first train ferry to operate on the Pacific Ocean. The new ferry was built by the Albina Engine and Machinery Works at Portland at a cost of \$1.3 million and is powered by direct diesel propulsion. She is 375 feet long and can carry 28 loaded freight cars.

The LAS PLUMAS remained in service until November, 1978 when traffic enroute to and from San Francisco was rerouted over Southern Pacific's Dumbarton bridge. Heavy grain shipments to San Francisco and the need of a major overhaul of the 20 year old car ferry were cited as reasons for its retirement. SP handled WP's traffic between Fremont and San Francisco first via Dumbarton bridge then via Santa Clara when that bridge line was closed. WP's business in San Francisco gradually dried up and the entire yard and industry trackage has been abandoned.

The LAS PLUMAS remained tied up to WP's 25th Street ferry slip for two years waiting for a buyer. It was then moved to WP's Oakland Yard slip due to the high amount of vandalism at the San Francisco site. Here it remained along side the deteriorating ferry slip and sugar dock facilities until sold to Sea-Link Marine Services, Ltd. of Vancouver, BC Canada in 1988.

Sea-Link removed the bridge and engines and converted the ferry to a barge to haul truck trailers, without tractors, between Vancouver and Swartz Bay on Vancouver Island. The service started in July, 1988. It's changed appearance would make it difficult to recognize today.

One of the two WP tug boats, the HERCULES, has been preserved at the National Maritime Museum in San Francisco. Located at the Hyde Street Pier, she is undergoing restoration by volunteers who hope to once again place her into operating condition.

Information for this article was gleaned from Pacific News, Western Railroader, WP Mileposts and the National Maritime Museum news letter. Thanks to George Comer for assistance.



The former Western Pacific car ferry LAS PLUMAS, extensively modified, is now in service hauling truck trailers between Vancouver, B.C. and Vancouver Island. Now simply known as LINK 100, the ferry is only a barge that must be pushed by a tug. Photo is by Frank A. Clapp, taken at Vancouver August 17, 1988. The photo was sent to us by George Comer.

EQUIPMENT ARRIVALS

Last June, Norman and Barbara Holmes visited their daughter and grandson in Anchorage, Alaska. Being interested in railroads (surprise), Norm visited the Alaska Railroad and found some surplus equipment for sale. One item Norm long wanted for our museum was a World War II troop sleeper car. Alaska Railroad had recently brought three such cars back from Denali Park where they had been used as a youth hostel for sleeping quarters and office. The two cars that were used for sleeping were complete as they were when in Army service. Norm selected one and negotiated a price with the railroad.

Also in the surplus track was a heater/power car. This car was converted from an Union Pacific E-9B unit by Amtrak and later sold to Alaska for the same use. A reasonable price was quoted, an inquiry made with Alaska Hydro-Train for movement to Seattle and Norm & Barbara returned home.

The proposition to purchase the power car was placed before our Board of Directors, Norm would buy the sleeper and donate it to the museum. Transportation would be extra. The Board OK'd the plan. Union Pacific was contacted regarding free transportation from Seattle to Portola. They suggested we try Burlington Northern to bring the cars from Seattle to Bieber, then UP would have a short haul to Portola. If UP hauled them from Seattle to Portola they would have to go via Salt Lake City making a very long trip.

To our surprise BN agreed to move the cars without cost to Bieber and UP agreed to haul them free from Bieber to Portola. This left Alaska Railroad and Hydro-Train. Hydro-Train would not move them free, but they have a reduced rate from Whittier to Seattle (set up mainly for summer tourist cars returning) which would save a considerable amount over the Anchorage-Seattle joint rate. After some soul-searching Alaska agreed to move the cars the 62 miles to Whittier without cost. Thanks to Alaska, Burlington Northern and Union Pacific Railroads, the only cost in transportation was \$3,444 paid to Hydro-Train.

The cars were placed on a barge at Whittier Nov. 25, and arrived Seattle Nov. 27. They left Seattle Nov. 30 and arrived Portola Dec. 5. No trouble or damage enroute except for two broken windows in the sleeper. Hobos apparently rode the car part way finding "first class accommodations." We were particularly concerned by the sleepers trucks. They are Allied Full-Cushion and are outlawed for interchange, however

a one time move to "HOME SHOP" is allowed.

The troop sleeper, besides being an interesting exhibit for anyone who rode these cars during WW II, will provide our museum volunteers with a place to sleep besides in a caboose. Locating a WW II car as complete as this one was a rare find. A number of railroads bought these cars after the war and converted them to MW service, usually receiving extensive modifications. Often the trucks were replaced with more modern roller bearing units. Although not a high priority, we would like to repaint the car back to its original Pullman green color. A quick sanding job revealed the car's original number - 8300.

Exactly what we will do with the power car, P-7, has yet to be determined. B units, either E's or F's are rare as most saved E's and F's are A units. The E9B story will appear in the next Train Sheet.

EQUIPMENT DEPARTURE

Almost as soon as the two cars arrived from Alaska, the final Alaska unit owned by Mountain Diesel Corp. was being prepared for a trip to Colorado. In November, 1986, MDC purchased six F7 units from Alaska Railroad and arranged to have them transported to Portola for storage and display. Included with the six unit deal was a power car converted from a troop kitchen car. MDC donated this car to FRRS.

MDC's original intent was merely to save the units from scrap (Alaska was stripping F units and selling the shells to a scrap dealer). However, an opportunity to lease three units to a short line railroad was found and after being repainted in our shop, two FP7A's and a F7B departed in December, 1987. The two F7A's remained for another year then they left for a lease deal in Idaho. While in Portola one F7A, 1506, was used for some of our train service and for railfan day. Not long after arriving in Idaho, the 1506 was involved in a runaway and wrecked. The final Alaska unit, a derelict F7B, stripped of its outside sheet metal remained at Portola until December, 1989, when it was placed on UP tracks for a move to Colorado.

At one time we had more F units at our museum than anyone else, and they were a welcome attraction to visitors. We now have a F7A, FP7A, FA-2 and E9B, still a good representation of the "covered wagon" era.

TROOP SLEEPER HISTORY

As World War II progressed, railroad passenger equipment was being taxed to its maximum availability. Troops were being transported by the millions, gasoline was rationed which forced people onto public transportation.

To help alleviate the sleeping car shortage, the troop sleeper was built. For a number of reasons it was decided to use a basic 50 foot steel box car, put in windows and side doors, toilet facilities, bunks and end doors with diaphragms to allow movement between the cars. A new designed high-speed truck was placed under the car. The cars were comfortable (?) being heated from train line steam heat, had electric lights and running water. Ventelation was from roof vents or windows could be opened as needed. Screens and black out curtains were provided.

During 1943-44 Pullman Standard Car Mfg. Co. built over 1200 of these cars for the Defense Plant Corporation. They were operated by the Pullman Comapny and each car had a porter.

The reason the box car style sleeper was chosen was two-fold: one, to build a streamlined, light weight sleeper would have used more materials and labor, both of which were in short supply and two, a larger number of service men could be transported with fewer, shorter cars so that more personnel could be carried in a given train length. Also when the sleepers were no longer needed after the war they could be easily converted to other uses, which indeed they were. A number of railroads bought the cars for MW service, Railway Express Agency converted hundreds to express refrigerator cars, the Alaska Railroad, operated by the federal government, converted the sleepers to box cars and troop kitchen cars to refrigerator cars. Some also were used in MW service.

These cars were the American version of the famous old 40 and 8 cars that the French used to transport troops in World War I. However the WW II version made the old French cars seem like cattle cars.

HELP WANTED We have a need for legal advice from time to time, any one volunteer?

right - Emery Godard disguised as Santa Claus aboard our fourth annual Santa Train.

Even though they were very utilitarian they had comfort and refinements lacking in their WW I counterparts. The interiors were insulated with attractive fiber-board, the floors were a composition material over a steel floor. There were individual lights for each set of berths and there was a toilet and two washbasins at each end of the cars. The bunks are three high and run crossways of the car. The bottom one stays in place, the middle one folds down to make the back of the seat during daylight hours, the top one always stays in place. The cars sleep thirty.

These cars were used in troop trains either singly or with other Pullman cars. Train makeup was usually a baggage car or express car on the head end for supplies followed by a number of troop sleepers, a troop kitchen car or railroad diner, and followed by more sleepers. A railroad coach or caboose on the rear provided a place for railroad crew to ride.

WP handled a large number of "Main Trains" as they were called. There is a good chance our car rolled on WP rails. If any of our members ever rode in one of these cars, we would be interested in hearing about your experiences.

Modelers wishing to build this car can convert one from a standard 50 foot box car using cast windows and passenger car parts. Commercial models in HO gauge were available a few years ago.



FEATHER RIVER SHORT LINE NEWS

By Betty Boynton

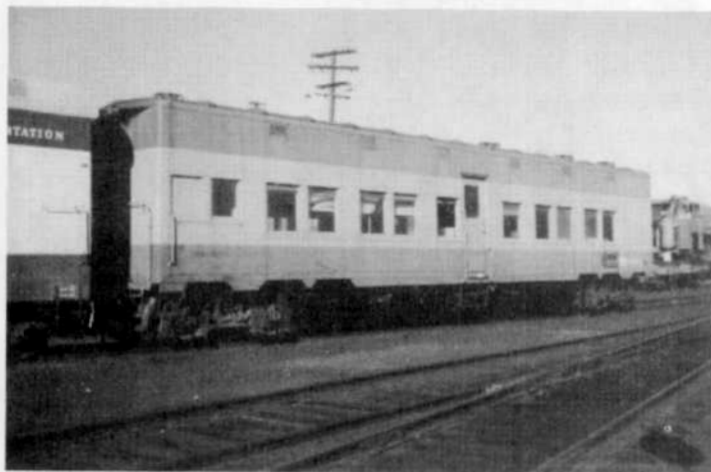
In September, Jim Boynton, John Marvin and I got Engine No. 8 ready for the winter. The very important draining of the boiler and all the parts that could freeze took nearly a full day's work. Jim also did a pit check and oiled many parts under the engine. I gave #8 the final cleaning of the year. The engine had a busy summer with a regular running schedule, an appearance on Bay Area TV and her first participation in Railfan Day.

Jim and John have been able to get in work days and have installed the new cab doors that were made by Iver Gregory. Jim stained the inside of the framework to match the woodwork on the cab ceiling. Iver will be making a window for the fireman's side and new armrests are planned for both the fireman and engineer's sides.

Jim and John have done electrical work on the dynamo and also on the sanding valves. They have installed a new oil pipe line between the hydrostatic lubricator and air compressor and cleaned and flushed the hydrostatic lubricator. Future work days depend on the weather.

On Nov. 15, 1989, Engine 8 celebrated her 82nd birthday. The well-known huge colored picture taken in 1962 by Carl Gus Haggmark was on display at the Plumas County Museum in Quincy, and video tapes of #8 were shown. The ever-growing popularity of the little "puffer" is evident in the many newspaper and magazine articles published about her this year. Radio stations KPCO and KHSL broadcasts featured news and sounds of her in action.

Continued restoration plans and activities for #8 in 1990 are now under consideration and will be made available later.



DIESEL DOINGS

Larry Hanlon, Dave McClain and John Ryczkowski resumed work on 805A's prime mover. Several cylinder liners were leaking water into the crankcase and will have to be resealed. The threesome expect to work on the unit regularly during the winter months. It is stored inside the diesel shop to make work a little easier. Ken Roller is working to remove most of the old paint and rust from the car body. Much body work and "Bondo" will be needed before it is painted.

Hank Stiles removed some grill panels from 2001 for sand blasting. 2001 and 805A will be repainted in 1990.

Gordon Wollesen is keeping our battery chargers busy to preserve the life of our large number of batteries.

MORE LAND

At our request, Union Pacific has increased the limits of our leased property. The City of Portola, holder of the lease, approved our request for additional land to allow us to construct a new entrance road, making it easier for visitors to find us. We are looking for someone to donate some bulldozer and grader work to rough in the new road.

RAIL TO TRAIL FESTIVAL

To assist Susanville's Rails to Trails Festival, our Rail Society loaned a number of historic railroad items for display including lanterns and models. The artifacts were displayed in the former SP Susanville depot during the October 14-15 festival.

Hand car races were the main attraction which brought hundreds of enthusiastic spectators and participants to the event. Thirty-five teams entered with several coming from Sacramento and Roseville. Sierra Pacific Industries sent up its former SP TR6, No. 1100 for display.

Earlier in the year FRRS loaned our ancient hand car for a parade in Susanville. We are pleased other groups in our area are preserving railroad heritage. We're glad to help in any way we can.

Left - our new Pullman Troop Sleeper No. 8300 shortly after its arrival in Portola, December 5, 1989.

GIFT SHOP NEWS

Gary and Pat Cousin loaded their car with gift shop items and set up a table at the International Railfair in Roseville, Nov. 11-12. They did a good business in merchandise sales and established good relations for our Rail Society. Dave Anderson, Mark French and Jim Gidley helped at the tables.

Dave Dodds and Bill Marshall set up a table at Orange Empire Railway Museum, West Covina Model Railroaders Swap Meet, Foothill Model Railroaders Club in Sunland and the GATS show at the LA County Fairgrounds. Their help in selling our merchandise and acquainting the public about our organization is greatly appreciated. Merchandise sales are a major source of income for our museum.

New Books:

Diesels over Donner by Richard Steinhilber & Dick Dorn. A visual history of first and second generation diesels working over SP's Donner Pass. 104 pages, 105 color & 4 b&w photos.

hard cover - \$50.

Light Rail Transit on the West Coast by Harre Demoro & John Harder. A 96 page soft cover book featuring historical and present photos & a short history of transit systems in San Francisco, San Diego, Sacramento, San Jose, Portland and Los Angeles. \$13.95

Toys:

Die-cast metal toy train set, includes diesel switcher, coal car, tank car, box car & caboose, about 20" long. \$3.95

Catalog:

We mailed out the new 1990 gift shop catalog in early December. If you did not get one, let us know and we will send you one.

TRAIN SHEET EDITOR

We are still without a new Train Sheet editor. We hope to have someone soon. In the meantime please bear with us. Our goal is to have the Train Sheet out on a regular basis with the Jan-Feb, 1990 issue closed on Feb 15 and mailed before Feb 28 and follow that same schedule through out the year. The next issue of the Train Sheet will have a callendar of events for the year.

DONATIONS

Dan Chapman built two thrust blocks for our RS-3. We were missing two of these heavy steel blocks with brass bearing plates which are needed in the truck bearing boxes. The cost of new blocks from Alco was over \$700 each. We paid Dan only \$50 for material. Dan did the machine work. Thanks. George Bartlett donated several display cases for use in the gift shop and snack bar and we have a correction - the movie screen listed as a donation last month should have been credited to Bill Frasier. Sorry Bill.

Cash donations received since Nov. 1st totaled \$260. We thank the following members for their extra support for our preservation work: Galen Anderson, Rick Galassi, Fred Klyver, Tom Moungovan, Eric Reuberson, Peter Shirey, Palmer Simpson and Larry Trumbull. Some of our facility expenses go on, such as electricity for heating and battery charging, during the winter months. We would like to put more names on the cash donation list...

SANTA TRAIN

Our fourth annual Santa Train was a grand success. Nearly 200 children and parents rode the two caboose train powered by WP 512. Six trips were made between noon and 2 PM, Saturday, December 9th.

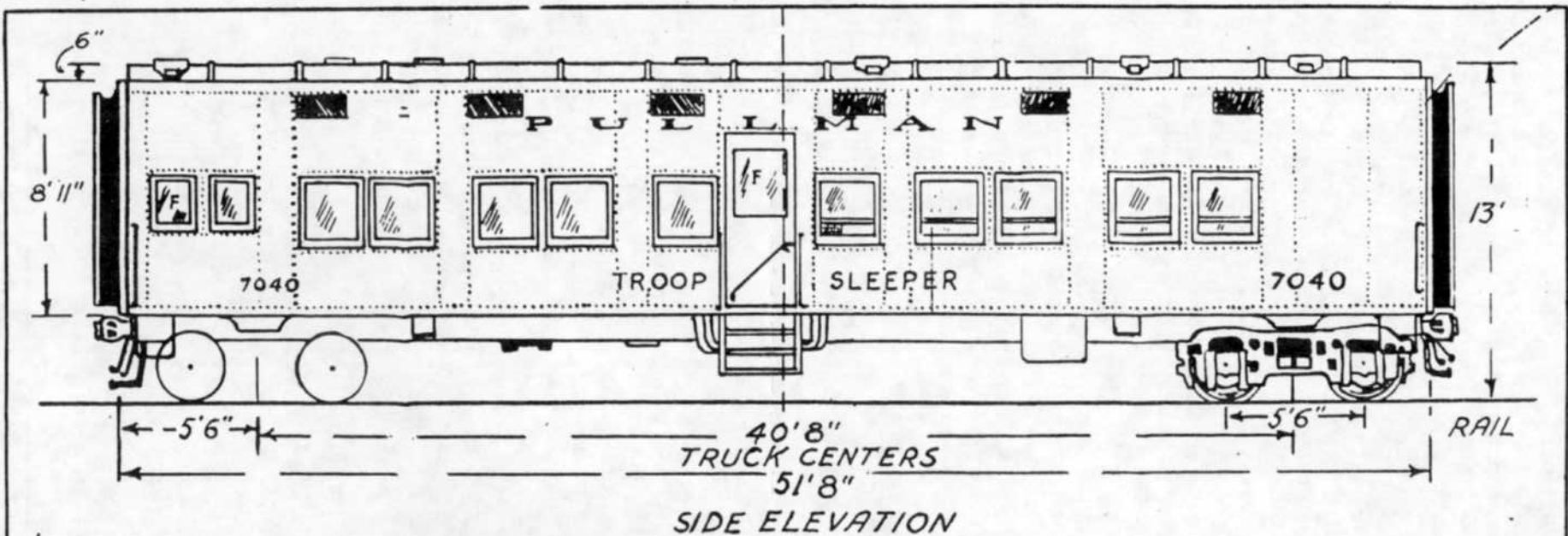
Hap Manit set up a six foot Christmas tree in the diesel shop along with other decorations. Barbara Holmes had ready hot coffee and cookies. Hap bought a giant sack of pop corn, which was readily consumed by the many children. Again, Emery Godard was our geneal Santa, riding the train and handing out candy canes and toys to the excited children.

Dean Hill was our engineer, Erv Hartung fireman, Hank Stiles conductor and Norm Holmes, brakeman. Barbara Holmes took care of gift shop sales.

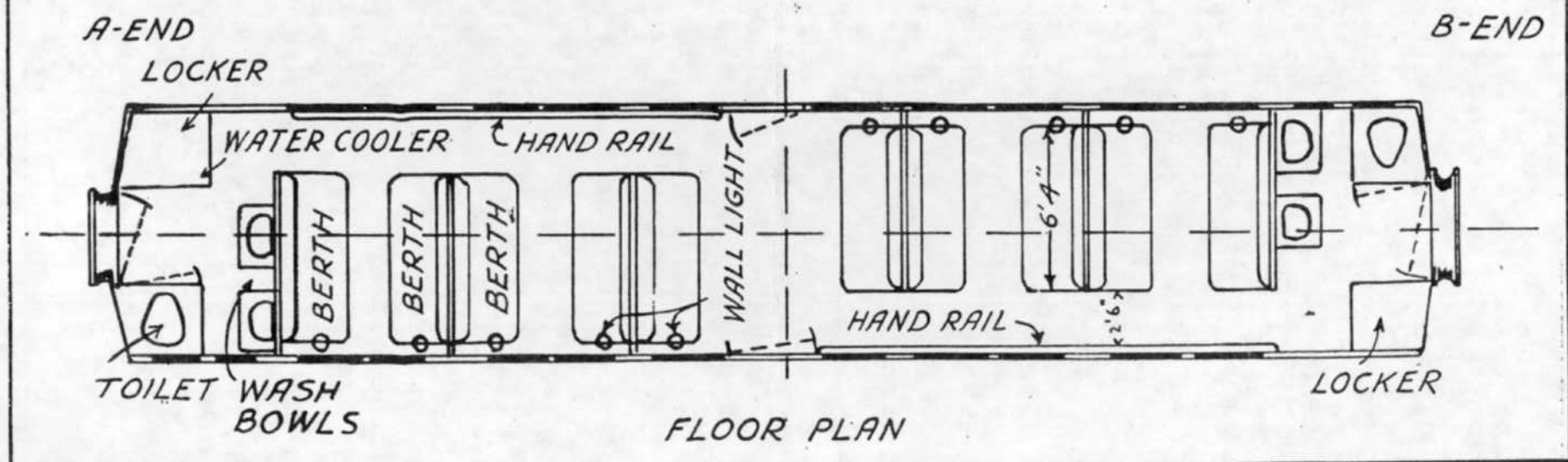
MEETING

Our annual Christmas social meeting was held at the Portola City Hall. Only nine attended which meant there was more cake and cider for us! Barbara Holmes baked a Black Forrest Torte cake, Deborah Canino brought two plates of cookies. Both were great. Norm Holmes showed some slides of other railroad museums and railroads visited this year.

Rent-a-locomotive gift certificates are available.
\$60 to drive a diesel locomotive for one hour. 832-4532

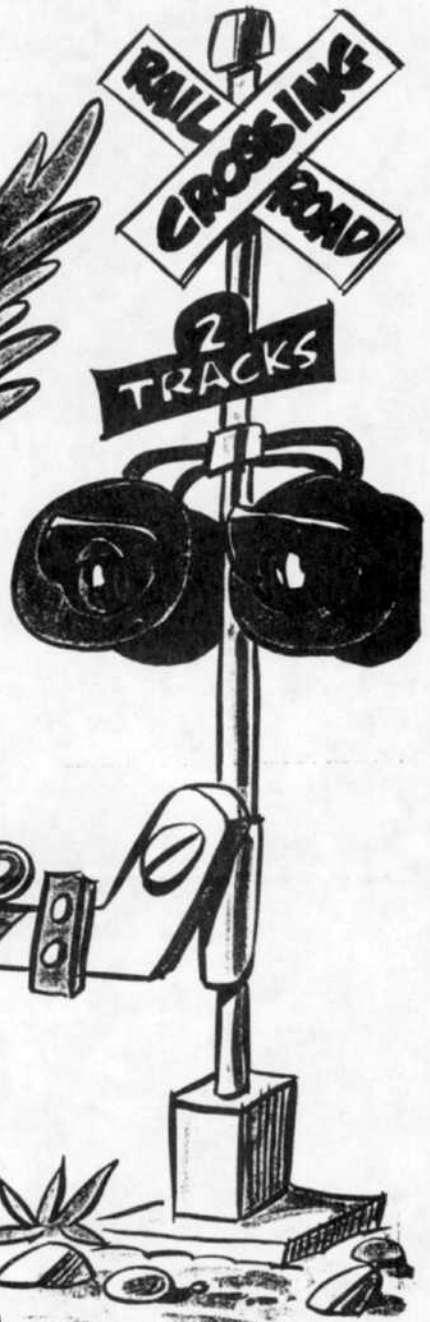


TROOP SLEEPER





BEEP,
BEEP!



Always
Obey
Railroad
Warning Signs...
They May Save Your Life!

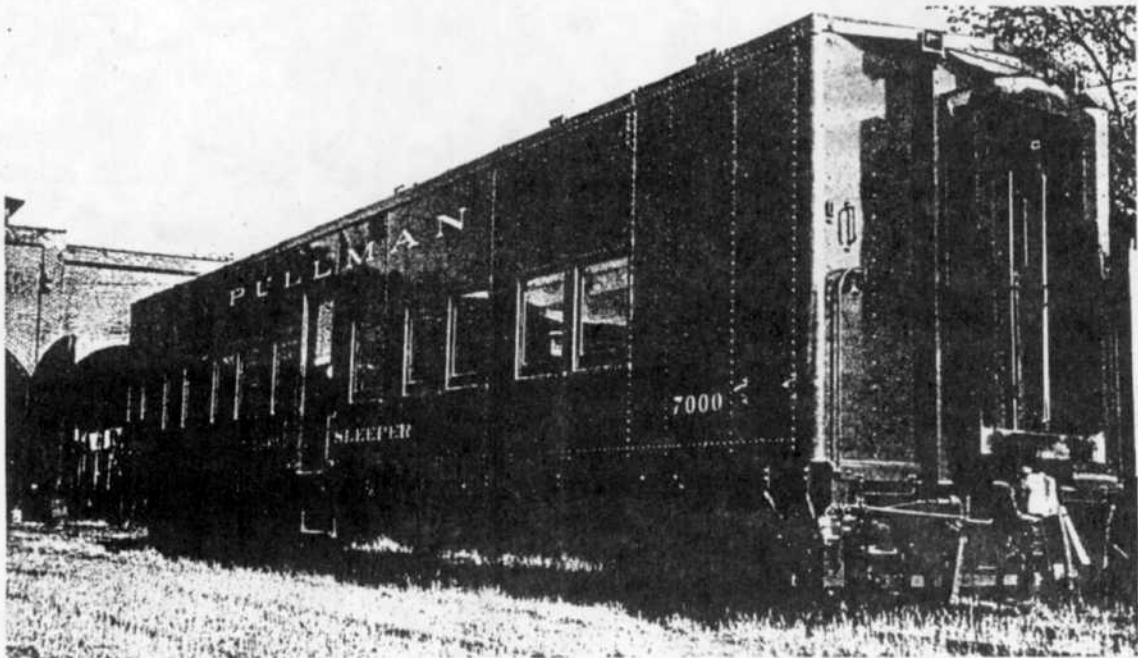


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(Photo courtesy the Pullman Co.)