

PRM Facilities Report

By Eugene Vicknair
Facilities Manager

Anyone who has been around the museum this year has probably noticed several members running around with tool belts, hammers, shovels and generally anxious expressions on their faces. These dedicated volunteers have been working to bring the museum into compliance with city and county building codes, a long overdue process that has preoccupied much of our facilities work this year (in addition to trackwork).

Special mention must be made to our new Chief Electrician, Eric Stephens. Eric has been a Life Member for over 10 years and my co-manager on the Zephyr Project. This year, he stepped up to the daunting task of bringing all electrical systems on the property into proper compliance. This is no small task when one considers that the diesel shop alone has a mishmash of wiring dating from its original construction until today. This unfortunately includes much wiring improperly installed during the early days of the Society. While the cost and time required has been high, with the help of several additional members, including Eric's father Steve Stephens, much progress has been made.

Under the guidance of Portola City Inspector Micheal Yarmey, we have been identifying compliance issues around the museum and enacting corrections to them. The final major task, in progress as this is written, is the removal of an illegal septic system installed several years ago for the Shower Car and its replacement with a tie-in with the city sewer system. The drains on the car are also being reconfigured to meet code requirements. Several other corrections are also in progress around the Shower Car, including rewiring of the pipe heating system and reconstruction of the deck between the Shower Car and sleeper "Edenwold" to meet city and ADA requirements.

It has also been found that the car currently occupied by our live-in caretaker, Ken Roller, does not meet residence requirements. After analyzing the costs to bring this car into compliance, and issues raised by our FRRS legal counsel concerning our role as landlord, the Board voted to end Mr. Roller's residence and aid him in finding a new home in town. This will save the cost of bringing the car up to residence standards and give Mr. Roller a higher quality home.

Another change in the works is the designation of fire lanes around the diesel shop. To comply with state law, our new Fire Marshall, Frank Brehm, has announced that parking will no longer be permitted along the north side of the Diesel Shop between the building and RIP track 1. This will provide clearance for a mandated fire lane allowing access for emergency equipment.

Much work remains to be accomplished around the facility. Of high priority for next year is completing a drainage project around the diesel shop to end the annual influx of water from melting snow. We are also in the process of completing the chain link fencing around the property by closing a large gap on our southwest corner and incorporating the hospital property into our fenced area.

If funds become available, Roadmaster Rod McClure and I are making plans to begin the long talked about walkway improvements by laying new concrete aprons at the east and west

ends of the Diesel Shop and a new walkway from the east end to the Parking Lot. Plans are also being made, again contingent on funding, for laying the proposed Parking Lot Display track, completing Dodgepole Siding and paving the reconfigured main parking lot.

A new major project may surface when Magnolia Tower is finally moved to the museum in the next few months. The hope is to quickly reassemble the tower in its final location and then make it weatherproof so that restoration work can begin.

In closing, I want to thank everyone who has put in long hours helping upgrade and clean the facility. We have very ambitious plans laid for next year, but they are only possible thanks to the down and dirty "grunt" work of everyone in the past year.

Apologies to anyone whose name I miss.

Dan Brady	Frank Brehm
Kerry Cochran	Greg Elems
Steve Habeck	Sam Herschbein
Alan Hirasawa	Wendy Holtz
Aaron McClure	Eric McClure
Gail McClure	Rod McClure
Doug Morgan	Curtis Olliff
Eric Stephens	Steve Stephens
Sara Eidman	Charlie Walls
Mary Ann Vicknair.	

Zephyrette Comeback?

By Jack Grasso

Remember when a single rail diesel car ran from Oakland and Salt Lake City on the Western Pacific Railroad? Remember a second BUDD RDC running in the opposite direction? Remember that the mileage was almost the equivalent of the distance between New York and Chicago? Remember the meal stops at Elko and Portola? Remember running through Feather river Canyon at night?

These local one car Zephyrettes were so much a part of Western Pacific's passenger schedules between 1950 and 1960. The California Zephyr carried the long distance riders. The Zephyrette ran for local patrons as well as mail and express.

Unfortunately, both Zephyrette RDC's were destroyed. The Portola Railroad Museum for this reason does not have this part of Western Pacific history.

YOU CAN HELP!

While the original Zephyrettes are gone, BUDD RDC's are still around. Would you like to help the Portola Railroad Museum obtain one of these cars so that our fine craftsman can transform it into a Zephyrette? If you do, please take note of the address below and help us make this a reality.

Zephyrette Acquisition & Restoration Fund
Feather River Rail Society
P. O. Box 608
Portola, CA 96122-0608