

WPRRHS, A Look Back, A Look Forward

Our plans for a convention at the Feather River Inn in Blairsden have changed. We will now meet at the fairgrounds in Quincy. The date will change to May 19-20. The fairground has two buildings located across from each other. One will have models and displays and a lounge area while programs and clinics will be given in the other building. The cost will probably be \$24.95 to \$49.95 per person. Tentative plans include a tour of the Quincy Museum, a locomotive engineers discussion panel, programs on the Keddie Wye, Arthur W. Keddie, the Quincy Railroad, the Indian Valley along with other slide shows and modeling clinic's. More details will be mailed to you real soon.

The new archive car at the museum has turned out wonderful! We finally have a nice, clean place to work. This car has been painted inside, has a new floor, lots of lighting, electrical outlets, filing cabinets, and lots of overhead racks. WPRRHS member Garth Groff from the University of Virginia has helped develop a filing system for the archives, which should be finalized very soon.

Donations have also continued to arrive. 190 Al Phelps WP steam prints. Hap Manitt's conductors' uniform and pictures from his collection. The Thomas Phillips diaries from 1908 to 1951 chronicling his work as a construction engineer on the WP. The "Weso Papers" which include train registers for every WP and SP train, which went by this station in 1923! Switch stand lamps, books and magazines were also added to the collection this last year.

I wish to extend my compliments to FRRS President Andy Anderson and Facilities Manager Doug Morgan for their help with the archive car project. I also want to thank the Board of Directors for their support of this project and to Norman Holmes for picking up the 26 file cabinets donated by Don Davella of San Francisco.

Several members really distinguished themselves this last year. Thanks to Jim Dias, Thom Anderson, Steve and Norma Hayes and all the presenters and staff for the great convention in Fremont. Mike Mucklin continues to make us look good in print and keeps the web page up (which, by the way, has been recognized this year as an excellent resource site for grade school students studying American railroad history). Bart Rohles has begun sorting through the UTU union records we received last year and with his friend Ralph Foster helped paint the archive car. Tom Lawler made a nice donation to the archive car for which we thank him. Also we want to thank everyone for his or her support and assistance last year. We couldn't do it without you!

I also want to mention the passing of Josh Ashtalosh who helped me overhaul the SN 1632 caboose a few years ago. I'll miss his sense of humor and companionship.

I consider it an honor to have served as

WPRRHS Administrator since the "historical wing" of the FRRS was founded back in 1996. We have made some great progress in developing the Arthur W. Keddie Railroad Library, publishing The Headlight, hosting conventions, helping to get some new models produced and caring for the archives at the museum. I'd also like to think that we have put some fun back into the FRRS and PRM.

The WPRRHS has grown in both members and the scope of its operations. Likewise, as a group like ours continues to grow, there is the danger of going stale from the lack of new ideas and new people getting involved. This is a group effort and everyone's ideas and involvement are welcome (and needed). It is also easy to lose touch with the desires of the membership when the same people continue to make most of the decisions. With this in mind, I'd like to take a little time off next year so that I can concentrate on the archives and our magazine, both of which require a lot of time and effort. Therefore, I will resign as WPRRHS Administrator effective May 20, 2000. I do not intend to quit the WPRRHS, I will simply concentrate on certain areas and let someone else lead for awhile. The new administrator should have it easier since most procedures are in place. I'll still be there to lend a helping hand when needed. And with me filling the void in the Librarian and Curator positions, the new Administrator will only have to worry about future conventions and trying to promote the WPRRHS in general. If your interested in serving as Administrator, contact me and I'll fill you in on the particulars.

There are many things that the WPRRHS could use.

1. Archival Safe page protectors. We go through two or three hundred of these things every month. They are available at Staples and other office supply stores for about \$10.00 for a box of 100.
2. Acid Free storage boxes of all sizes and shapes, "Banker Box" size is the most commonly used size. Even a donation will help us purchase these materials.
3. A volunteer to coordinate and run the 2001 and 2002 conventions.
4. A large format flatbed scanner. With this, we could scan important documents and pictures and view them without handling the originals. These items could also then be transmitted electronically via e-mail.
5. After scanning these documents, it would be great to store them on CD's. So we need a CD burner and some supplies as well.
6. We are always looking for more donations of pictures and papers to our collection.

In closing, we want to wish everyone a prosperous New Year! Now get back to work on those models so you can bring them to the convention in May!

- John Walker, WPRRHS Administrator
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