

# THE TRAIN SHEET

*Preserving "THE FEATHER RIVER ROUTE"*

News from the Feather River Rail Society



**Issue 133 . January/February 2006**

**Santa Trains - Museum Gets New Name  
2005 in Review - Upcoming Events**

**- THE TRAIN SHEET -**

News from the Feather River Rail Society and the Western Pacific Railroad Museum at Portola

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Contribution Deadlines: Last Day of February, April, June, August, October and December

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**FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY  
WESTERN PACIFIC RAILROAD  
MUSEUM at PORTOLA**

P.O. Box 608 . Portola, CA . 96122-0608

Museum: 530.832.4131  
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The museum grounds are open to the public from 10:00 AM until 5:00 PM daily from the first Saturday in March through the first Monday in November. The Diesel Shop is open from 10:00 AM until 5:00 PM daily during these dates.

Train operations begin the last Saturday in May and continue each weekend through the first Monday in September.

The museum grounds are closed to the public from the first Tuesday in November through the first Friday in March except for special events in which advance arrangements have been made. If you wish to visit during the closure period, it is advisable to call in advance and find out if the museum will be open.

Entrance to the museum is free, although a suggested donation of \$5.00 is greatly appreciated.

The Feather River Rail Society, a tax-exempt public benefit California corporation, is the historical society for the Western Pacific Railroad and operator of the Western Pacific Railroad Museum in Portola, California.

***The FRRS is not associated with the Union Pacific Railroad.***

FRRS Tax ID number is 68-0002774  
Member of the Association of Railway Museums and the Tourist Railway Association, Inc

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**- WEB PAGES of INTEREST -**

FRRS Official Site	<a href="http://www.WPLives.org">www.WPLives.org</a>
WPRR Historical Society	<a href="http://www.wprrhs.org">www.wprrhs.org</a>
CZ Virtual Museum	<a href="http://calzephyr.railfan.net">calzephyr.railfan.net</a>
Western Pacific Pages	<a href="http://www.WPLives.com">www.WPLives.com</a>
WP Virtual Museum	<a href="http://wpmuseum.railfan.net">wpmuseum.railfan.net</a>
Sac Northern On-Line	<a href="http://www.people.virginia.edu/~ggg9y">www.people.virginia.edu/~ggg9y</a>
Tidewater Southern Pages	<a href="http://www.TidewaterSouthern.com">www.TidewaterSouthern.com</a>
Tidewater Southern	<a href="http://www5.pair.com/rattenne/WP/TidelIndex.htm">www5.pair.com/rattenne/WP/TidelIndex.htm</a>
Central Calif Traction	<a href="http://www.trainweb.org/tractionco/">www.trainweb.org/tractionco/</a>

## President's Report

- Rod McClure, FRRS President

It is late December, the Santa Trains are over and we are shut down until next year. The Santa Trains went very well this year. We had good size crowds on both evenings and the weather cooperated. Many happy faces were seen sitting in Santa's lap getting Candy Canes and telling Santa their wishes. This year we had some great donations from the local community to help cover our costs and it made the difference in us being able to do it again next year. A huge thanks goes to Steve Habeck and Jim Haliwel for doing all the caboose and engine decorating, Kathy Habeck and her friends, Pat and Linda Brimmer, Loren Ross, Eric Stephens, David Epling, Charlie Spikes, John Walker, Eugene Vicknair, and Gail McClure for all the cleaning, set up and decorating of the Baggage and Lounge Cars. More huge thanks goes to Mary Habeck for taking charge of the cookie and beverage service with help from Vicki Krois, Kathy Habeck, Linda Brimmer, and Julie Anderson. Gail McClure was laid up with some severe back pain and unable to attend either day, but did bake a bunch of cookies. Cookies were also baked by Mary Habeck, Mary Ann Vicknair, Louise Dunbar, Alicia , Charlie Spikes, and Hank Stiles. Kerry Cochran took care of the operating crews and John Walker worked the Gift Shop. Thanks to all for their time and help and I apologize for anyone I forgot.

As I said above, Gail McClure has been laid up with severe back problems but she is not the only FRRS member being hospitalized. Director Matt Parker spent almost two months in the Hospital fighting for his life against Toxic Shock Syndrome from a possible spider bite. He has won that battle and is recovering well. FRRS member John Manter was hospitalized for a lung infection that almost cost him his life but was successful in recovering and is doing well and out of the hospital also. And, as mentioned last issue, Life member Eric Stephens is still grappling with a brain tumor. Our best wishes to them and their families.

Among some of the other things going on, the Board of Directors approved changing the name of the Portola Railroad Museum to the more appropriate Western Pacific Railroad Museum at Portola. This goes along with the recent changes to the FRRS Mission Statement. We

have NOT changed the name of the Feather River Rail Society! That is the legal name of our Organization it is registered as a 501(c)3 Non-Profit organization in the State of California. The WPRM is a subsidiary of the FRRS, as is the WPRRHS.

Revenues in 2005 were not what we would have liked. Gas prices were one of the biggest reasons that our visitor numbers were down and, even though that has changed somewhat, we have to expect more of the same in 2006. Other organizations have reported similar situations. With that in mind, we are going to concern ourselves with raising money and increasing advertising. As of right now, there won't be any restoration projects started in 2006 unless money is donated for a certain project. We are going to focus on finishing up the small projects around the Museum and working on the building itself. It needs some work and Charlie Spikes, our Facilities Manager, has a long list of things to fix. This of course includes finishing the Silver Debris and Volunteer Deck.

We also need to do some much needed track repair and hopefully build new storage tracks. We have the material on hand for this, but need strong backs to build it. Watch the calendar and Webpage for Track Work Weekends this year. We also have lots of simple things that need to be done, like servicing the rubber tire equipment, equipment cleaning, and finishing projects that were started last year and the like. All of this does not take much or any money, just time and hard work. I want to thank all of you who have come up in 2005 and helped out and look forward to seeing you again in 2006.

Hopefully, in the next Presidents Report, I will have news of new acquisitions that we are working on.

Until next time. WP Lives.

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## Special Events

Railfan Photographer Day will be held May 20, 2006. Dunsmuir Railroad Days will be held on July 7-9, 2006. And Portola Railroad Days is scheduled for August 26-27, 2006. Check [www.WPLives.org](http://www.WPLives.org) for more information in the coming weeks!

## NEW MEMBERS

The FRRS would like to acknowledge and welcome the following NEW Members:

Duane Vanderveen

Michael Keaster

Keith Williams

Keith DeVault

Spencer Walker

Christopher and Margaret Bell

Vern Simpson

Greg McLeod

A. L. Hanson

Steven Banker

and fellow railroad society

Spokane Portland & Seattle RHS

Thank you for your commitment to the Feather River Rail Society!

## RECENT DONATIONS

The FRRS would like to thank the following members and supporters:

Candy Kids . Richard Peck

Erik Frodsham . Colonel G. Cain

Patrick O'Driscoll

Terry Poole . Robert Early

James Schindler . Ernet Henton

\$100 or more

C.F. Bach - Zephyr Project

Norm and Barbara Holmes

Rotary Club of Portola

\$250 or more

P.J. Watkins - Zephyr Project

\$500 or more

Wayne and Linda Monger

Zephyr Project, WP 484 and others

Andrew and Julia Peterson

Zephyr Project

## IMPORTANT NOTICE - CREW TRAINING DAYS FOR 2006

Please watch the Trainsheet for more information on Crew Training Days in early 2006.

The dates for the 2006 training will be Saturday May 6th and Sunday May 7th, 2006. Held at the Portola Railroad Museum, starting at 9 AM each day, lasting until about 4 PM.

## NOTICE !!!! CHANGES IN CREW TRAINING

Crewmembers and prospective crewmembers are encouraged to attend the training weekend. It will be necessary for crewmembers to attend BOTH days of training. Training on Saturday will consist of update on General Code of Operating Rules, Rules Test, and various procedures used in the operating department. Saturday's training will also consist of a MANDATORY meeting of all RAL engineers. Training on Sunday will continue with hands on operations along with time for questions and answers on new procedures.

## OPERATING SEASON OPENS Saturday May 27th, 2006

Operating Season for 2006 will start on Saturday May 27th 2006 at 11 AM. Crew Call will be at 9:30 AM. Crewmembers will assemble in the Board Room.

If you have any questions concerning operations, or would like to JOIN the Operating Department, contact Kerry Cochran, Manger of Operations, at [operations@wplives.org](mailto:operations@wplives.org).

## The Western Pacific Railroad Museum at Portola

Effective January 1, 2006, the public museum operated by the Feather River Rail Society in Portola, California has a new name.

In the past several years, the FRRS Board of Directors has been leading an effort to refine the mission and collection of the FRRS. At the overwhelming request of the members, the Society has refocused on the Western Pacific and its related roads. A new mission statement was adopted, new collections policies and procedures enacted and the Society has staked its place as the premier historical resource for all things WP. Many other events have resulted from this new mission, including major changes in the roster, from the acquisition of California Zephyr cars and the trade with the Bay Area Electric Railway Association, to the sale of our Southern Pacific

steam locomotive and RS-32 diesel.

Now, the Society has taken this new focus to a more public phase. The name Portola Railroad Museum, which has served us for 22 years, no longer fits well with our future goals. After much review, the FRRS directors voted to adopt a new name for the museum:

### The Western Pacific Railroad Museum at Portola

Look for our new image to begin taking its place in our operations in the coming months. And watch for news about new achievements in our goal of preserving and restoring the Western Pacific. 2006 is shaping up to be an interesting year already. Won't you join us in making it an even bigger success?

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## Santa Trains 2005

- David Epling

This was my third year as part of the operating department crew for the Santa Trains, it was my first as a qualified Conductor. I must say that seeing the look of joy on the passengers faces makes it all worth standing in the cold and with the way the weather was looking, we were wondering if our new rotary would get pressed into service. Fortunately the weather cooperated and it stayed idle. FRRS VP/WPRM Yardmaster Steve Habeck began prepping the equipment 3 weeks before as he usually does. The results as usual were spectacular.

Operations on the 3rd began with the customary safety meeting an hour before train time. Present were Ops Supervisor Kerry Cochran, Ops Dept. Supervisor Pat Brimmer, Asst. Yardmaster/Student Passenger Engineer Loren Ross, Conductors David Epling and Charlie Spikes, Brakemen Craig Simmons and Spencer Walker, and Car Attendant Duane.

With train departure only 10 minutes away, Conductor Epling walked the train in the customary airbrake test. Lady Luck laughed at us a freshly repaired ATSF 999197 chose to not release her brakes. Supervisor Cochran came over, Conductor Spikes came over, Brakemen Simmons and Walker came over. We tried turning valves. We tried everything. The Brakes would not release until...Yes...Yardmaster Steve Habeck came over and glared at it. Talk about one intimidated caboose. The brakes released

and the night was underway and we completed the event with no further problems. The event was well attended with full trains right up until 8pm and actually with a run made after 8pm.

Operations on Dec 10th was a little less staffed. Ops Dept Supervisor Brimmer and Student Yard Engineer Ross again manned the cab of the SP 2873. The train was understaffed with a crew consisting of Conductors Epling & Spikes, Brakemen Simmons and Ed Powell. Decorations disaster almost struck the beginning of this train when the lights kicked out on the SP 4107 caboose. Quick work by Habeck had them up and running shortly after the 5pm train was scheduled to depart. This night went well but included a slow order over the ramp track frog and a pair of SUV's parked on the Right of Way at the west end of the chain link fence. Like the previous weekend, the event was well attended and we had riders right up until 8pm.

Overall it was a well attended event. The FRRS Board, at the January 7, 2006 meeting, voted to continue the Santa Trains in 2006 so for next December, if you can, make time to come up and help out or even just to visit the museum. Steve Habeck starts 3 weeks in advance to decorate the train and the facilities. He usually does this with very minimal help. The Operating Department can always use more crew and your membership allows you to join the Operating Dept. at no extra cost so we hope to see more of you at Crew training on May 6-7, 2006.

Oh, one more thing....WP LIVES!

## Caboosing Around the Museum

- John Walker, Museum Manager

6.30-7.09

Linda Knudson did Yeoman duties in the gift shop while Kerry Cochran, Paul & Ken Finnegan, Don Nelson, Norman Holmes, Jack Zygnier, Loren Ross, Ken Iverson, Bill Parker, Charlie Spikes and others kept the trains rolling at the museum. Paul "Yard Dawg" Lanyi and Kevin Caldwell did odd jobs around the museum. Alan Hirasawa finished repairs on the UP 849 and got it running again. Dave Pires also worked for several days in the Archives car.

7.13-7.15

"Brutally HOT". Record temperatures registered around the region. Linda and John sweltered in 103 temperatures in the gift shop while Ken Iverson, Norman Holmes and Jack Zygnier seated out several long days filled with RAL's. Jim Cooper and Frank Beavers worked in the Archives car.

7.16-7.17

Short on crew again this weekend. Norman and Andy Anderson ran RAL's while Pat Brimmer, Eddie Chase, Ken Iverson and John Walker crewed the caboos trains. Charlie Spikes, Tom Andrews and Bill Parker helped on Sunday. Rod McClure even took a few turns as passenger engineer in the afternoon. Steve Habeck directed after hour switching and setting up some new engines for RAL's.

7.18-7.22

John Manter has been working on setting up a new web cam over the weekend. The camera was finally made operational and tested locally around the museum. Pat Brimmer began a project to repair and repaint the benches on the Mopac caboose. Linda Brimmer volunteered to sort through eleven boxes of assorted magazine donated to the Archives. Dave Novarina of Salinas is back for his annual workweek here at the museum. Dave has started a project that we talked about last year, to whit, rewiring the cabooses used on the annual Santa Trains with permanent power cords which will make the whole process of stringing lights much more easier this winter. Dave will install permanent flex cable and sockets to the cars, which will greatly speed the installation of Christmas lights and decorations in December. The wiring will also allow the cabooses to be plugged into regular 110 volt current and be lit inside when stationary. Dave is also donating the entire cost of the project and will work with his suppliers for additional donations of electrical equipment

for the museum's future wiring projects! Bruce Yparreguire of Chico brought up a pair of nice display cabinets for use in the gift shop.

7.23-7.24

John Walker and Hank and Janice Stiles went back up to Oregon to do drink and snack concessions on another excursion train for a two-day trip from Eugene to Coos Bay Oregon. This trip was run by Tom Horstmann of Rails Northwest. This was a great trip down a very scenic line. The folks in Coos Bay turned out for a huge welcome party, which coincided with a "Show and Shine" antique car show! Apparently, this was the first passenger train over the line since 1953! Special thanks to Mr. Horstmann who purchased our entire supply of snacks and drinks, decided to give them away to his passengers and gave a nice \$3,000 donation to the FRRS! This was the first rail tour that Tom as done in many years but with this kind of special treatment to their customers and commitment to running a first class operation, we suspect his company will run some great trips in the future.

Meanwhile....back on the farm, restoration work on WP caboose 484 was begun under the supervision of Steve Habeck and Doug Morgan. Our capable crews handled RAL's and train rides while Linda ran the gift shop.

7.25-7.31

Restoration of WP 484 was the main focus of attention for the week. Raymond Franklin primed and painted the caboose on Sunday. Charlie Spikes, Loren Ross, Ed Powell, Ken Iverson, Norman Holmes and Andy Anderson ran caboose trains and RAL's. John Manter finally got the web cam working and transmitting while Eugene Vicknair and Dave Epling battled software and web link gremlins from home. Seth Adams is working on the SP 4404 again.

8.01-8.05

Gift shop doing inventories and rearranging merchandise and fixtures. Hank Stiles working on the SP 2873, which had a broken water, line. Charlie Spikes repairing waste oil pump. John Manter working on the web cam.

8.06-8.07

BIG WORK WEEKEND! Dave and Vicki Epling, Tom and Tim Carter, Kevin Caldwell, Matt Parker, Kerry Cochran, Charlie Spikes, Loren Ross (and "A-Bomb") and Bill Parker all pitching in on train crew. Jack Palmer and Andy Anderson ran RAL's. Doug Morgan, Steve Habeck, Hank Stiles and Ed Powell working on replacing worn out wheels

on WP 484 caboose. Eugene Vicknair and Tom Carter working on the ramp next to the sleeper car and, along with Raymond Franklin, relettered the 484 caboose. Raymond is also working on preparations to paint the Pullman Troop Sleeper. Everyone pitched in to replace a worn out switch, which connects the museum to the UP's "West Pass" siding out in the yard. John Walker, Kevin Caldwell, Charlie Spikes and John Manter working on renovations to the gift shop. Alan Hirasawa finished repairs to UP 849 only to find out we didn't have any fuel to test run it. Board meeting that evening with Wayne and Linda Monger, Gail McClure and Norman Holmes joining the directors already in attendance.

8.08-8.09

Touch up work on WP 484 continues. Charlie Spikes and Rod McClure cleaning up the oil house and other areas around the museum. Gift Shop renovations continue. Dave Pires working in the Archives car. Bob Lindley made a surprise visit-good to see Bob again.

8.10-8.12

Assistant Yardmaster Loren Ross, Charlie Spikes and Bill Parker switched the yard. Doug Morgan, Hank Stiles, Bob Lindley and Howard Hanson changing wheels under 484 caboose. Craig Simmons and Loren Ross with gift shop renovations. Dave Pires finished a lot of sorting work in the Archives car.

8.13-8.19

Nice Days. The weather has cooled somewhat with temperatures in the low 90's during the day and low 60's at night. Now that we're on the backside of summer, this is the most enjoyable time of year in the High Sierras. Renovations to the gift shop are completed with expanded display areas and a freshly painted floor. Work has started on cleaning up the shop and grounds in preparation for Railroad Days. Don Hammack and his crew of kids have been cutting weeds and picking up debris from the grounds. Don Keller has been a big help raking the grounds, picking up rocks and pulling weeds. Don has to be the hardest working guy in Portola! Seriously, he puts some of us young bucks to shame at times. Charlie Spikes continuing his work to repair water outlets and various repair jobs around the museum. Norman Holmes started preparation work on the recently acquired "Steel Gon" in hopes of getting it painted soon. Raymond Franklin painted the Troop Sleeper with a new coat of Pullman Green.

Rod McClure and Steve Habeck taking a special "hospital train" east from Portola with several

cars which we have been storing at the museum for the UP Heritage Fleet in Cheyenne. Our freshly painted 484 caboose brought up the rear of the train.

8.20

Pat Brimmer, Paul and Ken Finnegan, Ed Powell and Terry Decottignies (I spelled it right this time) operated caboose trains. Seth Adams and Josh Delp (visiting from Washington state) worked with Hank Stiles on mechanical issues. Linda Brimmer helping with cleanup around the museum. Julie Anderson is back in the gift shop after spending time taking care of an ailing sister. Thankfully, everything went well and we're glad to have Julie back with us. Raymond Franklin doing touchup work on the Troop Sleeper.

8.21

Tom Andrews and Norman Holmes joined the operating crew. General cleanup continues. Seth and Josh working on replacing a broken cylinder head on SP2873. Hank Stiles and Ken Finnegan sorting out GE 44-ton locomotive parts, which are going to our friends at BAERA in Rio Vista. Good crowds despite the high gas prices.

8.22-8.26

Charlie Spikes and others completed the relocation and repairs to two water outlets near the oil house. Finally, after 22 years, we can actually drive or push something around the oil house without running into the fire hydrant, which was always right in the middle of the sidewalk. The repairs also give us two additional water outlets so that we will not have to run garden hoses all over the place to water and wash locomotives. Good job everyone! Long days and good weather gave us plenty of time to get a lot of last minute preparations and cleanup done around the museum in preparation for Railroad Days. With the renovation of the gift shop, Linda Knudson was busy checking in and pricing a lot of new merchandise. Lots of nice comments on the "new" gift shop. Pat Brimmer has been handling RAL's this week, which has given our local RAL instructors some well-deserved time off. Pat, Loren and Craig Simmons making last minute adjustments to the yard.

8.27-8.28

Railroad Days! With so many other projects going on this year, the late start this spring and so many of our members away on trips or simply staying home this summer, we did not do much this year. Hopefully next year, we will not have so many conflicting projects and moves,

find some new enthusiasm for the event and have more volunteers to pitch in and help. With the help of Frank Beavers, Bill Strahle (Operation Lifesaver), the entire Knudson family, Craig Simmons, Pat and Linda Brimmer, Hank and Janice Stiles, Matt Parker and Norman Holmes, Kerry Cochran and his operating crew, we put on a good show and everyone enjoyed themselves.

8.29-8.30

Paul Lanyi is a weed-cutting fanatic! Paul did a great job cleaning up the parking lot, inside balloon track and Malfunction Jct. Thanks Paul! Doug Morgan, Rick Edwards and Hank Stiles worked around the shop.

8.30

UP 3985 in town for a two-day layover. The 4-6-6-4 is on a public relations tour of the west coast and left Cheyenne with our WP 484 caboose in the consist behind the "water bottles". Dave Epling, Sam Herschbien, Charlie Spikes, Paul Lanyi and Pat Brimmer cleaned up the area in the UP yard where the engine was displayed, set up some barriers and helped with crowd control for the hundreds of visitors who stopped by to see the locomotive.

9.02

Everyone was pretty tired from all the recent activity, but John and Sam used the cool of the morning to cleanup the UP yard, take down the barriers and put everything away after the steam engine departed this morning. After that, everyone just kind of crashed and relaxed for the rest of the day.

9.03-9.05

Labor Day Weekend. Despite outrageous gas prices, we had a good crowd for Saturday and Sunday. Kerry Cochran, Lew Barnard, Don Nelson, Craig Simmons, Eddie Chase and Ed Powell ran the caboose trains while Terry Decottignies (did I get it right this time?) ran RAL's for three days. Alan Hirasawa and Hank Stiles worked on various mechanical items. To round out the end of the Operating Season, several steak dinners were consumed.

9.06-9.15

Visitors to the museum have dropped off dramatically with the end of the travel season and high gas prices. But, we're making good use of the time to get various projects done. Charlie Spikes and John Walker are working on repairs to tools and equipment, checking the roof in preparation for winter snow and rains, and getting a head start on winter preparations. John guided several tours around the museum.

Mary Leal of Portola has begun several painting projects around the property, including painting the eaves of the oil and battery house.

9-16-9.20

John took a few days off and Linda Knudson held down the fort. Still some good crowds on the weekends and we're still running RAL's. Rod and Steve still traveling with the UP 3985.

It was a short, hectic summer! Despite blazing heat and outrageous gas prices, we did a lot of things around the museum this summer! Three pieces of equipment painted, the gift shop renovated, the shop was cleaned and overhauled, we pulled off several special events, moved a lot of equipment and most importantly, we made our visitors and guests happy.

9.20 through 9.30

Charlie Spikes and John Walker sat down and planned out a healthy list of things that needed to be done before winter. The list was posted around the museum and on our web site and steady progress is being made on most items. Clyde and Linda Lippincott brought up their tractor and tools over two weekends and cleared nearly eight acres of sagebrush, weeds and grass from around the hospital and the museum. Clyde mowed down most of the inside of the balloon track and the picnic area where we found the old horseshoe pits. Clyde also filled in ruts in the access road to the picnic area and cut a new drainage ditch through the picnic area. Hopefully, this will eliminate a lot of mud puddles this spring let alone reduce our danger from grass fires significantly. It also makes the museum grounds look a lot better. Plus, we found quite a few relics out there in the weeds that have since gone to the dumpster or the scrap car.

Doug Morgan, Hank Stiles and John Walker jacked up the front end of the WP 707 to replace a worn center plate liner and do some adjustments to the unit. It was an impressive sight for our visitors to see a 125-ton locomotive doing a "wheelie" in the engine shop!

Doug, Greg Elams and John dug holes and set 9 piers for the deck extension behind the shower car. Jay Sarno moved the temporary electrical service to the volunteer lounge car into a service conduit alongside the newly installed piers for a more permanent installation. This will allow the car to be moved with the simple act of unplugging it from the service conduit.

Mary Leal of Portola has been painting the eaves

Mary Leal of Portola has been painting the eaves of the battery house and oil shed. Somehow, this has been overlooked since the buildings were constructed. The new paint looks good and matches the trim on the main building. Mary also helped John prep and paint the floor of the Board Room (old gift shop). Wow! The room looks a lot better now that it is cleaned out and the floor is one color instead of five different shades of gray.

John and Charlie Spikes replaced the old wooden decks of the man lift cage. Now we have a safe platform on which to work on broken windows and for changing light bulbs.

Seth Adams and Jimmy Bryant are working on the interior of the SP 4404, getting it ready for a coat of new paint. Alan Hirasawa came up and worked on the UP 849 while Norman Holmes patched the roof on the WP camp car. John and Charlie also spent a day trimming sagebrush and trees around the balloon track.

10.01 through 10.07

Norman Holmes patching the roof of the Tidewater Southern outfit car. Doug Morgan and Jimmy Bryant working on locomotive parts in the shop area. Rick Edwards repaired various items on the museum vehicles, the pressure washer and reviewed Mechanical Department, locomotive inspection reports. Steve Habeck began winterizing some of our locomotives. Eugene Vicknair and Ed Powell worked on the interior of the volunteer lounge car.

10.08 through 10.13

Charlie Walls is back from Afghanistan and Iraq and everyone was very glad to see and visit with Charlie while he volunteered for a few days around the museum helping Rod McClure and Don Bordan unload some traction motors and reload them for transport to San Diego. Steve Habeck charging batteries. Don Bordon, Charlie Spikes and John Walker working on the wooden ramp to the sleeping car. Mary Leal continues painting. John, Rod and Charlie serviced RAL engines. Norman Holmes cleaning out the newly arrived (former UP) RPO car and patching some holes in the roof. The fall colors are out in force this year! This is a very pretty time of year in Plumas County and lots of visitors come up to Portola to see the fall foliage.

10.14 through 10.16

Don Bordan spent a week at the museum and ran seventeen hours of RAL's for us. Hank Stiles and Doug Morgan working on the WP 707 and loading GE 44 tonner parts to deliver to BAERA in Rio Vista. Hank also delivered the recently

purchased handicapped wheel chair lift. Don, Charlie Spikes and John Walker finished the ramp to the sleeper car. Charlie and John cleaned up all the scrap and left over lumber from "Fort Eugene" while Don Bordon began staining the deck with wood preservative. Seth Adams worked on the SP 4404. John oiled up some RAL engines and repaired the siphon tube on the oil pump.

We had a great visit with 30 members of the Butte College faculty and their families while Don Hamack and his crew of kids raked up the hospital grounds and picnic area in the hopes that we can burn off several piles of slash and trimmings before it snows this year. Norman Holmes boarded up the windows of the WP 614 caboose so that it can go outside this winter if we need more room in the engine house.

10.20 through 10.25

James Mason came up from Pasadena for the Big Work Weekend and helped John dig out, test and distribute all of the heaters, clean out the baggage car in preparation for the Santa Trains. Doug Morgan worked on locomotive parts. James and Charlie Spikes also repaired broken windows in the shop area. Mary Leal finished staining the ramp and deck behind the shower car. Mary also prepped and stained new shelves for the Board Room. Adam Mlarker has been trimming trees and cutting up old rotten wood and working with Hank and Doug on locomotive servicing and repairs. Norman Holmes has repaired the roof on the RPO car and painted out all the graffiti on the car. Andy Anderson running RAL's. Linda K. working in the gift shop while John, Dave and Vicki Epling and Kevin Caldwell staffed a GATS show in Reno.

10.25 through 10.27

John and Doug gave a tour for the Fernley Preservation Society. Rain with a few visitors. Norman Holmes entertained visitors from the new V&T project in Carson City.

10.29 through 10.31

Hank Stiles and Doug Morgan worked on various mechanical projects and made preparations to begin repairs to the WP 917, which has a big oil leak. Eugene Vicknair and his mom worked on the volunteer lounge car. Steve Habeck has begun pulling batteries while John Walker began packing things up for winter.

Bill Parker, Charlie Spikes, Adam Mlarker, Greg Elams and his sons pitched in to help with winter preparations.

11.01-through 11.06

11.01-through 11.06

Cold and windy most of the week with some rain. Ken Iverson still ran some RAL's. Board Meeting in Stockton. Charlie Spikes and Steve Habeck working on facilities and batteries.

11.07 through 11.11

Nice weather but few visitors and no RAL's. John, Charlie, Doug and Norm working on various projects. Norm got a second coat of black paint on the "steel gon". The tool room was totally cleaned and reorganized. Repairs made to shower car. Model A moved back inside the building. Various equipment moved inside for winter storage. Broken windows repaired. Howard Hanson working on wheel chokes and tie downs for WP 165. Steve charging batteries. A lot of work done this week!

11.12 Saturday. Ken Iverson ran RAL's. John Manter ran CAT-5 DSL cable inside the building. Jay Sidney of Portola used a wheel magnet to pick up nails and metal out of the gravel roads and parking areas. Howard Hanson working on wheel chokes.

11.13 through 11.14

John Manter wiring the Board Room, Office Car and Operations Office for DSL service. Jim Halliwell and Duane Vanderveen of Graeagle working on Santa Train lights while Steve Habeck ran the power cords. Jay Sidney picked up a pallet load of scrap metal out of the storage area inside the balloon track. Jay found a big piece of rail and the remains of an old car out there in the weeds! John Walker sanded and painted metal lockers in between visitors. Norman Holmes ran an RAL.

11.15 through 11.19

The weather remains very nice! Charlie Spikes and John Walker working on various projects around the museum. Steve Habeck and crew working on batteries and Santa Train preparations.

11.20 through 11.23

Charlie Spikes changed a leaky gate valve under the shower car and drained the west end of the car. Duane Vanderveen repaired a broken light fixture on the east end of the building. John And Charlie patched a hole in the roof.

11.25 Raining. Surprising amount of visitors today.

11.26 through 11.27

Work continues on Santa Train. Charlie Spikes and John Walker running RAL's. Steve Habeck supervised some yard switching.

11.28

SNOW! Don Bordon called from Hawaii to tell John that it was 85 degrees and sunny on his porch (Gee-Thanks Don). John hosted a tour for 5th graders from the Portola Elementary School.

11.29 through 11.30

John Walker and Norman Holmes decorated the WP caboose located in the parking lot in town with Christmas lights. This is our contribution to the City of Portola's annual Christmas Tree Lighting Festival on December 1st. Steve Habeck continued Santa Train preparations.

12.01 through 12.02

Steve Habeck and Rod McClure worked on the Santa Train while Dave Epling and Duane Vanderveen worked on some electrical improvements around the facilities.

12.03 SANTA TRAIN! Over 400 people attended and a good time was had by all.

12.04 through 12.09 Cold with some rain and snow. Surprisingly, the weather has turned unusually warm. Lots of paperwork, phone calls and odds and ends to catch up before the end of the year.

12.10 SANTA TRAIN! WOW- we had a huge crowd. Maybe 700 people! Charlie Spikes, Loren Ross, Pat & Linda Brimmer, Rod & Gail McClure, Duane Vanderveen, Craig Simmons, Dave and Debbie Epling, Kerry Cochran, Wayne Monger, Eugene Vicknair, John Manter, Heidi Miller, Linda Knudsen, Dave Rudolph, Norman Holmes, Ed Powell, Eric Stephens, Frank Brehm, Jim Halliwell, Vicki Krois, The Portola Soroptimist club and the entire Habeck family did a great job! With money rather tight this year, many Portola and Plumas County merchants and citizens pitched in with over \$1,300 in cash donations to help us out this year. Our heartfelt thanks to the community for helping us continue this great event.

12.11 Pat and Linda Brimmer, Ed Powell, Loren Ross and Steve Habeck gathered Sunday morning to help take down lights and pack up decorations.

12.12 through 12.20

John Walker and Doug Morgan continued cleanup and winter preparations. The last orders were packed and shipped, answering machine messages changed, water systems drained, signs changed and the museum closed up for the winter.

All in all, not too bad.

## NRHS Excursion

- John Walker, Museum Manager

Chris Skow of Trains Unlimited Tours offered the FRRS a chance to make some extra money by staffing a gift shop and food and drink concessions on his 15 car, three-day excursion from Oakland to Portland for the NRHS convention. Hank and Janice Stiles helped John aboard the train with the additional assistance of Dave Houston of Daylight Sales in Sacramento.

The trip was quite the adventure! Selling gift shop merchandise and serving drinks at speeds of 80 mph on the mainline and 10-30 mph on the switchbacks of the McCloud Railroad and the former SP Coos Bay branch west of Eugene (now operated by CORP) was challenging at times. The days were very long and after a few hours sleep; it was another pre dawn start for the next day of the trip. The logistics of trying to stock a fifteen car train with nearly 400 people on board are very challenging and Janice saved our bacon on several occasions by driving a chase car and picking up things we had run out of and delivering to the train just in the nick of time. On one occasion, we had to jump over an irrigation ditch to get 200 fresh donuts onto the train before the train took off again! But everything went pretty well and we had a great opportunity to talk to people about the FRRS and the museum. Surprisingly, a lot of our members were on board as well as members of other museums, private car owners, excursion operators and railroad officials and we got a chance to talk with them and help catch them up on recent events at the museum. Occasionally, we actually got a chance to stick our heads out the window and see some wonderful scenery (but not often enough).

After arriving in Portland (with eight minutes to spare) near midnight, we finally got to our motel rooms at 1:30 in the morning and caught up on some sleep. Janice and Hank returned to Sacramento while John picked up a U-Haul rental truck and packed up all of our stuff on the train. With an evening to kill, John visited the Brooklyn Roundhouse and was asked to volunteer for The Friends of the 4449 on their roundtrip excursion with the SP&S 700/SP 4449 from Portland to Wishram and back the next day. This was another opportunity to make new friends and observe how other groups do things and possibly learn something.

Following the Wishram trip, John drove the remaining gift shop supplies south to Dunsmuir to meet up with the museum train that had left

Portola on the 6th. Our baggage/Concession car was set up and stocked for Dunsmuir Railroad Days on the 9th and 10th. The people of Dunsmuir were GREAT! Many people went out of their way to thank the FRRS for making their event the best it has been in ten years. Rod and Gail McClure, Steve Habeck, Wayne and Linda Monger and Hank and Janice Stiles monitored cars and equipment, ran the gift shop, sold drinks, passed out brochures and gave rides on the turntable at Dunsmuir with our SP 2873 and WP2001 securely fixed to the bridge of the turntable. Special thanks to Matt Shumann and his crew of the Cascade Rail Preservation Society and Buck \_\_\_\_\_? and \_\_\_\_\_ Plank, the Union Pacific MTO and MOP at Dunsmuir for all of their assistance. And thanks to UP Superintendent R.J. Perry.

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## WP Modelling Report

- Thom Anderson, WPPRHS Admin

There are a few new models on the horizon. Broadway Limited has released the California Zephyr baggage, dome coach, diner 10-6 sleeper and 16-section sleepers as of this writing. They are also going to rerun the cars done in the first release in a few months.

Athearn announced WP 85-foot piggyback flats and WP bicentennial trailers in HO scale, stock #93272. A Pullman-Standard 2983 cubic foot covered hopper is now available, as is a 65-foot mill gondola, in both HO and N scale. These cars are good for WP, however WP is not among the roadnames announced so far.

Atlas announced GP35 units in N scale in green paint #3001, stock#46525 and #3009, stock #46526. Also announced in N scale is a 50-foot Fruit Growers Express boxcar. Many roadnames are being offered, including WP, stock #33713. Many of these other FGE cars were seen on WP, even though they had other reporting marks.

Rick Schonfelder reminded me that Atlas is offering WP as a roadname on their O scale Berwick 60-foot boxcar. The 2-rail car is stock #9629, and the 3-rail car is stock #8629. This is the same car that Athearn did in HO in their Genesis line. Atlas is also offering in O scale iced refrigerator cars in various WP schemes, including the Western Refrigerator Line, a very short lived scheme for some of the WP's first refrigerator cars. The cars will be available singly or in a 4-pack containing one of each paint scheme.

photo by John Walker



Accepting a donation during Santa Trains



Railfan Photographer Day 2005

photo by Eugene John Vicknair



917-D at Western Ry. Museum, Rio Vista Jct.

photo by Eugene John Vicknair

# 20

photo by Alex Ramos

photo by John Walker



Shimming caboose trucks



FRRS Train on the Benecia Bridge

*UP's WP Heritage locomotive poses with WP 2001*



*photo by Pat Brimmer*

*photo by Eugene John Vicknair*



*Unloading SN 146 at its new home at Rio Vista Jct.*

# 05

*WP 921-D and 917-D together again in Portola*



*photo by John Walker*

*Railfan Photographer Day 2005*



*photo by Wendy Holtz*

*photo by John Walker*



*SP 2873 and WP 2001 in Dunsmuir*

## Repainting of WP Caboose 645

- Norman Holmes

Western Pacific's wooden cabooses dated from 1910 were built to the original Gould Standards as used on the D&RG. By the mid 1930's WP's fleet of 49 cabooses of this design were reduced because of fires and wrecks and the company felt a need for additional cabooses.

WP's first box cars were one thousand 40' outside braced single sheathed cars that were built in 1916. They were now becoming obsolete with the arrival of WP's first steel box cars in 1937.

It was decided to convert some of the 1916 cars to cabooses. Earlier 200 had been converted into stock cars followed by 232 cars in 1936-37. Others were rebuilt for use as outfit cars and other MW service.

In 1937 12 box cars were rebuilt into cabooses (605-616) mainly for use in the Feather River Canyon. These cars had a unique "vestibule" end, a set back of 24 inches from the sides to provide protection from the weather when a conductor or brakeman was standing on the back platform. The only known example of this series in existence is No. 614, preserved by the FRRS in Portola.

Several design changes were made in the next 12 (617-628) built in 1938 and the final 4 (639-642) built in 1942.

As box cars were getting higher, it was becoming difficult to see over the tops of the cars. The purpose of the cupola was to allow the brakeman and conductor to keep an eye out for any problems that might occur with their train.



A number of eastern roads had experimented with cabooses that had a bay window on each side instead of a cupola. WP decided to experiment with the construction of a bay window caboose in 1942. Caboose NO. 642 was put into service for evaluation. It was a success and subsequently 60 bay window cabooses were built between 1943 and 1945. Because of the increase in war time traffic the early wooden cabooses remained in service but were mainly used in local service.

Bay window caboose No. 645, the subject of this article, was the 3rd one built. I first became acquainted with No. 645 while working in San Jose yard. Sometime in the late 1960s WP was installing electric generators on their cabooses. No. 645 left San Jose for conversion and when it returned it had electric lights and markers. The old kerosene markers were left in their holder inside the caboose. I thought someone would steal them so I took them home for safe keeping.

In 1970 we purchased 15 acres in Portola and in 1971 we moved from San Jose. Inspired by a search for a "lost locomotive in the woods" with James Boynton, I thought there would be room on our property to fulfill a life long dream and have my own railroad. The "lost locomotive" was still lost, but in Winnemucca I discovered a 1917 box car that was in excellent condition that the WP was going to retire. I purchased the car for \$200 and along with a flat car arranged to have them moved to Portola. A little later the railroad contacted me and asked if I wanted a caboose. It seems that No. 645 had followed me to Portola and was in use on the Reno Local. One day while returning through the Sierra Valley strong winds blew the roofing paper off. Since WP was not spending any money on repairs for this series of cabs, it was declared surplus. I purchased it for \$500.

Meanwhile the City of Portola had acquired No. 679 and another party bought No. 676. Thus there were 3 cabooses, a box car and a flat car that needed to be moved. I contacted a railroad car mover and the 3 cars were moved to my property, the city's caboose moved to a park and the other private owner's cab was taken to his property.

I had acquired some 45 pound rail from Loyalton and from "found" rail in the woods.

Now I needed a locomotive. A 35 ton Plymouth was located in Medford, Oregon and trucked to Portola. With the help of friends I now had a railroad with 1200 feet of track. The railroad was operated occasionally until 1983 when the Portola Railroad Museum was formed. In 1987 I retired as engineer for UP. I donated the caboose, box car, flat car and locomotive to the FRRS.

Since then the cars and locomotive have remained on my property except for the flat car which was sold for a bridge. It seems the summers go by so quickly and there is so much

to do at the museum that we never get around to moving the equipment.

This summer (2005) I decided No. 645 need a new coat of paint. It was last painted by WP in 1972. The results can be seen in the accompanying photo. A new application of roofing paper was also applied. To attest to their sturdy construction there are at least 12 cupola style and at least 22 bay window cabooses still in existence.

P.S. The kerosene marker lamps have been returned to their holder in the caboose.

## WP Equipment Sightings

- compiled by David Epling

Well here we are, 2006 and a new year and a new issue of the Trainsheet. By now most of you know the BIG change at the Museum. No longer are we the Portola Railroad Museum. We are now the Western Pacific Railroad Museum at Portola. But more on that will be written by others. This column is made possible by you the FRRS members and non-FRRS Members via the world of the internet be it yahoogroups, the various Discussion Boards are just plain individual sightings. To send your sightings to me, simply drop an E-mail to me at [frrsweb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:frrsweb@sbcglobal.net). And now, on to the reports:

- First up is Roger Burdick reporting UP 1983 by his home at MP 156 on the Roseville Sub on 11/1/05. (Editors note - UP seems to be keeping the heritage units in general in their primary namesake areas as 1983 has become a regular to out area).

- Mike Hinkle reported WP 12050 (Cov Hopper) near Richmond TX. November 2005.

- Dave Anderson reported WP 12090 in a UP unit grain train parked in the BNSF yard adjacent to the Louis Dreyfus Export Elevator on the Seattle waterfront on 11/02/05.

- Chris Bekaris reported UP 4504 stopped at north/east end of Sunset Whitney at 2 PM 11/5/05 due to MP 116.9 detector calling out

hot box on WP 12407 (Cov Hooper). This location is in Lincoln CA. Crew could not find a problem.

- Frank Caron reported WP 38128 (Boxcar) at San Jose CA's Newhall Yard 11/7/05.

- Jim Bryant reported WP 12072 (Cov Hopper) rolled west by his home trackside in Lawton NV 11/8/05.

- Ken Reiter reported WP 1903 (89' flat) at San Jose CA's Newhall Yard 11/9/05.

- Frank Caron reported the same flat as still at Newhall on 11/11/05.

- Kevin Caldwell reported in his travels an open top WP Hopper at Paxton on 11/30/2005. Later that same day, he observed a WP covered hopper heading west into Sparks Yard. He says both numbers were obscured.



- Dan Crews reported a very clean WP 86122 through Citrus Heights CA on 12/8/05.

*photo by Dan Crews*

- Roland Bayly reported WP 38008 (Boxcar) sitting in Kaiser Yard in Ontario CA 11/17/05. He also reported WP 13312 (Flat Car) sitting in the One Spot (Car Repair) at W. Colton Yard on 11/28/05. Later that same day he observed a large WP Lettered boxcar but it was too far away to see the number. He also reported WP 38265 (Boxcar) in the W Colton yard on 11/30/2005. He then kicked off December with WP 38156 (Boxcar) in a WB Manifest in Fontana CA on 12/01/05.

- Roland Bayly reported WP 38291 sitting in the Dolores Yard in Long Beach CA on 12/8/05.

- Merrill Thurman reported WP 65623, with UP Herald, sighted in the hole at Lexington, NE on 12/12/05. Later the same day, he saw a WP Boxcar w/large WP Lettering, but reporting marks completely tagged, on the Main at Maxwell, NE. Merrill hit the mother lode on 11/15/05 in the Laramie, WY Yard, on 12/15/05 @ 14:15. He observed the following cars: WP 10291, 10487, 10227, 10239, 10847, 10461, 10804, 10208, & 10449.

- Ed Wagner reported High side gondolas WP 7703 and WP 7718 EB through Niles headed for Altamont pass on 12/15/05.

- Bill Tharp reported seeing WP 7710 (High Side Gondola) at Oakland CA on 12/21/05.

- Biff Byrum reported WP 38195 (Boxcar) spotted at Smurfit-Stone Recycling in Polk, CA on 12/28/05.

- R. Wullich reported WP 1905 (89' Flat) in Oakland CA on 12/31/05. He says Happy New Years!

- Mark Freiberg reported WP 7701 (High side Gondola) in a Herzog Work train in the UP Yard in Oakland CA on 1/1/06.

- Bringing up markers for this edition of the WP sightings column is Merrill Thurman again. He reports WP 12063 eastbound at San Simon, AZ and WP 10207 eastbound at Separ, NM on 1/10/06.

Well that is it for this edition of WP sightings. Without you this column does not work. I thank you again for your contributions and remember our battle cry...WP LIVES!

## Mechanical Report

- Hank Stiles, CMO

I hope the holidays were as joyous for you and your family as they were for me and my family.

As per normal the museum is shut down for the winter. But some work and board of director meetings go on. I am trying to get a little work done so we can use our equipment for some upcoming projects.

Most of what goes on as this time of year is planning for the 2006 season. Many projects face us, repairs to the WP 917, turning the wheels on the WP 512 and repairs to the WP 501 prime mover are but a few of the things that we need to accomplish. Each small job that we finish on our equipment makes it look better and or makes it more reliable and longer lasting and fulfills our commitment to save the history of the Feather River Route. By April the weather will warm up and we can start another season. I have every reason to believe that we will be more successful in 2006 than we were in 2005.

Unfortunately we are not blessed with the funds to make many of the repairs and improvements that we would like to. If all 1000 members donated the cost of a cup of coffee a day to the museum, it would add up to about \$1250.00 a day and that is \$456,250.00 a year. A cup a week adds up to \$65,000.00 a year. Think about what that amount of money would mean to our museum. We could paint ten pieces of our equipment even at the low figure. If we all give a little we gain a lot.

A lot of what needs to be done can be accomplished with little money if we had the more people to help share the work. We use most of our help keeping our equipment up and running and keeping the museum doors open. Most people don't understand how much work is involved in running a museum like ours. I know that John Walker puts in about 60 hours per week and then there are the others like Rod Mc Clure, Steve Habeck, Doug Morgan, Ken Iverson and Norm Holmes that put in many hours each week also. There are about 25 others, like myself, that come up on a regular basis that add greatly to the hours being put in to run our museum. I would like to invite all of you to come up to the museum and help out, your help can be used and will be appreciated, no matter what you like to do. Many of you don't live close

enough to the museum to be able to come up and help very often, there are things that can be done from afar, like fund raising and working on publications, etcetera, something for everyone. If each of our 1000 members set aside just one hour each month to help the museum it would be the same as having six full time employees! You see it adds up fast.

In closing, a big thank you to Rick Edwards. The old brown pickup we use around the museum would not pass smog. After Rick rebuilt the carburetor and did some additional tuneup work it passed just fine. He did this without cost to the museum, giving about \$200.00 out of his own pocket.

Please become more active in the museum, you can make a difference.

Thank you and see you in Portola.

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## Volunteers

- Eugene John Vicknair

It seems that everywhere I go lately, I meet folks who are excited and impressed by what the FRRS is accomplishing. And let me say, it feels great to hear that so many people are not only paying attention, but approve of our progress! Still, most of these conversations seem to end with some variation on: "I wish I lived closer to the museum so I could do something."

You don't need to live close to help to museum. True, we have some volunteers who travel some long distances to pitch in. They come from San Diego, Salt Lake City, Washington state, even from Missouri. I live in the south Bay Area in California, a four hour trip if there's no traffic.

But there are things you can do right from home. We need help with advertising, volunteer coordination, off-site event assistance, even restoration work that can be done away from the museum. One member has often brought locomotive parts home to refurbish!

We just need to know who has the ability and willingness to take on these projects. If you would like to help, please contact one of the Directors or Managers listed in the masthead.

We Want YOU!

## FRRS On-Line

- David Epling, FRRS Webmaster

WIRED!

As you all know, we've added a larger Internet presence for the WPRM. This project began with the addition of a Discussion board and the next step saw the addition of a webcam. The most recent step was completed Jan 7th, 2006 with the running of network cable to the Operations/Mechanical office computer. FRRS members can now access the internet from the comfort of the crew lounge/board room. If you bring your own laptop computer, you can access the internet via Ethernet connection or wireless connection. If you choose to use the wireless connection, then you will need the numeric key code to access the router as we have made the wireless a closed system. Upon request to the webmaster, the key will be given to you and you may use it whenever you are at the museum.

This project is not complete however. We still have 2 more cameras that will be installed in the spring. Their locations are still being determined, but, unlike the current camera, they will be aimed at the museum grounds. The final phase of the project will be completed when the Silver Debris Crew Lounge project is finished. We will wire the Silver Debris for Internet access as well.

Hopefully this will become another amenity that will be readily available to the FRRS Membership and museum staff. Remember: your FRRS Membership allows you to come and be a physical part of the museum. Come on up and take advantage of the Edenwold Sleeper. 2006 is going to be a great year. There are a ton of projects big and small that need attention and together we can make our museum better than it already is.

Finally, thanks to member Seth Neumann for his generosity. Upon hearing that the webcam computer was having problems due to brownouts, he donated a used, high capacity Uninterruptable Power Supply to the museum, along with an inkjet printer and other items that will be quite useful around the Gift Shop.

**FRRS Website: [www.WPLives.org](http://www.WPLives.org)**

## 2005 In Review

- John Walker, Museum Manager

2005 is over. I'm tempted to say Good Riddance! After all of the momentum that we had built up at the end of 2004, the New Year greeted us with six feet of snow. Despite this, we got the museum open on time. The snow finally melted away in mid March and we thought we could finally get back to work. But then it started raining. We had rain, snow, sleet, hail and freezing conditions for five out of seven days for two and a half months. This weather precluded any kind of out door work and left everyone very frustrated. It got so bad that we began looking through the archives to see if we could find the plans for the Las Plumas we were so wet. Although our RAL and passenger ops began on schedule, the lousy weather adversely affected our visitor traffic and the slow start eventually led us into a cash crunch that would continue to haunt us throughout the year.

Business picked up in June and July despite a six-week heat wave that left temperatures inside the engine house well over 100 degrees. August started out promising, and just as it looked like we might start catching up and turn the year around, the record high gas prices quickly slowed attendance to the museum yet again. Still, we hosted a decent Railroad Days and a visit from the Union Pacific 3985. Eventually August proved to fall short of the previous year and by 3 PM on Labor Day the operating crews had nullified the last runs of the day and there was nothing to stop the occasional tumbleweed from blowing through the parking lot.

September was a very poor month. But just as it looked like the year was going to be a total wash, the gas prices began falling, the fall foliage came out and the weather turned unseasonably warm and dry. RAL's and visitors remained steady and we were able to recover some of the income we lost in the spring and summer. Oddly enough, the last three months of the year turned out to be better than last year and, along with a great July, were the only bright spots in an otherwise rotten year financially. Although disappointing, I can honestly report that this was not due to any error on our part. We did everything right but the weather and fuel prices are simply out of our control. In hindsight, there were probably some things we could have done better but we've yet to find a

crystal ball lying around the museum that can accurately predict the future.

Quite honestly, I couldn't wait to put 2005 behind us and start over. But, now that I've had some time to reflect back on the year, I have to admit that despite all of the adversities, we still continued to make good progress in many areas and we had several accomplishments that we should be very proud of.

Although we're still crunching the numbers, it looks like our gift shop and operations are down 10-12% from 2004. While disappointing, that's not too bad considering our remote location. Reports from the Tourism industry indicate that we did better than a lot of other people. Our financial donations improved and our material donations were very good as we received the gift of several items, which we can really use at the museum. Our community relations are improving rapidly and we are working together on several cooperative ventures, which will benefit Portola, Plumas County and our museum. Our relationships with other museums continues to get better and better with lots of potential benefits to all of us. Our facility operates more smoothly and productivity around the museum is at an all time high.

And we made some significant improvements this year. The gift shop received a healthy overhaul with some new paint and expanded display areas. The entire shop area was cleaned and reorganized. The battery house and oil shed received some new paint. The old gift shop (now known as "The Board Room") was cleaned and spruced up with new paint, shelves and furniture. The efforts by many to clean up the museum grounds resulted in more junk being picked up, more trees trimmed and nearly 8 acres of sagebrush and weeds being cleared from the property and old Hospital. Electrical improvements included new lights in the display room, additional outlets in the gift shop, safety and security lighting in the shop, and repairs to several broken light fixtures and outlets. We now have the start of a computer network and DSL inside the museum and a working web cam and security cameras! We have a fantastic new web site that just seems to get better and better all the time. And we painted three pieces of equipment this year!

And let's not gloss over our activities outside the fence either.

While railfans reveled in photographing our WP 707 and 2001 running around the Bay Area last spring, something much more important was happening. Nearly every railroad museum in the country has some oddball pieces of equipment, which just doesn't seem to fit the parameters of their collection. And it's safe to say that many of us have more stuff than we can take care of. Downsizing or reconciling these misfits has long been a mute subject in the railroad preservation community. More often than not, these orphans were left to "rust in dignity" rather than even entertain the notion of trading or giving it to a new home where it might find some "good lovin".

Our good friends at the Bay Area Electric Railway Association in Rio Vista have broken new ground by returning to their roots and focusing on their core collection, which is electric interurbans. It was a courageous decision to downsize and refine their collection. BAERA has been very generous to us and other museums in offering their surplus equipment to new homes where they will be better appreciated. We have also been very fortunate that BAERA officials and staff have openly shared with us the problems, pitfalls and the processes involved in this very progressive undertaking. I think it's safe to say that the whole experience has been an eye opening experience for the entire rail preservation community and we've learned a lot from being able to view this transformation from an insider's perspective. Our thanks to BAERA for their open, friendly and insightful cooperation. We've done more than just trade equipment. We've begun sharing information, ideas and services, which are proving very beneficial to our organization. And now that the barrier has been broken, other museums are beginning to talk about equipment trades, information and service exchanges. A new dawn has risen in the railway preservation movement and the FRRS was there to help get it started.

In July, Chris Skow of Trains Unlimited Tours offered us a unique chance to make some extra money and advertise the museum on a series of excursions in the Pacific Northwest. Since things at the museum were kind of slow, we jumped on the opportunity. The results were good. We

raised some money, passed out a lot of brochures, talked to a lot of members and met and talked with many private car owners, volunteers from other museums and railroad officials from several shortlines and regionals.

The end of these excursions coincided with our participation in Dunsmuir Railroad Days where we put on quite a show and left everyone in Dunsmuir very happy. The organizers said that our participation made the event the best it has been in nearly ten years! This was another opportunity for the FRRS to show off its professional railroading capabilities. All of our equipment performed flawlessly and the McCloud Railway and officials from the Union Pacific spoke admirably of our abilities and the professional way we conducted our operations.

The Union Pacific called on us in August to transfer some vintage railroad equipment from California to the Heritage Fleet Headquarters in Cheyenne Wyoming. Once again, the FRRS performed admirably and successfully completed the task. And we did it with flair: with freshly repainted WP caboose 484 bringing up the rear of the train! The UP returned the favor by dispatching UP 1983 to Portola for Railroad Days in the new WP Heritage paint scheme (which we supplied the color chips for) and a two day visit from UP 3985.

The Historical Division (WPRRHS) also had a good year with progress continuing on the archives, several large donations, a new display at the museum this year featuring a photo essay on snow fighting on the WP and SP by noted winter railroading photographer Dick Dorn, three new issues of The Headlight and a successful convention in Tracy.

As winter approached, we got a lot of small jobs completed at the museum that protects our equipment from the inclement weather and will help us get off to a good start this spring - providing the weather cooperates. So, all in all, the FRRS had a pretty good year and we made good progress and did a lot of good things. Once again, WP stands for "Willing People".

In closing, I wish I could express to all of our members just how much we (the management and staff) appreciate you and need you. It was only through your faith and support that we've come this far. You're what made our

## Train Sheet Changes

- Eugene John Vicknair, Interim Editor

As seen in the last two issues, there have been many changes coming to the Train Sheet. Two more are on the horizon.

Starting with Issue 134, May/June 2006, the Train Sheet will be available as a downloadable PDF file. Members will have the option of receiving an e-mail notification to download the latest issue when it goes to the mailing house. This will speed up delivery an average of 10 days to those who choose this option, as well as lower printing costs for the Society. See the notice in the removable center insert.

Also, we are considering allowing limited advertising in the Train Sheet, also to offset increasing printing and mailing costs, to allow us to focus more resources on restorations and museum improvements.

If you have any comments or questions, feel free to e-mail me at [trainsheet@wplives.org](mailto:trainsheet@wplives.org).

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*2005 In Review continued...*

organization the fastest growing, most innovative and most active museum in the rail preservation industry today. For twenty-three years, people kept saying that we couldn't do what we've done. Now the list of things we haven't already done is so short that most of our critics are smart enough to keep quiet and not let us step on their tongues yet again.

Am I proud of this organization? You bet I am! And now I'm in the unique position of seeing firsthand, everyday, the dynamic changes that are helping us achieve the dreams we embarked on back in 1984.

Now, we need each and every one of you more than ever. We need volunteers at the museum; we need volunteers in your area, maybe in your very town! As the FRRS, the museum and the WPRRHS continue to spread its wings and expand into new ventures and activities, we're going to need your physical and financial support more than ever. Please make plans now to spend some time at the museum this year.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

## October 2005 Board Meeting Motions and Actions Summary

### Motions Passed

1. Consent Motions - Motion 05-10-01

. Minutes - Approval of the minutes of the regular meeting held Sept. 10, 2005.

. Financial Reports - Current Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet.

2. Motions

#### **Motion 05-10-02**

Donation of Metal Break from Stockton Shops  
Proceed with acquisition of Metal Break from UP Stockton Shops pending determination of movement cost. Motion made by Director Vicknair, seconded by Director Holmes. All Directors present in favor - Motion carried.

#### **Motion 05-10-03**

Use of WP 707 and 2001

Restriction of use of WP 707 and WP 2001 for mainline service, Railroad Days and Railfan Day only, and other special events as determined by FRRS President, and with an Operational Report to all effected departments outlining why this decision has been made. Motion made by Director Holmes, seconded by Director Vicknair. All Directors present in favor - Motion carried.

### Actions and Notices

- Board gave direction to pursue a trade for Central Calif. Traction caboose 24.
- WP 165 is being loaded at the Nilcs Canyon Railway shops.
- Decoration for Santa Trains has begun and volunteers are needed.
- Director Vicknair thanked Jay Sarno for his work regarding mobility compliance on the Silver Debris. He also thanked Clyde Lippincott, John Walker, Doug Morgan, and Ed Powell for assisting Mr. Sarno.
- Director Habeck thanked Loren Ross and John Walker for keeping the yard running smoothly during his extended absence.
- Recent donations include a pledge of \$1,000 for window snow shields, concrete cement mixer from Roger Stabler, snow blower from Jim Haliwell (with conditions).

- President McClure appointed the following Ad Hoc Bylaws Committee: Jay Sarno (Chair), Director Cochran, President McClure, Director Vicknair.
- The November 2005 Meeting will be held at the Stockton ACE Depot, Saturday, Nov. 5, at 1:00 PM.

### **Closed Session**

The Board Adjourned to closed session at 5:45 pm and reconvened to open session at 6:12 pm. Director McClure reported the following out of closed session: The Board was given an update on ongoing legal issues; no action was taken. The Board was also given an update regarding an ongoing proprietary property issue; no action was taken. The Board discussed a potential contract issue; consensus direction was given, no reportable action was taken.

## **November 2005 Board Meeting Motions and Actions Summary**

### **Motions Passed**

1. Consent Motions - Motion 05-11-02
  - . Minutes - Approval of the minutes of the regular meeting held October 1, 2005.
  - . Financial Reports - Current Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet.

Minutes removed by motion.

### 2. Motions

#### **Motion 05-11-03**

Trade for Central California Traction caboose 24 Agreement to pursue trade offering SP 4107 for CCT 24 pending determination of repair and transport cost. Motion made by Director Vicknair, seconded by Director McClure. All Directors present in favor - Motion carried.

#### **Motion 05-11-04**

Acquisition of Storage Pallets  
Authorization to purchase 38 pallet racks at a cost of \$755 (\$40 each x 38 bins (\$1,520 total) less \$15 donation per bins (\$570 total) less Combo RAL valued at \$195) and with funding to be provided from budgetary line item 70035 - Facilities, Supplies. Motion made by Director Vicknair, seconded by Director Stiles. All Directors present in favor - Motion carried.

### **Actions and Notices**

- Director Stiles reported that the Metal Break offered to the FRRS for donation is actually a 100-ton hydraulic vertical press.
- Director Stiles, in his capacity as CMO, and Asst. CMO Rick Edwards, provided a very detailed summary report regarding maintenance and inspection of locomotives due in part to consensus direction at the previous meeting.
- President McClure informed all that not only are these reports important for the Mechanical Department to properly maintain the equipment, but will be critical if we have an incident involving this equipment.
- President McClure reported that the facility is looking good and thanked everyone for their hard working in making it that way.
- Director Vicknair has been appointed as Membership Chairman as well as Publications Manager and Fire Marshall.
- Director Vicknair recognized Don Borden, Charlie Spikes and John Walker for their work on the deck ramp. He also thanked Jay Sarno, Doug Morgan, Ed Powell, Greg Elems, John Walker, Kerry Cochran, Bill Parker, Tom Carter, James Mason, Paul Hollings, Mary Ann Vicknair, and Greg Elems for their work on the Volunteer Support Cars.
- President McClure advised that there is a great deal of serious work that needs to be done to the balloon, as well as switches and ties in the yard, before operations can begin this year.
- Director McClure asked that each Board member and officer of the FRRS pledge \$100 to the coming fundraiser to show support to the membership. This pledge challenge was agreed to and Director McClure thanked the Board for their support.
- Member Thom Anderson reported that planning for the 2006 Convention is on schedule and where it should be for this point in the process. Convention will be in Chico, CA.
- Member Rick Carter, former WP employee, indicated he is impressed with the communication he sees between Board members as well as the direction he sees the organization is going.

### **Closed Session**

Meeting adjourned to closed session at 4:58 pm and reconvened at 5:46 pm

Director McClure reported the following out of closed session: The Board received a report

regarding an ongoing legal issue; no action was taken. The Board also received reports regarding several proprietary equipment issues; consensus direction was given, no reportable action was taken.

## Upcoming Events

May 6-7	Crew Training
May 20	Railfan Photographer Day
June 3	Annual Membership Meeting
June 10-11	Facilities Work Weekend
June 17-18	Zephyr Project Work Weekend
July 7-9	Dunsmuir Railroad Days

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*Any member in good standing may request a complete copy of the transcript of board meetings from the Society. There is a nominal charge for each copy which covers postage and administrative costs. Full minutes are posted on the FRRSlist hosted by Yahoo Groups.*

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## Western Pacific and Subsidiary Locomotives at the Western Pacific Railroad Museum

	type	power	built	b/n	notes
Western Pacific 165	Alco 0-6-0	34,000 TE	1919	58787	ex-United Verde Copper Company one of 5 surviving Western Pacific steam locomotives - acquired by FRRS
Western Pacific 501	EMC SW-1	600 hp	8-1939	906	also served as Sacramento Northern 401 WP's first diesel locomotive - donated by Corn Products Corporation
Western Pacific 504	Alco S-1	660 hp	4-1942	69685	also served as Sacramento Northern 405 first Alco diesel-electric purchased by WP - donated by Sierra Pacific Industries
Western Pacific 506	Alco S-1	660 hp	4-1942	69687	Stockton Terminal & Eastern 506 donated by Stockton Terminal & Eastern Ry.
Western Pacific 563	Alco S-4	1000 hp	6-1951	78777	also served as Central California Traction 50 one of 2 S-4s built for WP, one of 6 Alco switchers built with M.U. for local service purchased from Foster Farms by Norm Holmes and John Ryczkowski
Western Pacific 608	EMC NW-2	1200 hp	5-1940	1000	built as Union Pacific DS-1001 Union Pacific's second diesel switcher - donated by Union Pacific
Western Pacific 705	EMD GP7	1500 hp	10-1952	17029	purchased by FRRS members
Western Pacific 707	EMD GP7	1500 hp	10-1952	17031	regularly stationed in Portola in the late 1970's-early 1980's, often pulled B&L Local - donated by UP
Western Pacific 708	EMD GP7	1500 hp	10-1952	17056	donated by Union Pacific
Sac. Northern 712	EMD GP7	1500 hp	3-1953	18168	built as Western Pacific 712 received from Bay Area Electric Railway Association
Western Pacific 725	EMD GP9	1750 hp	9-1955	20696	purchased by FRRS
Western Pacific 731	EMD GP9	1750 hp	9-1955	20754	purchased by FRRS
Western Pacific 805-A	EMD FP-7	1500 hp	1-1950	9004	last existing WP California Zephyr locomotive purchased by FRRS and FRRS members John Ryczkowski, Larry Hanlon, and Steve Habeck
Western Pacific 917-D	EMD F7A	1500 hp	1-1950	8971	one of WP's "Fab Four" F-units received from Bay Area Electric Railway Association
Western Pacific 921-D	EMD F7A	1500 hp	1-1950	8979	one of WP's "Fab Four" F-units donated by Union Pacific
Western Pacific 2001	EMD GP20	2000 hp	11-1959	25623	first GP20 built, EMD's first production turbocharged four axle loco - donated by Union Pacific
Western Pacific 3051	GE U30B	3000hp	9-1967	36451	built as WP 751 first GE loco purchased by WP proper (as opposed to subsidiaries) - donated by Union Pacific

## - FRRS Membership -

### **Yearly Dues**

Associate \$20.00  
 Active \$40.00  
 Family \$60.00  
 Sustaining \$100.00

### **Single Life Membership**

Birth-17 years of age \$1200.00  
 Age 18-39 \$900.00  
 Age 40-61 \$600.00  
 Age 62 and above \$300.00

### **Family Life Membership**

Birth-17 years of age \$1800.00  
 Age 18-39 \$1350.00  
 Age 40-61 \$900.00  
 Age 62 and above \$450.00

These are the dues for the duration of one year, with Life and Family Life being a one-time payment.  
 Five year payment plans are available for life memberships.

**Associate** memberships do not have a vote, receive The Train Sheet but not the Headlight and are for one person only.  
**Active** memberships receive both The Train Sheet and the Headlight, have voting rights and are for one person only.  
**Family** memberships receive both The Train Sheet and the Headlight, have one vote and include all members of ones immediate family.  
**Sustaining** memberships receive both The Train Sheet and Headlight, maximum of two persons with one vote each.  
**Life** memberships receive both The Train Sheet and Headlight, have voting rights and are for one person only for life.  
**Family Life** memberships receive both The Train Sheet and the Headlight, are for a maximum of two people and have two votes (one per member) for life.

Send all applications, renewals and address changes to:

Feather River Rail Society - Membership Dept. - P.O. Box 608 - Portola, CA 96122-0608

Address changes may also be sent to [membership@wplives.org](mailto:membership@wplives.org)



### **From the Archives**

Western Pacific's first roadswitcher, GP7 701, waits for an assignment at the Williams Street Yard in San Jose. Once a busy feeder for the WP, the line has become a shadow of its former self since the merger. Recently, through service on the branch ended and most of it has been abandoned and taken up. Only the Milpitas Yard and a few miles of line running south are still in service, along with two isolated spurs in San Jose, now connected to ex-SP lines.

- photo by Jim Bruce, June 26, 1976

### **Mission Statement**

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"The Feather River Rail Society is dedicated to the preservation, interpretation and education of the public, as to the history and people of the Western Pacific Railroad."

### **Mission Goals**

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To preserve and interpret the history of the WP, the "Willing People" as a vital link in the development of the rail industry on the West Coast, including the steam and diesel evolution, WP's influence in the passenger tourism industry, the impact of freight competition between neighboring railroads. WP's influence in the lumber, mining and agriculture industry from Plumas County throughout California, Nevada and Utah.



*WP 484 sparkles under nighttime lights - photo by Eugene John Vicknair*

## **The Train Sheet**

Feather River Rail Society

P.O. Box 608

Portola, CA 96122-0608

Change Service Requested