

turntable, many small buildings (shacks) throughout the facility plus miscellaneous remnants of the days of steam. We then discovered the WP 94 and General Bowker steam engines in the roundhouse together with several diesel switchers. That was a great visit.

On another visit to the Oakland Yard that year we had to wait for a freight drag to clear the entrance. I walked up to talk to the driver of the pick-up ahead of us. He asked where I was going and I replied to take pictures. He informed me that he was the Roundhouse Foreman and if we would be at the roundhouse at 8:30 he would take us for a ride around the yard in the Zephyr units when he would make up the train. Yes, we were at the roundhouse before 8:30 and enjoyed another pleasant surprise, courtesy of another WP's WILLING PEOPLE.

During a visit to the Oakland Yard in September 1975, I was fortunate to also photograph WP caboose 683 which was recently stenciled "RETIRED". (The 683 was one of 38 WP box car series 15001-16000 that had been converted into cabooses in 1942).

I promptly went to the Yard Office and asked for one of its Heralds. I was told they would have it for me the next day. Since then, it has been prominently displayed on the door to the entrance to my model railroad.

I next began one-day trips to other nearby location along the WP. right-of-way between Niles (Now Fremont) and Altamont. Although they were easy to get to, it required a lot of patience waiting for hours for only a photo of two of anything coming from either direction.

I was aware I had two strikes against me from the beginning. First, WP did not operate on schedules, and second, I could not afford to buy a Bear-Cat Scanner which would enable me to listen for train movements in my area.

On a good day at Altamont it was always difficult waiting for the SJT, CZ No. 18, GGM, or a work train because there was no shade or even a hard rock to sit on – but the photos taken that day were worth the effort.

I found Altamont to be a favorite location among rail fans because if I was already waiting, it soon became obvious that something was about to happen whenever a group would suddenly arrive with all their cameras and recording equipment. (I knew I was in good company when Ted Benson showed up).

Vacations or holiday week-ends would usually find me anywhere from Oroville to Portola chasing the "Orange and Silver". But that's another story.

General Superintendents Report

—Kerry Cochran
General Superintendent

By the time you read this, Annual Crew Training will be completed and the crews will be ready to start the 2017 operating season.

Several members braved the winter weather to attend the first crew training session with 3 to 8" of snow and ice in some locations. The snow hampered the crew training, as we had an 8 ½ hour power outage at the time of the training and forced us to perform all the training without a computer and projector. Paul Finnegan and Rick Gruninger handled most of the training this year as I needed to attend the monthly Board of Directors meeting.

There are so many volunteers that help around the museum all the time and I would be remiss if I did not say thank you to all of you. Your help is needed to keep the place running and helping our visitors.

Keep Alert, Be Safe.

Mechanical Department

Look for Bil Jackson's, CMO report. The mechanical department has been working very hard to get our equipment read for RAL and Operations this year.

Steam Department

The steam crew has been very busy working on the WP165, please visit the WPRR steam blog, <http://wprsteam.blogspot.com/2017/04/springtime-in-portola.htm>

See the latest news on the WP165

Facilities Department

Charlie Spikes has been busy getting the facilities ready for us for the 2017 season and have been busy making repairs and general maintenance on our facilities so we can get to work this yard.

Museum Store

I have ask Leisa Wesch is she would take over the operation of the Museum Store last month and she accepted my invitation.

Leisa has been working with several other volunteers to get the museum store rearranged, cleaned up and get inventoried so that we have products to sell to the general public. Leisa has been working with Eugene Vicknair on the new POS (Point of Sale) system so that we can be ready for the season.

Historical/Archive Department Report

In my last report, I described the number of box cars that had Historical/Archive materials stored within them.

We have started to inventory each of the cars to determine what materials are in each and start the process of recording all the donations. This will not be a fast project as it will take time to go through each box, bin, paper bag, or other assorted items that have been donated to us.

One of the new things that you will find on the Historical/Archive WEB pages is, the FRRS History page, where several old FRRS (Portola Railroad Museum) WPRM documents will be available for viewing. This look back into the FRRS's history (by document) should give everyone a look back into the days when we started, thru our tenth year anniversary right in

to, today.

One of the things I hope everyone will find an interest in, is the Grand Opening 1985 flier announcing the opening of the museum and train rides.

The Circle the Wagons, Tenth year anniversary program

And the first printed Rules Book

I hope that you all will take a look and give us feedback on this concept.

If you come across and Historical/Archive, Donated materials, Please contact one of the staff of the Historical/Archive Department and let them know that the materials have been received and where it is located so that it can be moved to proper storage.

Director Frank Brehm has been lending a hand with all the documents needed to make sure that we have operating policies and procedures in place to account for the Arthur Walter Keddie Railroad library.

Working Group Meetings

In the background during the non-operating season, there is some hard work going on for not only the operating department, but the museum also.

Paul Finnegan, Kenneth Finnegan, Rick Gruninger and Kerry Cochran, have been working on various Operating Department procedures for next year's training classes and adding more content to the training for our volunteers.

During these meeting, there are other thing that have been brought up that concern the overall operation of the museum and the volunteers. These items relate to Safety, Volunteer records, Volunteer Training, RAL Operations and several other issues.

During these discussion there will be some new additions to the several of the museum documents and we will be adding a new volunteer's manual. The volunteer's manual will

be a living document that will give all of our volunteer's written guidance on what the museum expects from them, general information, emergency forms (so if there is an emergency with a volunteer, we know who to contact) organization chart and information on the facilities.

This manual is in draft form right now and we hope to have it published sometime during the year.

As always, there are so many volunteers that help around the museum all the time and I would be remiss if I did not say thank you to all of you. I may have missed some specifically by name, however all of your help is greatly appreciated.

Julia Rigutto Pagan visit

–Patty Clawson, Eugene Vicknair, Paul Finnegan

On Saturday, July 8th the museum had a special visit from Julia Rigutto Pagan. It was a step back in time for her as she made her way toward the "Charles O. Sweetwood" Red Cross Blood Donation Car at the Western Pacific Railroad Museum in Portola, California. Accompanied by her loving family each step, Pagan approached the blood car wide-eyed as memories came flooding back.

As one of four original nurses employed by the American Red Cross in January of 1951, Pagan, now just shy of her 96th birthday, was honored for her years of service on the "Charles O Sweetwood", a railroad passenger car used by the Red Cross and Western Pacific Railroad to collect blood in support of the Korean War.

Credited with saving thousands of lives, the "Sweetwood" was the first of its kind used to collect and store blood along a route that took it to small towns and big cities. Traveling over 28,488 miles, over 11 railroads in 4 states, and running as far east as Pueblo, Colorado, this blood car achieved the collection of over 25,000 pints of blood. It is this significant piece of American Red Cross history that Pagan so humbly attributes her success.

With an artfully orchestrated surprise, Pagan was honored by her family, directors of the Western Pacific Railroad Museum, Bill Sweetwood (nephew of Charles Owen Sweetwood, a Korean War medic for whom the blood car was named after he was killed in action), representatives from the American Red Cross, and a representative from Congressman Doug LaMalfa's office for her service during this unique blood collection operation.

The American Red Cross presented Pagan with a Certificate of Recognition for her service, and Shane Starr, representing Congressman Doug LaMalfa, was also there to present her with a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition.

When asked about her years of service, Pagan exclaimed she had nothing but good memories and always felt the work was important. "It was a pleasant time when so many were happy giving," said Pagan.

September 2017 marks the "Sweetwood" railroad car's 100th birthday, and nearly 64 years since it ended its blood collection service. Plans to celebrate this significant milestone are in process with the hopes of a guest appearance by Julia Rigutto Pagan, members of the Sweetwood family, and the American Red Cross.



Eugene Vicknair, holding up a photograph of Julia Rigutto Pagan, one of the original four nurses of the WP 106. Julia today and Charles O. Sweetwood's nephew Bill Sweetwood at the same spot as the original photograph.

–Michael Clawson Photo.