

Historic Railroad Photography Seminar at the WPRM

- Greg Elems

November 6th turned out to be a cold and stormy day. Mark Vollmer and I had hoped for a better turnout, but with the people who attended we had a good class. We figured out what works and what to repeat and not repeat next spring when we offer another photography class.

We started at 10 am in the Museum Store. Mark opened up the class with his assignment plan and a slide show. In it were examples of what he hoped to teach and show the possibilities. I gave a brief history of the museum and some safety pointers for the photographers to follow. Having done that we closed the classroom instruction and went out into the shop. We stopped for lunch and at 3 pm we had everyone meet up in the shop. Mark started the afternoon field shoot with an exercise, or idea for taking pictures. This assignment kept everyone focused. We would then meet back in the shop 15 to 20 minutes later and share the favorite picture each student had taken. Mark would critique the picture and the rest would comment about them. An excellent learning experience and a really personal one on one teaching experience.

Mark's course content covered many things. Starting with exposure, shutter speed, depth of field, composition and tips for different effects. After the first assignment a second assignment was given and so on till the class had a chance to experiment with Mark's instructions from the class room. Moving about the museum, finding subjects to photograph and use the knowledge from Mark's class kept everyone busy.

At the end of the day and field shoot, David Elems moved the QRR 1100 from the shop area to the front pedestrian walk by the parking lot. This gave the class a chance to set up their tripods and shoot long exposure images of the engine moving. Sort of a bonus that Mark hadn't covered in class.

The class will be repeated in May 2022. Should you be interested in taking it, we'll be posting details after January 1st. It will be run through Action Camera of Reno. Craig Moore will be in charge of the class and sign up. Craig is hoping to have a couple of models to pose for portraiture which will add to what Mark will be covering in class. Mark Vollmer will do his slide/power point show for the class instruction. Craig and Mark will be out and about giving tips and encouragement during the evening field shoot. We'll have a few museum members around to act as docents and keep everyone safe.

Group portrait at the end of the day.

L-R Jana Dunn, Tanya Silva, Janet McCormack, Mark Vollmer, Barry Buchholtz and Albert Fox. Greg Elems on the Sweetwood platform.

- Photo by David Elems

