

standing watches in the engine room. Due to her narrow hull, *Hercules* presented cramped quarters for those who served on her. Her main deck was often a soggy place: since the *Hercules* rode low in the water, the deck was often awash from ocean waves.

Hercules spent her ocean-going career towing barges, sailing ships and log rafts up and down the Pacific coast. Since the prevailing winds made sailing difficult and required a round-about course to stay with the wind, sailing vessels were typically towed on their northbound voyages beyond San Francisco. In 1916, the *Hercules* towed future museum-mate the *C. A. Thayer* to Port Townsend, Washington. Often, the tug towed huge rafts of cut log, often holding millions of board feet of prime Washington and Oregon timber bound for mills in central and southern California. Bulk cargo was hauled in barges among the west coast ports and the *Hercules* even made trips to Hawaii as part of her runs. At least once she ventured to Panama, towing a huge caisson (a steel built structure used for closing the entrance of canal locks) to be used in the Panama Canal, then under construction. A small bit of irony considering the Canal would help bankrupt future owner Western Pacific.

Ocean tug life was harsh and frequently busy, but gaining a berth aboard a ship like the *Hercules* was typically considered a good career. Tug crews were kept supplied with good food and were often well paid, particularly the senior crew and captain. The skill and experience needed to manage a tug and heavy tow on the open sea were highly respected. Shallow sand bars and narrow bay entrances challenged the crews and one either learned their craft well or ended up unemployed, or worse, wrecked on the shores.

“Out through the Golden Gate, the most beautiful harbor in the world. North, towing this barkentine to Port Washington in Canada. Thence south, empty, to Astoria where we picked up six million feet of timber in a raft to tow south to San Diego. Long, slow, lazy days, making no more than three knots. Even the patent log [a device trailed in the water to measure speed] would not work. We rigged a fishing line on it and caught beautiful king salmon on the way.”

— Albert J. Hody, fireman, describing life aboard *Hercules* in 1919. Excerpted from an oral history in the San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park collection. From SFM On-Line.

After a little more than 15 years in ocean service, *Hercules* left the Red Stack fleet in the early 1920's and was sold to the Moore Dry Dock Company. Western Pacific purchased her from Moore in 1924 and typically paired her with barge 1, running freight cars among the rail docks WP interchanged with. At the height of railroad marine operations on the bay, WP craft called at the State Belt Railway pier on Fisherman's Wharf, Northwestern Pacific's dock at Tiburon, Santa Fe docks in Richmond and San Francisco, and the WP's own slips in SF and Oakland. WP service was quite a contrast to her ocean days, with its short transits and frequent dockings. For over 35 years, the *Hercules* would be a regular sight on the bay, bridging the gap among the bay area's railroads.

Starting in 1955, the WP sought to replace both *Hercules* and *Humaconna* and the three barges. The studies undertaken eventually led to the design and construction of the *Las Plumas*, a self-propelled car ferry and the last word in SF Bay marine rail-

roading. After *Las Plumas* began regular service on July 29, 1957, the *Humaconna* was decommissioned and the *Hercules* was placed on stand-by service with barge 3. In September, 1961, the *Hercules* was also retired. In early 1962, she was sold to Thomas & Brown Shipbuilders, Inc.

The venerable tug seemed destined to fall to the scrapper's torch until the California State Park Foundation purchased her in 1975 for the San Francisco Maritime State Historic Park, located at the Hyde Street Pier in San Francisco. Restoration began in 1977 under the auspices of the National Park Service. In 1986, *Hercules* was awarded designation as a National Historic Landmark and was later documented as part of the Historic American Engineering Record's Maritime Project.

Several dedicated crews of volunteers worked on her during the 1980's and 1990's, returning the ship to a fully operational and sea-worthy condition. Today, she is fully operational and occasionally operates on the bay with her trained, volunteer crew. Aside from the heavily modified and demotored *Las Plumas*, the *Hercules* is the sole survivor of the marine fleet that once served the WP.

the *Hercules*

Overall Length..	151 ft
Beam..	26 ft
Draft..	18 ft aft, 10 ft forward
Gross Tonnage..	409 US Tons
Motive Power..	3 cylinder, triple expansion
Cylinders..	17", 24", and 41" with 30" stroke
Horsepower..	125psi/770hp at 90 RPM (originally 180psi/1000hp)
Boiler..	Scotch Marine Firetube
Boiler Specs..	16' diameter, 11'9" length
Furnaces..	Four, oil-burning type
Fuel..	Bunker C oil
Built..	1907, Camden, New Jersey
Service..	1907-1924: Shipowners' and Merchants' Tugboat Company "Red Stack fleet" 1942-1961: Western Pacific Railroad 1962-1975: stored out of service 1975-current: San Francisco Maritime State Park

Archives/Library Report

By John Walker

Work on the Arthur Walter Keddie Railroad Library archives continues this summer with generous donations coming in regularly. Several folks responded to my last report with specific donations. In fact, there is a huge pile (some 30-40 boxes) of new donations to work into the collection. Doug Peterson of Lodi donated several boxes of magazines, newsletters and annual reports, which helped to fill some specific holes in our collection. Harold Seyforth's family (Harold worked as an engineer on the WP during the 1940's and early 1950's) donated several boxes of books, paintings and a unique collection of postage stamps which all feature trains and railroad themes. In memory of her husband

Larry, Ramona Mosier of Yuba City has donated several books, magazines and pictures from her late husbands collection. Former Director Pat Brimmer made arrangements with Mr. Oscar Olson of Salt Lake City to get us digital color copies of Mr. Olson's father's 1916 trip passes and early WP employment records. These are very unique documents, which many of us have never seen before. David Dewey learned of two Feather River Railway cross bucks (which surfaced from Lake Oroville many years ago) stored in a garage in Oroville. David made the arrangements for us to purchase both cross bucks through a private donation and these were transported up to the museum by yours truly and Robert Forren of Gridley (who also donated an old WP shovel to us). Charles Dean Conrad, who worked for the WP between 1967 and 1973 as the railroads Training Coordinator and Personal Officer donated several old WP timetables and Official Guides from his collection. After working in Pennsylvania and Saudi Arabia, Mr. Conrad has resided in Indonesia for some 19 years now and even paid for the shipping of his donation to the United States.

Director Kerry Cochran has been helping to sort through a lot of Hap Manitt's collection and has discovered several unique items, including an old WP recipe book and many old papers and photographs. Director Frank Brehm and I have been working on acquiring several items. Hopefully, we will soon have a complete collection of WP annual reports and a complete set of all of the WP's California Zephyr advertising proofs. Another member has promised some WP station signs from the Highline, and another has sent us some metal mile markers from the old Second Sub. And thanks to Anthony (whose business card I misplaced, sorry Anthony) in Sacramento for the donation of a sizable collection of CTC Board and Pacific Rail News magazines.

While sorting through some things earlier this year, I found a box of really neat things donated by K.W. Bowers of Fallon Nevada. I don't know when these California Zephyr, annual reports, photos and timetables were donated but we wanted to thank him also. Many items in the archives have since lost the little notes, which identify the donor. If you've donated something in the past and would like an acknowledgement, please send me a note in care of the museum. And on top of all of this, we have also received some hand lanterns and other books, which were dropped off at the museum this spring. THANKS to everyone for your contribution to our continued success!

Museum Managers Report

By John Walker

It is with a great sense of enthusiasm and admittedly, some trepidation, that I take on the task of becoming the museum's first, paid, full time manager.

I'm excited because I believe this is another step forward in the development of our organization and museum. In just twenty years, the FRRS has done more, with less, and in a shorter period of time, than any other railroad museum in the United States. We have a great collection, a unique facility, fantastic volunteers and a strong and supportive membership. We have done some incredible things over the last twenty years. And we did this without any State or Federal money. We did it with hard work, our own fundraising, being innovative and never being afraid to take

a chance or listening to the doomsayers who said we couldn't do it. In retrospect, it is rather amazing that we have come this far with just volunteers and occasional part time employees.

And after twenty years, I'm still excited about the Portola Railroad Museum! I still believe that we are a great diamond in the rough. And with just the right amount of polish, in just the right places, our railroad museum and the FRRS are going to shine even brighter.

But, I also realize that in taking on this job, I've got some big shoes to fill. The work of Hap Manitt, Norman and Barbara Holmes, Chris Skow, Gordon Wolleson, Doug Morgan, Ken Iverson, Lolli Bryan, Ken Roller and others kept the museum going during it's early development. Recently, Jan Bratwieser, The entire McClure family, Steve Habeck and others have done an incredible job of holding it together while also advancing it forward.

After careful consideration of the task ahead, I've met with all of the Directors and most of the department heads and found them very supportive and eager to assist in making this new program work. Their unanimous vote of confidence is encouraging and most reassuring.

The Board of Directors has given me specific problems and issues to address. This in itself will be a challenge.

I will work each day to improve gift shop sales, take over the scheduling of RAL's, ensure the security of our property and equipment, improve and expedite communications, maintain accurate records while maintaining a sense of order around the museum each day.

In addition, I have some very important goals of my own. I'll be volunteering more time on the archives, displays and restoration projects. But, this organization and this museum is not about one person or one set of ideas. This is your organization and your museum. So, I welcome your help and your support. And I thank you for the opportunity.

News Bits

We are glad to hear that member, and former Director Clyde Lippencott of Carson City is making a great recovery from Back and Hip surgery. Clyde says he is looking forward to getting back up to the museum soon.

It was also great to see Member Jim Cooper of Reno visiting the museum in early June. Jim is recovering from Carpal Tunnel Surgery in both wrists (later, I was wondering how he managed to drive up to the museum?).

A special thank you to Bob and Virginia McBratney of The Western Depot model train store in Yuba City for the donation of 40 gallons of interior house paint and nine brand new, high intensity, out door security lights to the museum earlier this year. Bob and "Ginny" have been very supportive of the museum over the last twenty years. They have never asked for recognition, but have donated lots of surplus items and helped the museum's gift shop numerous times over the years with consignment items and special offers to help increase our sales program.

It was good to see member Andy Petersen from Portland visiting the museum June 22nd. Andy is a great supporter of the museum and proved this again with a generous \$200.00 cash donation. Thanks Andy.