



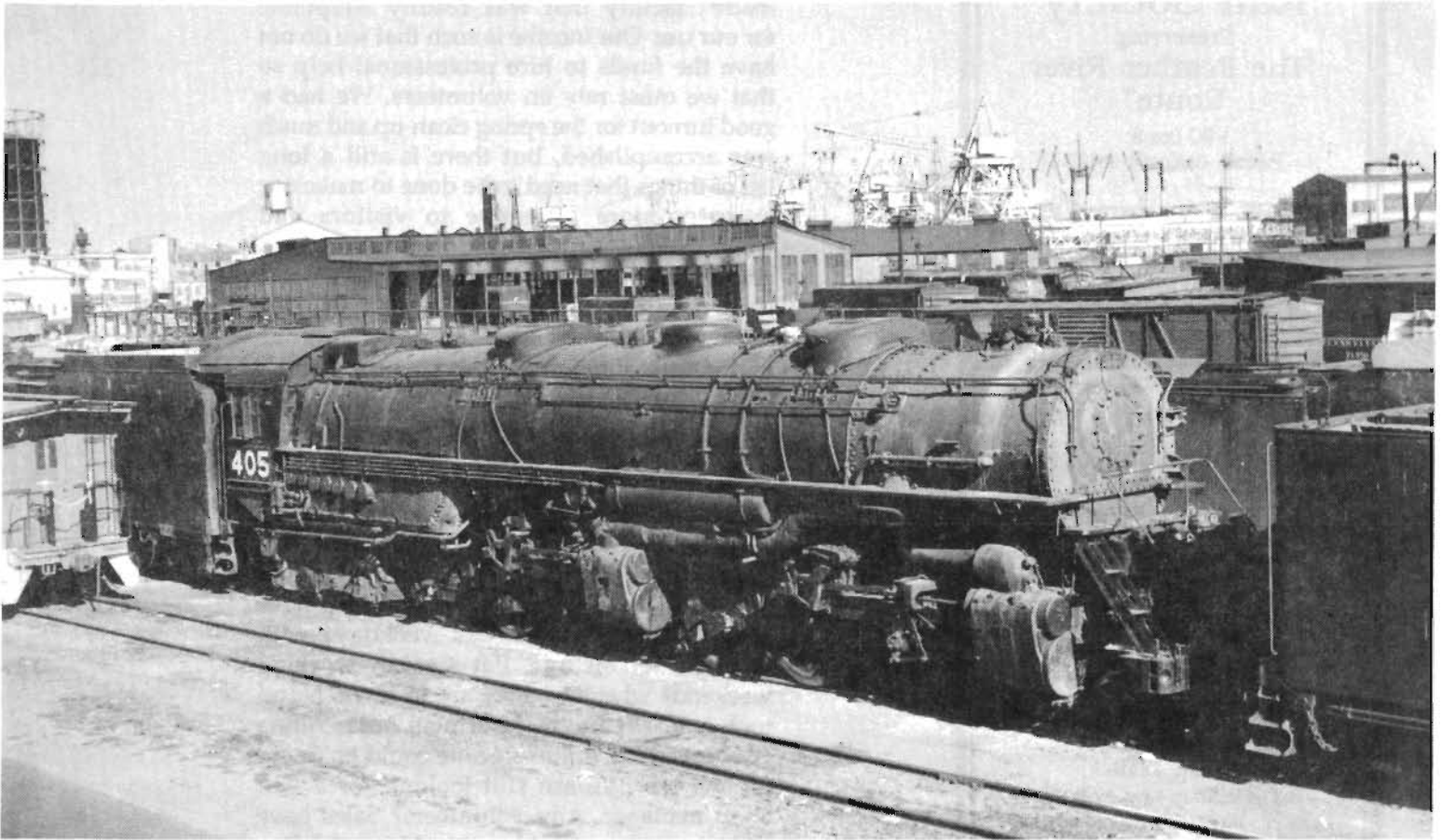
Preserving "The Feather River Route"

The Train Sheet

May - June, 1989

Issue No. 37

\$1.50



From The Past: Western Pacific Challenger No. 405 waits on its track to meet the scrapper's torch at Oakland yard on July 6, 1952. Seven 4-6-4's were bought from Alco in 1938 for fast freight service between Elko, Nevada and Salt Lake City, Utah. They occasionally ran between Elko and Winnemucca, Nevada. As they were coal burners, they were restricted to these districts where coal facilities were maintained. In 1949, the 402 was sent to the Chicago Railroad Fair, but was never placed on display. Enroute it was weighed on a Burlington scale, which showed it to be heavier than thought. Since engineers and firemen are paid by weight on drivers, WP had to spend a considerable sum in back pay for enginemen who worked on these machines. Note the fresh silver and orange paint scheme on caboose 644.

FRRS

Feather River Rail Society

Preserving
"The Feather River
Route"

PO Box 8
Portola, California 96122

The FRRS, a tax exempt public benefit California corporation, is the historical society for the *Western Pacific Railroad* and operates the *Portola Railroad Museum* in Portola, California. The FRRS is not associated with or supported by the *Western Pacific Railroad*.

FRRS Tax id number is 68-0002774

Board of Directors

Bruce Cooper
Norman Holmes
Jim Ley
Wayne Monger
Hank Stiles
Gordon Wollesen

Train Sheet Editor

Dave Waters

Membership

Associate \$ 15.00
Active \$ 25.00
Family \$ 30.00
Life \$300.00

Dues are paid for 12 months from time of receipt. All memberships have one vote, except Associate.

President's Desk

Rome wasn't built in a day, neither is the Portola Railroad Museum going to have everything ready and finished in a short time. In the first five years of our existence, we have progressed further than some others who have been in operation for 25 or more years. We were fortunate to have a "ready made" facility that was readily adaptable for our use. Our income is such that we do not have the funds to hire professional help so that we must rely on volunteers. We had a good turnout for the spring clean-up and much was accomplished, but there is still a long list of things that need to be done to make our museum more attractive to visitors and workers. Many small jobs do not have a high priority, but would just be nice to have done, like painting the garbage barrels, for instance. These jobs can be done by someone with a little time on a weekday or weekend. Come on up, all are welcome.

Gift Shop

The Gift Shop has been rearranged and has a better, more 'open' look. Lou Ann Milward spearheaded the effort, with Norm and Hap doing the heavy work. Norm and Hap have been handling sales most weekdays with Julie Anderson and Pat Cousin working weekends whenever they are in town. Norm took over the buying and mail order filling last November until someone could be found for the job. We are still looking for a Gift Shop manager. Any volunteers? Sales have picked up considerably since Memorial Day and a number of new items added.

Board of Directors Election

Of the 320 ballots mailed to eligible voting members, 124 were returned. Reelected to two year terms were: Bruce Cooper, Norm Holmes and Wayne Monger. Brian Challendar was elected to a one year term. The ballots were counted at our annual membership meeting.

Work Weekend

Another great Work Weekend has come and gone. The museum was spruced up and organized for the upcoming busy season. Work Weekends are traditionally utilized to clean the museum and unpack the enginehouse from its winter storage state. This time was no exception. Besides cleaning, much material was sorted and stored in an organized manner. The tool room was reorganized and several wooden filing cabinets were set up to properly organize the tools and parts in the room. Vic Neves performed this work. The cabinets and shelved are labeled and set up so as to allow working members to easily locate the required items. Please, when you use tools, return them to their proper storage place.

Some maintenance was performed on the locomotives, the largest of which was the turbocharger on UP GP-30 849. While the problem wasn't fixed completely, a bolt was found to be loose inside which was scraping and that was removed. 'Diesel' Dave McClain and Larry Hanlon performed the removal and teardown, assisted by Jim Ley at the controls of the Little Giant crane and another person wearing an EMD T-shirt (who are you?). Diesel Dave, Larry, Steve Milward and Dave Waters re-assembled the turbocharger and placed it back into the 849, again with Jim operating the crane. Jim Ley also replaced the cables in the crane, using cables obtained from State Surplus. GP-9 No. 707 received some miscellaneous maintenance, including some water pipe repairs, a new headlight switch and door latch on the engineer's side. Erv Hartung did more work on No. 80 locomotive and spent both days of the weekend buried inside the carbody.

Six trees were planted at the site of the new picnic area overlooking the balloon track. Within a few years these trees should provide some nice shade in addition to the stand of pine trees there. There is now one picnic table with more to come in the future. There are several spots levelled to provide a spot for members to camp while at the museum.

Enginehouse cleaning was performed by Jim Gidley, Stan Hedlund and Richard Canino. Jim and Betty Boynton of the Feather River Shortline spruced up the area around Number 8 also. Brian Challendar and Gary Griffen (who came all the way from San Juan Capistrano!) worked on the roof for our new oil house. Tom Moore did more work on the electrical wiring in the shop and was assisted by his son. Dave and Julie Anderson did some work on GP-7 No. 707, working on the headlight and air brake cylinder. Steve Habeck cleaned locomotive cabs & cabooses and put labeled trash buckets in them also. Doug Jensen continued his hard work on GP-20 No. 2001 and, along with Annie Worth, cooked meals which were again served in our dining car. Other general assistance was provided by Mark French, Kent Stephens, Carl Maniscalco, Dean Hill, Ken Roller, Hap Manit, Norman Holmes, Barbara Holmes and Hank Stiles.

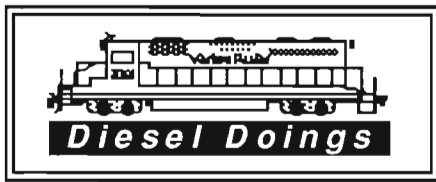
If we've missed mentioning you, it's because we didn't take good enough notes, not because we didn't appreciate the work done by all our hard working volunteers.

Special Event

Going on at the same time as our work weekend, students from Portola High School volunteered to be 'victims' in a mock disaster exercise on the museum grounds. The setting was of a tank car explosion using our two tank cars (water) and nearby box cars. The students had 'injuries' such as burns, heart attacks and broken bones. Response was made through REACT with cooperation from Eastern Plumas Hospital. While we pray that nothing like this really happens, it is good to be prepared.



Preserving "The Feather River Route"



Diesel Doings

Steve Habeck and Steve Milward changed the leaking water pump on WP 608. Steve Habeck also replaced a leaking water drain valve on WP 707. Gordon Wollesen and Norm Holmes exchanged nine cracked batteries that were weak and froze during last winter's cold snap. 707, 849 and 2001 all suffered from the frozen battery syndrome. One set of eight batteries were sold for scrap and another set, made up from junk batteries on hand, were exchanged for a set of used batteries from scrapped SP diesels, thanks to LMC Metals. Norm's pickup again did the honors of hauling 3200 lbs of batteries back and forth. Our Alco S-1, to be WP 512, was running poorly due to dirty fuel. Some 150 gallons were drained and replaced with new fuel. The old fuel can be used as stove oil in the cabooses. The unit still does not run as well as we would like and the cause is still under investigation. Brian Challendar and Jim Ley drained, cleaned the crankcase and replaced the engine oil and filter on 512. The crankcase was remarkably clean, indicating a recent overhaul.

The rear engineer's door on 707 was replaced by door from a scrap SP GP-9. The rear door latch and window were broken so it was easier to replace the entire door. Outside of the gray paint, it looks much better thanks to Dave Anderson and Brian Challendar.

Erv Hartung adjusted valves and injectors, installed a new exhaust pipe and rain caps, installed new toggle switches and hooked up hour meters on No. 80, Erv's pet project.

Progress on preparing GP-20 No. 2001 for painting continues with Doug Jensen sanding most of the paint off the cab and hoods. Terry Decottignies, a Chico Miracle Method bathroom fixture restorer brought up two friends, Allen Hansen and Tom Watson on June 17th. The three of them worked all day sanding more of the nose section and before the day was over, had it primed. It will still need filler and more sanding, but it was a great day's work.

Hank Stiles has taken over the job of completing the overhaul of WP 501's brake system. New parts were ordered for the brake cylinders and brake valves. The cylinders were taken to a local shop and cleaned in a 'hot tank' to remove 50 years of gunk. Hal Shields painted the cylinder heads and Hank reinstalled the springs using a fork lift as a press (smart boy!). The job is now almost complete. Hank and Brian Challendar also have removed the exhaust manifold to replace leaking gaskets. The engine compartment will be steam cleaned and when all back together, prepared for paint. This unit will be 50 years old in August. We will have a celebration.

New Equipment

Recently we learned that WP caboose 484 was retired and awaiting disposition. This is one of the last series of cabooses (cabeese?) bought by the WP (481-486). They were built to SP specs, being an add-on order to a batch being built for SP by International Car Co. in 1980. Interestingly, WP 4-8-4's Nos. 481-486 were also part of an SP order! We were interested in acquiring the last WP caboose, 486, but it was damaged in a derailment and 484 was available so we contacted the UP for a donation. In due time the request was granted. The caboose was in storage in the Moccasin siding (near Keddie) since October 1988. On June 21 it was brought to Keddie and a work train later brought it to Portola. It will need some repair, mainly the interior, but is a very welcome addition to our museum. Vickie Krois originally informed us of the caboose and it was inspected by Vickie and Steve Habeck to determine its condition.

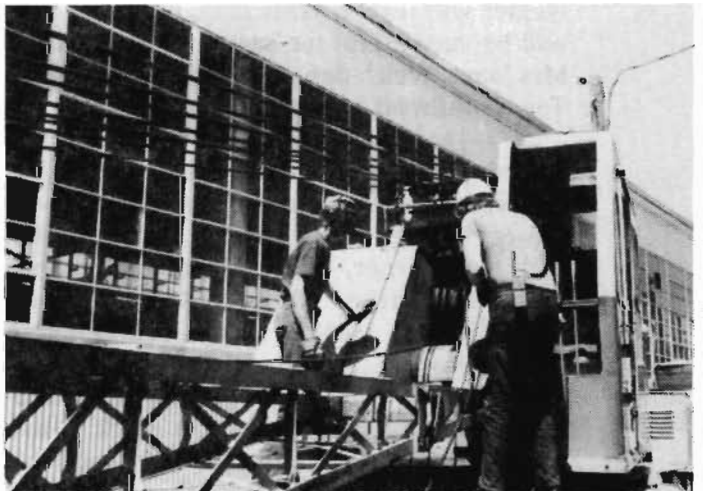
We have purchased a 28 foot low-bed trailer from State Surplus. The cost was very reasonable and the trailer will be very useful in moving the cars from Norm Holmes' property to the museum as well as hauling large locomotive parts, etc. We can hire a local trucker to haul the trailer when needed. Erv Hartung, a mechanic for a trucking company, has gone over the trailer and is making whatever repairs are necessary.

Opening Weekend

Despite cool winds and even a little snow, attendance was good during the opening weekend. Saturday's operations got off to a slow start, but as the day warmed up a bit, more visitors dropped in. Two engine sets were used, GP-9 No. 707 and F7 No. 921/GP-30 No. 849 performed opening day honors. The operating department sported new caps for members, available only to operating department volunteers. Engineers for the weekend were: Dave McClain, Jim Ley and student passenger engineer Bruce Cooper. Conductor duty was handled by Gary Cousin and Assistant Trainmaster Vic Neves. Fireman duties were performed by Bruce Cooper (on runs when passengers were in the cabs), Dale Wyant and ??????. Brakemen were Mark French, Fred James, Dave Waters and student brakeman Sam Burton. Gordon Wollesen also assisted with operations. Trainmaster Steve Habeck had to depart early to home near San Luis Obispo since his wife had baby number four, a girl. Congratulations!

Beyond his usual frantic pace around the engine house, Norman Holmes found time to grease the balloon track thereby endearing himself to the crews and passengers alike. After the winter, the flange squeal was LOUD!

Assistant General Manager Hank Stiles was out and about the property helping out with odd tasks and operations assistance. Thanks also to the snack bar crew, Barbara Holmes and Sue Cooper, with Emery Godard again slinging his famous burgers and hot dogs. Pat Cousin manned the gift shop with help from Hap Mani. If you haven't visited the gift shop lately, you're in for a surprise. Lou Ann Milward has completely reorganized it and it looks (and sells) great! As always, mail orders are cheerfully accepted!



Activities on Spring Work Weekend. Top, Brian Challander and Gary Griffen finish the roof on oil house; middle, Dave McClain and Larry Hanlon see what the inside of a turbo looks like; botton, Jim Ley and Mark French replace cable on our Little Giant Crane. Dave Waters photos

Special Operations

Two groups of senior citizens from the Oakland (CA) Museum stopped by our museum on April 28 and on May 17 for a train ride and tour. They were on a three day tour visiting historical sites and museums in our general area. We also gave rides and tours to several school groups in May. Most of the children had never been on a train and this gives us an opportunity to talk to them about railroads and safety around trains. On June 8, a busload came over from Reno for the tour and a ride. Their trip was climaxed by dinner at Portola's famous Log Cabin restaurant.

On June 17, Union Pacific Corporation Chairman Drew Lewis, his wife Marilyn and guests, including Richard Voell, President and CEO of the Rockefeller Group, toured the museum. At 7 am, their special UP train, which had spent the night in Portola, left for a daylight ride through the Feather River Canyon. We are certainly pleased that Mr Lewis enjoys showing the museum to his friends. Rising at this early hour to welcome the group were Dave and Julie Anderson, Ned Cray, Norm Holmes, Hap Manit and Hank Stiles.

Donations

Hans Ploug donated a 400 amp electric welder with cables. This item, although old, will be very useful for heavy welding. Mr & Mrs James Welch donated a number of Ernest Towler railroad prints.

Cash donations have been gratefully received from the following: Murray Brown, George Comer, Clem Dickey, Robert Diehl, William Garner, Melvin Getzlaff, Steve Habeck, Charles Hakker, Richard Hall, James Hollett, Hooker Oaks Good Sams of Chico, Robert Klempner, Josiah Jenkins, Richard Hall, Allan and Lynn Ratcliff, and Leonard Rimicci. In addition, a check in the amount of \$259.50 was received from the Fairfax-Falls Church United Way of Vienna, Virginia. One of our members (who are you?) must have made contributions to our organization through the United Way. We really appreciate this and this might be a

way other members could contribute to our museum.

Steve Habeck again applied for PG&E's Community Award Program. Again, he did not win the \$1000 first prize, but the \$100 award alludes to Steve's personal contribution to our society. We thank Steve and PG&E for the contribution.

We have several painting projects - 2001 and 501 in particular - that will be completed this summer. However, paint and associated supplies are costly, we could really use some extra financial help in this area.

Operations

Starting with Memorial Day this year, we have been operating trains every weekend. Feather River Shortline RR will be operating No. 8 on the second weekend of each month, and on Railroad Days. Rather than trying to list all the operating personnel each week, we just want to thank those who regularly and not so regularly come to Portola to help operate the trains. All are dedicated to doing a safe and professional job and are a credit to our organization. Anyone wishing to learn the job are come on up and see the conductor for instruction.



John Ryczkowski, Larry Hanlon and Dave McClain on top of UP 849 (GP-30) as the turbo is removed for repair. (DW)

Around the Museum

Last September a forest fire started by lightning blackened a large area directly south of Portola. Miraculously the wind changed as the flames reached the southern most homes and the town was spared. 30,000 trees were donated by Louisiana-Pacific to replant the area. As the trees arrived too early to plant them, we stored them in one of our refrigerator cars. When planting time came, the logging of the burned trees was not completed so there were too many trees. We were given one box of 250 pine trees that Hap Manitt and Norm Holmes planted along the south fence, west of the balloon track and around the city pumping plant. Hopefully most of the will grow and provide a nice border to our property.

Dry warm weather finally arrived allowing Gordon to complete the new water line to the diesel shop. The hold dug last December was at last filled and we can now look forward to having water to the restrooms year round. Two of the 'Santa Fe Boys', Bob York and Bob Lindley, came up from the Bay Area for a week's vacation and got real close to mother earth in the project. Hap, Norm, Dean Hill and Ken Roller took turns on the shovels.

Jerry Todd and Cal Maurer installed a new exhaust fan and ducting in the kitchen area. The Portola Rotary Club provided the cost of materials and Jerry donated the labor. Now the pleasant odor of friend onions goes outside instead of into the shop area (will this hurt sales?).

Also, thanks to funding by the Portola Rotary Club and to work and expertise by Phil Webb, the roll-up door on the east track (No. 1) is now repaired. Phil had experience with roll-up doors and with the help of Ken Roller, Hap and Norm, the lower half of the door was replaced with parts from the one obtained from government surplus. It needs to be completed and painted, but it works. And for the first time in probably 15 years or so! The door on track 2 now needs to be worked on, but it will be a more complex repair.

The roll up door was made functional just in time to show its operation to the Portola Rotary Club's Pancake Breakfast on Sunday May 28th. This annual event is well attended by both local citizens and visitors. The profit from the event goes to our organization, this year in excess of \$900. Our museum is one of several local beneficiaries of the Rotary Club's breakfast fund raisers. We really appreciate their civic-mindedness and the generosity of their membership. Next year, however, the breakfast will be held on the first Sunday of August, our track car race weekend to give the Rotarians the Memorial Day weekend off.

Steve Habeck made signs for the snack bar, gift shop, operations room and shop area. Signs were also made for identification of each locomotive. It will be nice when all are in place. Ken Roller built a new retaining wall where a little stream crosses the balloon track. Jack Palmer painted the doors in the womens rest room and the gift shop door. Norm Holmes ran a paint roller (with paint) over floors in the gift shop, both rest rooms, display room and meeting room. Hap, not to be left out of the fun, painted the operations room.

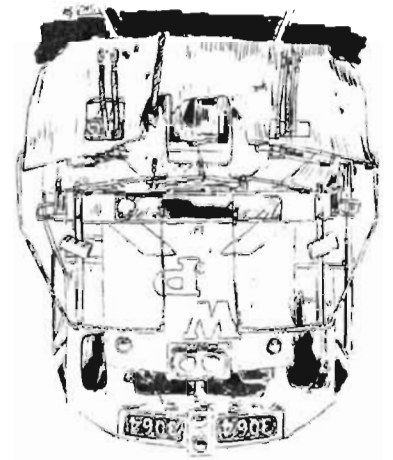
Miscellany

Another FA To Be Restored

We received a notice that the Connecticut Valley Railroad Museum is raising funds to restore New Haven FA-1 No. 401 to operation. This unit, acquired from the Long Island RR, as with our FA-2, was demotored and used as a control car. This organization has been very cooperative with us in sharing restoration details so that one day we might have our FA in operation. If you would like to donate to their efforts, the address is PO Box 97, Essex, CT 06426.

Life Members

James Groenke and Robert York have recently become Life Members. We appreciate your confidence in our organization.



Eastern Plumas Chamber
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