

To: FRRS Board of Directors
From: Paul Finnegan, Webmaster
Re: Museum Web Page
Date: July 5, 2016

June turned out to be a very busy month for the web site with a lot of planned and unplanned activities.

After my report for June was submitted there was an impromptu open meeting at the museum on Friday May 27th about the web site and future direction. Attendees included Tom Carter, Kerry Cochran, David Elems, David Epling, Steve Habeck, Bil Jackson, Steven Parry and Eugene Vicknair. There were several action items generated and we had a good discussion and exchange of ideas.

One of the outcomes of the meeting was agreement on how to proceed with the release of the updated [Archive/Historical Department](#) web pages. The full set of pages was sent out for review to Kerry Cochran, Eugene Vicknair, Steve Habeck, Tom Carter, David Elems, Bill Jackson, Leisa Wesch and Richard Gruninger. The review resulted in a few updates and one page being held for more review and development. The remaining pages went live on Thursday June 2nd. Eugene prepared a PowerPoint presentation about the new Archives/Historical Department web pages and showed it at the Members Meeting on June 4th.

The last week of May saw a flurry of emails with new ideas for fundraising, promoting items from the gift shop and enabling people to help stock our supply cabinets after my June report was submitted. We had some discussion about this at the meeting. Tom Carter strongly advised us not to pursue the Amazon Smile program and issues about how donations would be received off-season when the museum is closed. David Elems agreed to create a list of Amazon items that could be put on a museum wish list. It was decided to put the on-line store on hold until the new point-of-sale system for the Gift Shop is resolved. It is expected the on-line store will be integrated with the new Gift Shop system.

The topic of the [restoration page](#) also was discussed. This page is grossly out-of-date and needs to be updated. The restoration priority was stated to be (1) WP 165, (2) WP 1503 and (3) CCT-24. I created a new project page for the [CCT-24](#). It has not gone live because the content needs to be updated. Tom Carter has indicated he will update the project plan and then we can go public with the page. I also created a project web page for the [WP 1503](#), but I do not have a project plan to post to it. We also could have a project page for the Zephyr project, Eugene got tasked with helping me create one. Kerry Cochran took the action item to resolve and document the paint scheme for the future restoration of the WP 705.

Kerry Cochran and I worked on getting a physical inventory of which *Headlights* are available in the Gift Shop and in storage. Using the archive Ethan Doty created and input from Frank Brehm, we put together a new [WESTERN PACIFIC Headlight](#) web page to promote the headlight under the Archive/Historical Department's web page. I am working with Peter Arnold to create a [Headlight Master Index](#) (not publically released yet) web page similar to the [Train Sheet Master Index](#) to help people find articles in back issues.

A new collection was posted on the [WPRM Photo & Video Gallery](#) page showing pictures from the Media Day event (and the press release), the 2016 Members' BBQ & Meeting and the opening of the 2016 operating season.

The election results were posted to the web site real-time from the announcement of results at the Members' Meeting in the *Latest Museum News* box and under the [election information section](#) of the Membership page.

The web site was modified to support a special announcement page for the passing of Rod McClure. The default landing page was changed to be a page about Rod created by Tom Carter with a link to continue to the main page. Additionally, the mobile friendly version of the web site was also enhanced with similar behavior. A [news item](#) was added to the *Latest Museum News* box which appears on several pages. As information became available about Rod's Celebration of Life I kept all the pages up-to-date and consistent. The FRRS Calendar and calendar web page were updated.

On June 15th Eugene Vicknair requested a Museum Volunteer event be posted for the FRRS/WPRM Booth at the Graeagle event on July 3rd. This was set up and posted the same day it was requested. I would like to encourage event coordinators to use this service so we get our members familiar with using this system. Unfortunately this exercise was not successful. Even with a "Call for Museum Volunteers" on the home page, only one member signed up on the Museum Volunteer web site for this event, and it was not done until the Friday immediately before the event.

A performance and user-interface improvement was made to the [Operating Department Train Crew Sign Up](#) tool. When initially released it had a static image of the Extra Board just as a graphic in the upper-left corner. Users requested it be replaced with an image of the current Extra Board. I did this on June 1st, but this added about 3 seconds to the page load since the image was being created on the fly so it would be up-to-date. I was unhappy with this performance hit. Although the image was correct, it was hard to read, and only showed some of the remaining season. So I used a different approach and the page now loads a live HTML page into an iframe on the sign up page. This is very fast and allows the user to scroll through the whole season without leaving the sign up tool's page.

On June 15th, the *Train Sheet* article reminder email on behalf of Kerry Cochran was sent automatically to the department heads. Previously this email had been sent manually. It now is sent at 0400 on the 15th of February, April, June, August, October and December. The distribution list is easily maintained in a single configuration file. It is hoped this will help generate articles for the *Train Sheet*.

A large number of maintenance and minor improvements were made throughout the web site. Several documents were updated, additions were made to the staff page, the change of date for RR Days necessitated several pages to be updated, etc.

Email forwarders were created for the newly elected directors and tested on June 19th. Matt Elems will put them in the next *Train Sheet*. Frank Brehm and Leisa Wesch were also added to the [Staff web page](#) as Director-elect. They will be updated to Director after they are seated.

On June 20th a new tool was released that allows new people to join the society and existing members to renew their membership online. The [Join/Renew web page](#) can be reached from the Membership web page or the Members pull-down menu. The tool uses three web pages to collect information from the user to complete an online application and then emails the application to the society membership team. Payment can be made either by PayPal or mailing a check. Additionally it collects information about what the user is interested in. This information will be forwarded to the appropriate volunteer coordinator/department head to help us recruit new volunteers. It also asks if the member wants to receive the *Train Sheet* by email.

The online renew tool was used for the first time on Saturday July 2nd. I sent an inquiry to the member in Colorado asking for comments on the use of the online tool. His reply email said: “Very easy to use...I had printed out the mail in form 3 or 4 times and never got around to mailing them in.”

As a result of the Online Join/Renew project, the downloadable paper application was significantly updated and posted on the [Membership](#) page. The paper application should be completely reformatted at some time in the future.

On June 6th I created a sample Sponsor’s web page, a sample how to become a sponsor web page and developed the code to have the Sponsors’ logos display on a future visit us web page (there is a slide show in the lower right corner, it will have logos of sponsors!)

The web pages associated with the “FRRS Business Sponsorship Program” went live on June 29th. There are both desktop and mobile versions of several of the web pages. There are two main pages, [How to become an FRRS sponsor](#) and [View our Sponsors](#) . The View our Sponsors page will have links to and information about the sponsors’ businesses. Additionally there is a slide show on the [Visit Us](#) web pages that cycles through the logos for the sponsors that is a link to the View our Sponsors web page.

On July 1 (at 05:39 PDT) I removed the special limited time offer half-price membership offer pages and links from the web site. The offer expired on June 30, 2016. (web ticket 2016-0068)

On July 4th and 5th I removed the Independence Day information from the web site.