

## FROM THE PRESIDENTS DESK

As we start our second year, we can look back and really be proud at the progress we have made. The museum idea first came to light after attending a Portola city planning meeting held by planning consultant Laurie Oberholtzer. A number of recreational ideas and community activities were discussed, one being the use of old railroad right of ways as a trail. This gave me the idea of establishing a railroad museum. It would be appropriate for Portola, since the town was founded by the railroad. In January I asked Mr. Flannery, President of Union Pacific, for one of the two remaining F-7 units for the proposed museum. This eventual donation was helped along by conversations between Skip Englert and Walter Treanor, Vice-President, Law of the WP.

Next a meeting was held to determine if there were others interested in the museum idea. There was, and it was decided to form a group to achieve that goal. The Feather River Rail Society was thus formed.

A request for use of a piece of land near the Gulling street bridge and use of the right of way parallel to the WP tracks east to build a one-half mile operating track was turned down.

On August 26, WP unit 921 was presented to the Greater Portola Area Chamber of Commerce for the Portola Railroad Museum. It was given to the Chamber because our group was not yet established as a tax-exempt organization.

Former WP Portola Diesel House      January 18, 1984

In October the city of Portola, at the request of our Society, sent a formal request to Mr. Flannery for the lease of the unused diesel shop building and adjacent trackage for a museum site. In December Mr. Flannery and the Union Pacific agreed to lease the site. This property will then be subleased to the Society for operation. The reason for the City's involvement is two fold: one it is established (we are new) and two: it has the capability of obtaining grant money to improve the property. This will take a sum that we have no possibility of obtaining for a long period of time. Also in October, the Society asked for four cars (a tank car, two box cars and a wooden caboose), These were also given to the City for the same reasons as stated above.

During 1984 we should see a new access road built, the site secured with a fence and the building cleaned and repaired. The Feather River Short Line equipment (steam engine, kitchen car and caboose) located at the Plumes County fairgrounds has been offered for exhibit and restoration at our museum. My Feather River & Western equipment (gasoline locomotive, box car, flat car and caboose) will be moved to the museum as soon as the site is secured. This will give us an even dozen pieces of equipment. In addition several other locomotives and cars have been requested from other sources.

All this activity will present a challenge for us, not only for funds, but for volunteer help to restore our equipment to museum quality for exhibit. We also must all work to make our organization creditable to the community and the Union Pacific Railroad to prove to them that their faith in us is justified.

## THE ENGINE HOUSE

Now that we have a commitment on the diesel shop building, we must start thinking about what we will do with it. The building is 220 feet long and 70 feet wide. Two tracks run the length of the building, one with a pit under it. The building contains six rooms, one large enough for a meeting hall and there also is a 24x80' machine shop area. We will be needing shop equipment, tools and office equipment and just about anything necessary to reestablish the facility. Nothing will be moved into the building, however, until we are able to lock it up. The building has gone virtually unused since it was closed September, 1974. Only a small air hoist remains from the once complete shop facilities. About 450 of the nearly 1500 windows are broken, the plumbing has been vandalized and much of the electrical wiring has been ripped out. In addition, both east end roll-up doors require repair before they can be opened. All this must be repaired -we have a lot of work ahead. Lucky for us, we have a building and tracks to start with - most museums have to start from scratch. We can thank the Union Pacific for giving us a head start. Now it's up to us to keep going.

## NEW LOOK

Starting with this issue, our Society's publication will be called "The Train Sheet" thanks to a timely suggestion by Guy Dunscorn. The new masthead was decided upon by the Board of Directors with the art work drawn by John Ryczkowski. It was also decided to hold membership meetings and publish "The Train Sheet" every other month instead of quarterly, to better keep the membership informed on late breaking news.