

The Railroad

The Deep Creek Railroad was organized in 1916. Construction was financed by Captain Duncan McVichie and associates, who included the late Charles Levy, then president of the Western Pacific, and United States Senator Reed Smoot, of Utah. Grading began on November 1 and the railroad opened for freight traffic in March, 1917, and for express and passenger

service one month later. Two locomotives, one freight car, one water car and a combination passenger coach operated over the 46-mile single-track railroad. A daily schedule was maintained by the railroad during its heyday, leaving WP's Wendover station at 6:30 a. m. for the three-hour trip to the southern terminus at Gold Hill, Nevada, returning at 5:00 p. m.

Although Gold Hill was primarily a gold-producing district, copper, tung-

sten, arsenic and other minerals were added sources of income. But copper mining, for which the line was originally built, failed to materialize as had been expected, and the road was left without a source of supporting revenue. Western Pacific, which absorbed the railroad, recommended abandonment and the Interstate Commerce Commission authorized the plan on July 12, 1939. The last run was made on the 28th of that month.

UPDATE ON SHORTLINE #8

Betty Boynton

The Fascination with a steam engine was very evident during RR Days as Shortline #8 received countless visitors. Polished and painted and clean as a (train) whistle, she showed off progress made in the last two years on her restoration by members of Project Sequoia. The work of many months on the grinders by Mel Moore, Dean Hill, Steve Jackson and Laurie Edens removed paint of the past from the tender and cab..finally reaching bare metal. A new coat of black paint was applied and Odie Lorimer then went to work. Starting at midnight the Friday before Railroad Days, he worked until 5 AM to give #8 something she had not had for several years..her name and number painted on the tender and cab. 9" white letters and a big #8 leave no doubt that she is the Feather River Shortline Railroad.

New railings were added to the steps up to the cab of the engine by David Dodds and Jim, with Hap (Mr. Perpetual Motion) Maniit rounding up the materials. This made the steps much safer with so many people using them. The interior of the cab was painted by Dave Lubliner and the brass fittings and

parts restored to original brightness last winter by Jim really stood out. The chance to look into an engine's firebox, sit on the engineer's seat and hang out the cab window provided an unusual experience for everyone. Steve Jackson, Jim and John Marvin answered many questions about the running of an engine. Inside the south door of the museum, near the front of the engine, we now have a depot bench complete with Feather River Shortline RR in gold letters on the back. Hap located a piece of carpet for the area and the picture board on the wall in back of the bench has been upgraded. After John Marvin resurfaced and painted it, Jim relettered the board and replaced the worn pictures with new ones of #8 from 1908 at Hobart Mills to present day color photos. John also made #8 her own donation box and brochure holder which is on the pilot beam of the engine. Many people have expressed much interest in seeing the front of the engine opened up and the chance to see the 140 flues that were cleaned by Jim and Hap. It took them two Saturdays to do the job, the first major work done on the restoration two years ago.

One of the nicest things about Railroad Days was visiting with the delightful retired railroaders. Full of facts and stories of the steam days and eager to share them, They left no doubt about their love and challenges of the steam days. Of course the question was asked "when will she be running again?" (Hopefully next year.)

Railroad Days was a big success and Shortline #8 was proud to be a part of it. The thanks goes to the fine people who gave their time and energy and talents to give a little steam engine a hand.

With the first snow falling in the area, work days will now depend on the weather. #8's boiler has been drained for the winter and the work goes on. Crawling through the 16" hole into the firebox, Jim has spent the last three Saturdays caulking seams. Steve Jackson traveled up from San Jose to help one Sunday. Bob Beattie drove over from Carson City and gave Jim a hand with a hydro test.

John Marvin has put new bolts on the rear of the tender, prepping for starting work on new sill steps. He is also planning improvements on the seats in the cab. The old cushion has been tossed from the engineer's seat and woodwork comes next.



Feather River Shortline #8 and friends on Project Sequoia at the Portola Railroad Museum. Left to right...Hap Maniit, Keeper of the Broom and Museum Coordinator; Dave Lubliner, Boiler Foreman; Mike Attama, Chief Electrician; Don Dunscomb, General Foreman; Guy Dunscomb, Shortline Historian and author; Mel Moore, Vice President and Restoration Paint Removal Specialist.
Photo by Sequoia Gen. Mgr. J.E. Boynton

Our little pink caboose is now receiving much needed attention from Mel Moore. He has been stripping paint from the caboose sides. There is much work ahead to restore this precious bit of railroad history.

There was a fine response to our brochures that were introduced on Railroad Days. Many new officials have joined the Shortline. The processing of the applications is efficiently handled by Robert Erbeck who has been a Director and Secretary Treasurer of the Feather River Shortline Railroad since it was founded in 1958. The Board of Directors appreciate the generous donations made to the restoration of our vintage railroad equipment.

In November the Feather River Shortline #8 will be seventy nine years old! Jim is planning an extravaganza next year when #8 is 80...But in the meantime, Happy Birthday #8, with all the friends and steam lovers working for you, there will be many more.

MILEPOSTS

SEPTEMBER, 1956

To many railroad travelers, a love for the sound of car wheels clicking off pleasant miles is second only to a love for the sound of the old steam whistle. Unfortunately, the old steam whistles have already "blown" from the railroad, and to a modern railroad like Western Pacific the elimination of every other "click" will mean a better and more quiet ride for those railroad travelers and added years to the life of the rail.

To eliminate every other rail joint, the cause of the "clickety-clack," the railroad in 1955 constructed a rail-welding plant which slightly resembles a modern assembly line. The plant was put into operation on the site of the former roundhouse (another antiquated railroad facility). It consists of racks and crane tracks for the storage and handling of rail, and a long roller line along which the rails are fed end to end, passing through sheds which straddle the assembly line and are designed for the various stages of the welding process.

The 39-foot standard rail sections received from the mill were drilled by CF&I for a standard joint, but with bolt holes at one end only. Placed on a set of skids which feed into a power hacksaw, the undrilled (without bolt holes) rail ends to be welded together are first clamped together at the saw. As the blade passes down through the ends of both rails it removes a small amount of metal from each rail, thus

**They're closing the joints
in Winnemucca at**

WP's Rail Welding Plant



General view of loading area. At left, carloads of 39-foot rails just arrived from mill. In foreground, 78-foot rails are loaded onto cars destined for track-laying installations.

matching the ends perfectly and removing any oxide or rust that may be present. After further manual refinement of the end surfaces, the rail moves on to the next shed where the prepared ends are clamped together in the rail-welding machine and adjusted to proper alignment. Four heating heads, containing 132 adjusted heating tips, surround the ends to be welded. After the heads are ignited and the rail becomes heated to a temperature of about 2,000° F., hydraulic pressure of 5,000 pounds per square inch is applied. This fuses the ends and completes the weld but forms an "upset"—a protruding bulge—around the rail. Acetylene gas, used for the heating flame, is generated on the welding site by means of a 1,000-cubic-foot acetylene generator, and oxygen is supplied by manifolded cylinders.

THE rails, now 78 feet in length, move along rollers to the trimming station, where the upset is partially removed by oxy-acetylene cutting torches. After trimming, the weld is placed in a normalizing machine designed to heat the general weld area to remove residual stresses caused by the welding process. The welded rail is then advanced through three stages of grinding to remove the remaining upset from the rail head, sides and base.

After close inspection by Magnaflux—a magnetic method of detecting minute flaws or cracks—and other testing methods, the long rails are loaded on cars for distribution along the railroad for track gangs who will replace the old with new rail.

During 1956 it is planned to relay about 45 miles of track with the longer rail, which will require about a seven-month welding operation at a cost of about \$100,000. Because of the

efficiency of the operation and the cooperative efforts and increased experience of the workers, the rate of production at the rail-welding plant has climbed from an average of 50 to 55 rails a day, which is higher than the production rate obtained by any other railroad operating a similar rail-welding plant. The program was somewhat interrupted during the recent steel strike in July, as no new rail was manufactured during that period at the CF&I mill.

The welding process is licensed to Western Pacific by the Linde Air Products Company, a division of the Union Carbide and Carbon Corporation, and is known as the Oxweld Pressure-Welding Process. The method involves simple welding principles and is related to one of the earliest forms of welding, commonly known as blacksmith weld.

One of the reasons Western Pacific decided to weld rail into 78-foot lengths rather than into lengths as long as a quarter of a mile or more, as some railroads are doing, is because of the handling and transportation problems, not only just after the rail has been welded, but years later when worn-out rail is ready for replacement. While the larger railroads can reuse welded rail in secondary or branch lines, Western Pacific sells most of its used rails to outside firms. To do this, WP would have to cut up the longer lengths at considerable cost and the sale value would be considerably reduced.

Because of overhang, an idler car must be used between each pair of loaded cars to negotiate all the curves.