

In the Dog House

During the late 1940's the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen negotiated an agreement with the railroads to provide a place for the head brakeman to ride on steam engines. Steam engines had a seat for the engineer and a seat for the fireman. On a few locomotives there was a second seat for the brakeman in front of the fireman's seat or a seat that was attached to a pole that could be lowered when needed. On some steam engines the only place for the head brakeman to sit was on the metal sand box.

The railroads complied with this agreement and constructed a four foot by four foot square building about five feet high with seats for two. It was steam heated in cold weather and located on the rear top of the tender. All of WP's Little Malleys (201-210), some of the Mikes and a few Consolidations had this addition in their latter years.

When WP scrapped its steam locomotives, Stockton shops mechanic Bob Travel saved one of these buildings, called Dog Houses, to take home for a play house for his children. Years later after the children were grown Bob Larson saw it in his yard and knowing about Norm Holmes' back yard railroad asked for it. Bill Magazin brought it to Portola and now Norm donated it to our museum. This is an interesting artifact from the age of steam.

V&T Symposium Report

By David Dewey

Several FRRS members attended the 25th annual V&T Railroad History Symposium in Carson City last month. The main topic this year was care and feeding of wooden cars, a major point of interest to the car restoration group. There were many speakers with different ideas on how to repair and build wooden passenger cars. The "museum types" insist on exact replication, while the "tourist operators" utilize modern lamination technology. Both groups acknowledged the different criteria they face in maintaining their fleets. The operators need longevity with low maintenance costs, while the museums want to preserve the historic technology intact.

The one thing both groups agree on is: Keep the water out! We learned how to caulk wood window frames so they will resist rotting out at the bottoms. Also covered was caring for the wooden window sills common to our cabooses and some of our heavyweight passenger fleet. No nuclear science, but some common sense combined with modern elastic caulks to keep everything dry.

There was also much discussion on finding modern paint that can take the weather. With environmental controls becoming more stringent, it is difficult to find "Great" paint, as the really good stuff has heavy metals and ghastly solvents, all No-No's nowadays. Marine Paints usually do very well holding their gloss and staying flexible enough to not split and peel as the wood moves.

There were also sessions on the V&T passenger business and the planned reconstruction of the Carson City-Virginia City line. If all goes as planned, there will be some major changes coming!

The FRRS Gift Shop was Successful at the Southern Regional Meet

We had a very successful day at the Southern California Regional Meet in La Habra, on October 14, 1995. Roger Aten, Norman & Barbara Holmes did a good business at our merchandise tables. The regional meet was very successful also with a number of interesting speakers and clinics. Peter and Sue Solyom deserve a great deal of thanks for putting on this annual event.

Roger and Dottie Aten worked the GATS show at Costa Mesa Oct. 7-8, 1995 and David and Linda Dewey had a sale table at a Chico Mall. We want to thank all for helping at these shows and we particularly want to thank Lollie Bryan who is spending a lot of time at the museum Gift Shop.

Upcoming Train Shows of Interest

- International Railfare in Roseville, CA, November 10 - 11, 1995.
- Great American Train Shows at Pleasanton, CA, November 25 - 26, 1995 and at San Jose, CA, December 9 - 10, 1995.

We have several new HO gauge Red Caboose tank cars in the gift shop: Conco, Skelgas, Ambrose Wine, Fruit Industries and Roma Wine.

These and other oil companies already mentioned are discounted to \$9.95.

We also recently received a nice new video tape from Kaw Valley titled All Aboard, Passenger Trains in America featuring UP, N&W, Frisco, SP and Amtrak. This 58 minute tape sells for 19.95.

FRRS Name Badges

FRRS name badges for the following members are ready and waiting in the Museum Gift shop: Judy McGrath, Gary Hall, Jeff Palmer, Art Young, King Felton, Kim & Vince Martin. Badges are \$5.50 each.

If you would like to order a name badge, contact the Museum Gift shop.