

**1998 Convention Report**

Nearly 100 people attended the 1998 WPRRHS convention held at the Stockton Inn on May 8th and 9th. Convention directors Steve and Norma Hayes did a fantastic job of setting up, coordinating and executing a great gathering. Clinics included model railroad photography by the nicest Texan you'll ever meet; Mr. Tommy Holt. Modeling WP "Beer" cars by Eel River "Beer Car" manufacturer Jim Booth. John Walker used a variety of member slides to show detail shots of the WP's Stockton Yard facility. Jack Palmer contributed some slides to the program while Ken Meeker helped described some of the items we were looking at. Dave Stanley presented a program on the Central California Traction Co. and announced that his CCT book will be available soon. Jack Parker and Bob Larson showed some vintage WP slides from their collections. Ken Rattenne shared his multi-media presentation on the WP and Ken Meeker presented his tribute to the old WP dispatching office in Sacramento with his "Odyssey to Omaha" program. Virgil Staff kept everyone on the edge of their seats as he showed four WP color movies from his collection! Todd Clark of Icon Video provided a video tape showing the first renditions of a series of new WP video's featuring the color movies of Virgil Staff. An authors panel consisting of Guy Dunscomb, Ken Rattenne, Virgil Staff and Kent Stephens enthralled listeners when they recounted their work in bringing notable WP books to print. The joy and frustrations of the publishing business were explored and many memories of kind, helpful WP employees and memorable experiences on the WP were

relieved.

The museum gift shop did a lot of business and the members swap table was phenomenal! The modeling displays were bigger than last year but surprisingly, few wanted to compete in the contests. Instead many people just showed their models and discussed modeling techniques with other members.

A great time was had by all. Good food and great fun. The icing on the cake was a \$1,400.00 profit on the event, which will go to the continuing development of the WPRRHS's Arthur Walter Keddie Railroad Library in Portola. Again, our thanks go out to Steve and Norma Hayes and all of the volunteers who helped make this another great event!

**1999 Convention Plans Announced**

WPRRHS members Jim Dias and Thom Anderson have come up with a preliminary plan for a convention at the Newark-Fremont Hilton on April 16-17, 1999. The convention would run from 5:00 PM Friday evening until 11:00 PM Saturday evening. Sunday would be a free day with possible layout tours and possibly a get together with the Pacific Locomotive Association in Niles Canyon.

The cost of this facility and the meals will be a little more expensive than we have encountered in the past. But, the Hilton is a first class facility and we are sure everyone will have a good time. Tentatively, registration will be \$25.00 per person and dinner will cost each attendee about \$30.00 to \$35.00. There is a bar on the premises and refreshments will be available. This is a nice hotel and rooms would run \$79.00 a night. However, we are not obligated to book any hotel rooms. Attendees can make other

arrangements or drive home at the end of the evening if they choose to do so.

We are still negotiating with the Hilton management for a firm price and Jim Dias has already lined up some tentative speakers and presenters. More details will follow as the event schedule begins to firm up. But please mark your calendars now to attend this event. And start working on those models. We want an even bigger model display next year. This is sure to be another great convention! Tentative plans for the year 2000 convention are looking at the historic Feather River Inn in Blairsden, just down the road from the Portola Railroad Museum!

### **Help Wanted**

As part of our responsibilities as the Official Historical Society of the Western Pacific Railroad, we get numerous requests for information. Some questions are easy and others require more time or information. We currently have several requests which the office has no answer to give. If you can help with these questions, please drop John Walker a note.

1) Ada Southern of Lake Havasu City, Arizona asks if anyone might have any information concerning her grandfather, Mr. Henry James Southern. Mr. Southern worked on the WP as a tunnel watchman, section foreman, and bridge builder before passing away in Portola in 1919.

2) Mr. Theodore Kornweibel, Jr. is a professor in San Diego who is researching a book on African Americans and the railroads. He is looking for any WP records, reports, employee magazine articles, newspaper clippings or photographs of African American employees on the Western Pacific.

3) Mr. Lyle M. Lindahl of Golden, Colorado

is interested in railroad stations in Nevada. He is interested in acquiring copies of old WP and Nevada shortline railroad timetables to add to the information he has already collected.

4) Mr. Philip Dohmen writes: I am writing to locate the former WP# 815 *Silver Schooner*. All of the records of the Auto Train Corp. auction I have read claim that the car was sold on 12/08/81 to "Anbel Corp.". This company is owned by Mr. Ken Nickols of Houston, Texas. I have spoken with him several times about this car. Each time he denies having ever owned it! Have you or any of your readers "seen" this car over the years since the (Auto Train) auction? Has anyone out there been to Brownsville, Texas where this stuff is stored? Sure appreciate any help! Thanks in advance. pdohmen@ddnnet.com or (901) 795-7117 days (901) 757-1310 evenings. Again, if you can help with any of these questions, please drop us a line. Thanks.

### **Library**

A major accomplishment of the WPRRHS last year was the passage of the Library Proposal. One of the primary functions of the WPRRHS is to establish a permanent library for the FRRS/WPRRHS archives. As we began sorting through the material already collected by the FRRS over the last 15 years, it quickly became apparent that we needed to come up with a plan for what we will collect, how we will store it and how we will allow access to this material. Kent Stephens and John Walker presented a proposal to the FRRS Board of Director in October 1997 that was accepted.

Basically, the library will be known as the Arthur Walter Keddie Railroad Library