

Donation to FRRS

In remembrance of his brother Joe, who passed away suddenly this last February, Ed Wagner recently presented to the Feather River Rail Society a donation in the amount of \$15,000 to be used for the sole purpose of assisting the Society in improving our ADA status.

In speaking about his brother Ed told us how they had had only two opportunities to vacation together as adults and one of them was to the Portola Railroad Museum ten years ago in June 1993. It was his brother's first and only trip to the museum.

When Joe was six years old, he contracted Polio and spent 14 months in an iron lung. He spent most of his life on crutches; however, it did not stop him from living his life. He put himself through college and had a successful career as an Aerospace Engineer. He was also a hard core railfan, and when Ed and his brother came to the museum, they participated in an RAL together with the late Bruce Cooper.

Planning has already started on how we can make our museum more accessible to those with mobility problems so that they may also enjoy their visit to our museum.

We thank Ed for his thoughtfulness and generosity.

WP SW1500's 1501 - 1503

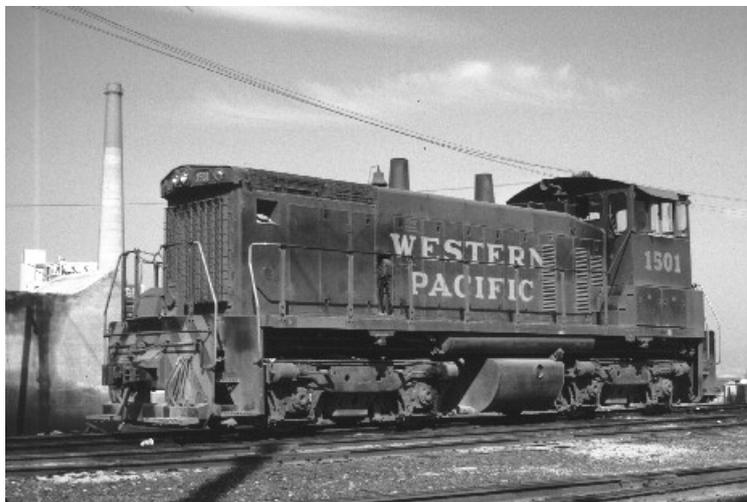
By Frank Brehm

WP had largely ignored yard switchers since the early 1950's. This would change in the 70's. EMD had introduced a new line of locomotives in 1966 featuring a new prime mover the 645. Although rated at 1500 horsepower as were the 1952 vintage GP7s the SW1500 was a rail-roader's switcher. Sporting a taller cab, which increased visibility with four side windows verses, two in earlier switchers the SW1500 could also be equipped with optional trucks, which were rated for speeds of up to 60 miles per hour for use on the main line. Other options included an 1100 gallon fuel tank and full length walkway mounted handrails which were supposed to make this model truly a dual purpose locomotive that could be used in the yard or for local freight service. Production ended in 1974 with the introduction of the MP15.

Finding the switcher fleet aging and car capacity increasing WP management placed an order with EMD for eight SW1500's in early 1970. This order was subsequently canceled and substituted with an order for ten GP-40's. Another attempt to acquire SW1500's proved successful in 1972 when three units were ordered. Delivery came in May 1973. With the exception of headlights and high cab mounted

number boards these units were very similar to rival Southern Pacific's complete with flexicoil trucks, full-length handrails, multiple unit connections, and large 1100-gallon fuel tanks.

Numbered 1501-1503 to reflect their rating of 1500 horsepower the units came painted green with orange lettering and stripes on the pilots. Although originally delivered with a single chime horn, all three units eventually received the standard Nathan five chime horn. Originally assigned to Stockton they eventually were sent to Oakland/San Francisco. Generally two worked in Oakland and one worked San Francisco until ferry service was terminated. This was the last time Western Pacific would receive new switchers and these were not purchased by the railroad but instead leased.



Plying home rails in San Francisco, CA the 1501 sports the original single chime horn in this 1977 view.

Bob Yanosey photo, Frank Brehm Collection

Along with 10 units owned by MKT and Missouri Pacific these became, through merger, the first examples of this model switcher on the Union Pacific.

Prior to the mergers all of UP's switchers were at least 20 years old with the exception of the SW10's which were being built from older switchers by the UP beginning in 1979. All three WP units retained their numbers, when repainted at North Platte in 1984 and returned to Oakland for service. Renumbering into the 1300 series came in 1987-1988 with the 1501-1503 being numbered

1315-1317. All three were purchased by UP on January 3, 1989 when the original lease to WP expired. Reassignment came in 1990 when all three left California for service at Centennial Yard in Fort Worth, Texas. Another renumbering would come in 2001 when they became UPY1040-1042.

December 7, 1982 found the 1502 working the Oakland area tracks. Of interest is the mounting of the 5 chime horn on the roof in contrast to the mounting as applied to the 1503 below.

Al Christianson photo, Frank Brehm Collection



For you modelers the cab end of the 1503 at Oakland, CA on May 26, 1974.

Photographer unknown, Frank Brehm Collection

Using the horn on the 1503 had to be loud in the cab. Mounted where the original single horn was both reversed bells faced directly at the cab. Oakland, CA January 18, 1975.

James C. Herold photo, Frank Brehm Collection

