

How Much Longer Will "WP Live"?

- Robert and Lois Mersereau

For the last few years we have worked the registration desk at the annual conventions. One major concern that we have had is the lack of pre-teens, teenagers and young adults in attendance. Where is the youth? If you take a few minutes to look in depth at the recent issue of the Western Pacific Headlight, number 27, you should have some of the same concerns.

Spend a few minutes looking at the shaded area on page 26 where Virgil is thanking the contributors to his article. Within the text are the following words "Most of these are now gone from us, but I will always remember the graciousness of their wives who served little tidbits, and who made me feel at home." The words "gone now" are one area of concern.

Over the years we have made a concerted effort to collect the stories from those who lived the WP adventure, have tried to preserve the locomotives, rolling stock and other items to help continue the history of the Western Pacific, Sacramento Northern, Tidewater Southern and the other members of the extended WP family.

The next group is the hobbyists who have tried to preserve as much of the history of the WP family in something less than a 1:1 scale. Not only the locomotives, rolling stock but samples of the scenery, the bridges, the building, etc., have all been saved in very detailed presentations.

But when you assist the convention by hosting the registration desk the real problem that is very apparent is the question of "where are the young people?" Nolan Bechtold has been one of the very few youngsters participating in our convention. Where are the children and grandchildren?

If WP is going to live we must get the youth active in the conventions. They are the hope of the future!!!

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Due to space constraints, the article on WP's Mystery Font, mentioned in Issue 131, will be held until next issue.

WP Equipment Sightings

- compiled by David Epling

Before I start, I want to extend a hand of thanks to Frank Brehm for his great work as our editor and welcome Eugene "Heywood" Vicknair as the new sucker... er... editor. As we all know, WP lives on in equipment still running around 22 years after the fact. Remember your sighting reports are what keeps this column afloat in the newsletter. Also, remember your sightings can also include former WP Locomotives that are still around. Maybe if I get motivated a future edition of this column, I will include a "where are they now" for remaining WP power. All marks below are boxcars unless otherwise noted, all locations are California unless otherwise noted. So here we go, on to the reports.

September 1st through October 31st...

- First up is Dan Crews. Dan reported sighting WP 65557 in a westbound manifest by his residence in Doyle on Sept 1st.
- Big John reported via the Calrailfans list a WP boxcar with large WP Block lettering in Davis on Sept 3, 2005 and in Cordelia CA. on Sept 6, 2005.
- Kevin Caldwell reported WP 38251 EB out of Sparks NV on Sept 6, 2005.
- John Manter reported WP boxcars 66347, 66303, and 65631 on the same NB manifest at Stockton on Sept, 9 2005.
- Ron M reported via Calrailfans, WP 12032 at Roseville CA on Sept 10, 2005.
- Ed Wagner reported WP 38124 through Niles, EB at 12:55pm on Sept 12, 2005, and WP 11696 (Airlide Hopper) EB through Niles at 4:45pm on Sept 14, 2005.
- Bill Gilbert reported sighting WP 38108 in Sacramento on Sept 18, 2005.
- Ed Wagner reported High side Gondola WP 7738 WB at Niles at 3:13pm on Sept 23, 2005.
- Bill Gilbert reported WP 38506 in Roseville on Sept 23, 2005.
- Kerry Pierce reported seeing the Silver Quail on the rear of Amtrak #2 on Sept 25, 2005. Kerry also reported seeing UP 1983, the WP Heritage SD70ACe that UP did nice and pretty in West Colton CA. on Sept 26, 2005. *(Editor's note: Yes, I know the S. Quail is not a WP car, but as former CZ car it qualifies for the column. And likewise on UP 1983: it flies our flag, so we include it accordingly.)*

- Next up, David Epling observed WP Covered Hopper 12069 on a SB grain at Stockton at 8:20pm on Sept 25, 2005.
- Chris Bekaris reported WP 38047 in a WB manifest at Martinez CA at 4:07pm on Sept. 29.
- Loren Dunlap had a good day in the Canyon on Sept 23, he reported one train at 8:55am as having WP Covered Hopper 12061, and WP Boxcar 65668 on WB manifest, following that train at 9:18am, was the UP 1983 West (WP Heritage unit) with WP Covered Hopper 12097 buried in the train.
- Chris Bekaris scored again at Roseville on Oct 24, 2005, He observed WP 38152 in a manifest parked along Roseville Rd in Citrus Heights. WP 66345 was WB at Citrus Heights, and a third manifest sitting in Brock Siding yielded WP covered Hopper 12048. Chris again spotted 3 more WP cars on Oct 27, WP 65615 was part of a small manifest backing into Roseville from the wye at 12:13pm. WP 66347 was in a cut of cars being worked in the Roseville City yard at 2:25pm. And bring up the end of Chris' report, WP 65571 in the QFRNP just west of the Roseville Yard.
- Bill Gilbert reported WP 66336 in the Roseville yard on Oct 30, 2005.
- Ed Wagner brings up markers with sighting High Side Gondola WP 7712 at 3:12pm Oct 31st.

Happy Halloween!

2006 ELECTION NOTICE

For the 2006 FRRS Election, the board seats currently held by Steve Habeck, Gail McClure and Eugene Vicknair are up for election. Nominations open January 1, 2006. Candidate statements should be mailed to the museum at:

FRRS 2006 Election
P O Box 608
Portola, CA 96122

For more information, contact David Epling, Election Chair, at frrsweb@sbcglobal.net.

Election Timeline

January 1 - Nominations open for 2006
January 31 - Nominations close
March 1 - Election Withdrawal Deadline
April 19 - Election Ballots mailed
May 6 - Appoint Election Tellers
May 26 - Ballot Return Deadline - 5 PM
June 3 - Board Meeting - Election Results

Any propositions or motions from the membership must also be forwarded to the committee by January 31.

IMPORTANT NOTICE - CREW TRAINING DAYS FOR 2006

Please watch the Trainsheet for more information on Crew Training Days in early 2006.

The dates for the 2006 training will be Saturday May 6th and Sunday May 7th, 2006. Held at the Portola Railroad Museum, starting at 9 AM each day, lasting until about 4 PM.

NOTICE !!!! CHANGES IN CREW TRAINING

Crewmembers and prospective crewmembers are encouraged to attend the training weekend. It will be necessary for crewmembers to attend BOTH days of training. Training on Saturday will consist of update on General Code of Operating Rules, Rules Test, and various procedures used in the operating department. Saturday's training will also consist of a MANDATORY meeting of all RAL engineers. Training on Sunday will continue with hands on operations along with time for questions and answers on new procedures.

OPERATING SEASON OPENS Saturday May 27th, 2006

Operating Season for 2006 will start on Saturday May 27th 2006 at 11 AM. Crew Call will be at 9:30 AM. Crewmembers will assemble in the Board Room.