

CABOOSING AROUND THE MUSEUM

- John Walker, Museum Manager

April 3-4

Cold temperatures with various sleet, hail and rain. Occasional visitors.

April 7-8

Great WPRRHS Convention in Chico!

April 9-15

Weather warming up finally but, still crummy. Ken Iverson, Jack Zygnier and Charlie Spikes sneaking in a few RAL's.

April 16

Easter Sunday. The museum was scheduled to be closed today but Mother Nature pretty much sealed the deal with 18 inches of fresh snow.

April 17

Museum Closed.

April 18

A lot of snow has melted but the museum is water logged and requires a lot of cleanup.

April 19

Ken Iverson made up an RAL, which we missed on the 17th. Steve Habeck, and Rod McClure switched the north side of the museum in preparation for unloading the WP 165 steam engine.

April 20

Rod, Steve, Norman, Charlie, Doug and Gail unloaded the WP 165 and reconnected the tender and locomotive. The reunited pieces hit the ground at 1:45 in the afternoon ending a 50-year drought of WP steam in Portola. The WP165 was then moved into position for our new Steam Department to begin inspection and removal of certain parts. The train crew worked well into the evening putting everything back where it normally belongs.

April 21

We had not one, but two steam engine crews working here today! Chris Allan, our new Steam Department Manager and Roger Stabler began working on the WP 165 while the California Trolley and Rail Corporation steam crew began working on the SP 1215.

April 22-23

Work continued on both steam locomotives while Hank Stiles and Ed Powell began work on WP F7A 917. Doug Morgan, Charlie Spikes and John Walker began cleaning out a boxcar. New shelving was installed and the contents rearranged for better storage. John gave a lengthy tour to a group of California Conservation Corp members. New member Cody Wilson sorted nuts and bolts in the material storage area and continued work on cleaning up the cab of the UP DDA40X 6946.

April 24

General Cleanup.

April 25

The California Conservation Corp called John at 7:30 in the morning and offered to send a crew over to do some landscape work around the hospital. The crew cleared the side of the hill of large clumps of sagebrush and burned ten piles of trimmings. Again improving the appearance of the grounds and cutting down the potential of a brush fire.

April 26

John and Charlie cleaned up the material storage area while Mary Leal returned to finish the restoration of the "Coffin Cart" she started last year. Seth Adams stopped by for a visit.

May 5

Nice warm days this week. Ken, Jack and Charlie running RAL's. John, Charlie and Eric Spikes and Doug Morgan working on various projects including cleaning out a boxcar, setting up tables, benches and displays for the upcoming season. Jay Sidney doing some grounds cleanup.

May 5-6

Crew Training, Board Meeting and Dinner. Eugene and Hank repaired the wheel chair lift. Kevin Caldwell and Spencer Walker provided the evening entertainment.

May 8-14

Nice weather with RAL's and visitors picking up. Hank delivered some parts with his big flatbed truck while Jay Sidney continued work on the grounds. Norman did roof repairs on the UP 105 Business car and UP RPO car. Matt Parker, Wayne

Monger, Loren Ross, Dave Epling, Spencer Walker, Tim Carter, Don Nelson and others replaced broken gauge rods on the balloon track. Hank and Ed Powell did some locomotive maintenance. Gail McClure prepared a wonderful feast for dinner. John, Doug and Charlie cleaned out another boxcar and installed shelving.

May 15

Hank delivered four big electric car jacks, beams and left over parts from the GGRM move in February. Don Keller is back sweeping sidewalks, pulling weeds and helping to pick up the grounds. Duane Vanderveen and Jay Knudson did some telephone line repairs.

May 16

John and Jay Sidney rearranged the contents of some boxcars and set up displays and did general cleanup.

May 17-19

Loren Ross, Bill Parker, Charlie Spikes, Dave Epling, Craig Simmons, Duane Vanderveen, and Don Nelson started switching for our Annual Railroad Photography Day operation. John and Wayne Monger set up the inside of the house with the assistance of the switch crew.

May 20

Rail Photography Day. Despite our best preparations, a spring storm rolled in with heavy overcast and occasional showers. 60+ guests still ventured up to shoot pictures of our vintage equipment in operation. Norman and Barbara Holmes sold some of our surplus stuff from the archives while Linda Knudson and her family prepared a great dinner for the operating crew. Dave McClain, Dwight Whetstone and John Ryczkowski installed batteries, repaired a control stand and fixed a broken window on the WP FP7 805 and got her running again. Cody Wilson and Lew Barnard also helped with operations on Saturday. Wayne Monger covered the gate while Ed Powell helped in several areas. The evening entertainment featured our old friends Dale Sanders and Bob Larson.

May 21

Loren, Matt, John, Terry D. Kevin Caldwell, Craig Simmons and Ed Powell worked at putting everything back where it belonged on Sunday

and had most of it done by four in the afternoon despite chilly temperatures and spats of rain. Alan Hirasawa did vehicle maintenance.

May 22

Ken Iverson ran RAL's while Matt Parker and Loren Ross switched a few remaining pieces left over from the weekend. Alan worked on installing hasps and locks on locomotive and car doors and fixing a flat tire on the Grove crane. Alan also checked batteries on all the Maintenance of Way equipment. Norman Holmes helped with general cleanup.

May 23

Alan continued work on various projects and repairs on vehicles and MofW equipment. John and Alan lubed up six boxcar doors to make them easier to open. Loren Ross ran an RAL and joined Matt Parker and Charlie Spikes in a little switching. After the museum closed for the day, the crew ran a special freight train for the Washoe County Sheriffs Department C.E.R.T (Citizen Emergency Response Team). This is a new Federal program designed to train civilians to help in disaster and Homeland Security issues.

May 24

John lead a tour for a high school class and ran errands while Linda K. ran the gift shop.

May 25

Ken Iverson ran RAL's while Alan Hirasawa fabricated a new portable pump fuel vehicles.



May 27 dawns cold and snowy as Ops Season is about to begin.

- photo by Kerry Cochran

May 26

Andy Anderson returned to run some RAL's while Kerry Cochran, Jack Palmer, Lew Barnard and Paul and Ken Finnegan prepared for the weekend.

May 27-29

Memorial Day Weekend! The start of a new operating season, what we've been preparing for all spring, great anticipation of huge crowds and a prosperous year.....and two inches of new snow greeted the staff and crew Saturday morning! As the morning warmed up, the snow turned into a light mist and visitors began showing up. The crew was soon joined by Student Brakeman.....er, Brake...people, person's....Sally Thomas, Rick Gruninger, Cody Wilson and veteran Craig Simmons. Alan and Ken Finnegan continued working on the new pump while John started cleaning out another boxcar. Linda, Ashley and Brittany worked in the gift shop and prepared lunch for the crews. Norman continued work on the roof of the UP RPO car and helped John with garbage and recycling. Don Keller swept sidewalks and did general cleanup in between caboose rides.



Some of the crew on Opening Weekend: Kenneth Finnegan, Terry Decottignies, Jack Palmer, Cody Williams, Lew Barnard, Craig Simmons and Alan Hirisawa. Several crew members not shown.

- photo by Kerry Cochran

Charlie Spikes and "Terrible Terry D." joined the team on Sunday. Jack Green delivered some automotive batteries. Alan, Ken and Chris Boza repaired the reverser on the FM 1857, which was getting "sticky" and not releasing. John and Alan transferred fuel and continued working on boxcars. Paul Finnegan greased switches and the balloon track. While operations went smoothly, the number of visitors was noticeably off from last year, no doubt due to the weather and high gas prices.

May 30

John did general cleanup while Jay Sidney worked on grounds maintenance and worked on straightening out a boxcar. Norm ran RAL's.

May 31

Norman, John, Charlie, and Ken Iverson helped move and load the M60A1 Army tank onto a trailer for movement to it's new home at a museum at Camp Pendleton California. Under the direction of USMC Master Gunnery Sgt. James King, and help from Eric Spikes (a U.S. Army Armor mechanic), the batteries were changed and the tank almost ran under it's own power onto the trailer. But the diesel fuel had gone bad and our 20-ton truck crane, the tractor off the trailer and a city front-end loader were required to shove the 54-ton beast onto the trailer. The truck crane gave up it's power steering pump and both of the lifting rings on the back of the chassis were crushed but we couldn't have done it without her. Even the truckers and Marines were impressed with its power. Craig Simmons dropped by the museum that evening to report that he saw the tank heading through Reno on Interstate 395.



Paul Finnegan instructs new student brakemen.

- photo by Kerry Cochran

June 1

Norm ran RAL's and lubed the doors on the former Amtrak F3B Power car.

June 2

Jay Sarno started work on a new entry sign to the museum while Don Bordan ran RAL's.

June 3

Jay installed the new sign and it looks great! Hank Stiles, Ed Powell, Scott Franklin and his son, Dwight Wolfinger, Doug Morgan, and Bob Lindley worked on the Whiting electric car jacks in preparation for a "big lift".

Board of Directors meeting followed by the annual membership meeting. Gail McClure prepared another sumptuous meal and nearly 80 members devoured it. Dave Epling reported election results. Norm, Cody Wilson, Eddie Chase and Charlie Spikes ran an after hour caboose train for the attendees. John Walker presented "Super Volunteer" baseball caps to Jay Sarno, James Mason, and Norman Holmes who were present at the meeting and mentioned the other volunteers who are always helping John with all of the little projects around the museum that have to be done to keep the place going (Jay Knudson, Duane Vanderveen, Paul Lanyi, Jay Sidney, Loren Ross, Charlie Spikes, Alan Hirasawa, Don Keller and Doug Morgan).

Each of the directors thanked the membership for their support. A Question and Answer session followed. No questions were asked and no answers given.

June 4-5

James Mason and John Walker continued restoration of the "Coffin Cart" while Hank's crew successfully lifted the former Amtrak F3 B-unit, removed the trucks and sat it back down on shop trucks. It was an impressive sight and our visitors were thrilled to see the work up close!

June 6

Duane Vanderveen and James Mason helped with general cleanup.

June 7-9

Jay Knudson burning tree trimmings and weeds in the picnic area. Slow week with Ken Iverson running RAL's. Duane and John continued work on the "Coffin Cart". Don Keller pulling weeds

and sweeping up the shop. Steve Habeck working on getting our passenger cars ready for the upcoming Dunsmuir trip. Norm working on the UP RPO car.

June 10-11

Ken and Paul Finnegan and Lew Barnard ran the caboose train. Good crowd on Saturday, slow on Sunday. Tom Potts and his family delivered and assembled three outdoor picnic tables on the dock.



Don Keller adds a little color and friendly greetings to all the goings-on.

- photo by Kerry Cochran

June 12-23

Warming up finally. Steve Habeck working on passenger cars and the WP 484 caboose. Andy Anderson, Jack Zygnier, Ken, Norm, and Charlie running RAL's. John and Duane working on various projects including chasing down a mysterious bug in the museums DSL system. We never found exactly where or what the problem was, but somehow Duane managed to scare it away and we finally got some more computers hooked up into the network.

John and Jay Sidney cutting weeds while Ashley Voight and Don Keller picked up trash and raked the grounds. Hank Stiles transporting things between Portola and San Francisco for us. Ed Powell, Bill Parker, Cody Wilson, Norman, Lew

Barnard and the Finnegan's are running passenger trains.

June 24-30

Preparations for Dunsmuir Railroad Days trip. Paul Lanyi did a lot of grounds keeping and along with WPRRHS officers Thom Anderson and Dave Pires, and James Mason, washed several locomotives and cars in preparation for the trip. Frank Brehm, Tom Carter, Tim Carter and Eric Stephens also pitched in on the scrubbing. James, Terry D. and his crew did a lot of tape and texturing on the volunteer lounge car. The WPRRHS guys also did a lot of work in the archives. Tom and Alicia Carter, Wendy Holtz and Eugene Vicknair completed interior cleaning of the Silver Lodge. Norman Holmes worked on the exterior of the car. Hank Stiles, Rod McClure and Doug Morgan loaded supplies for the trip. Frank Brehm and Rod McClure worked on the oil house. John and Gail stocked the baggage car. Steve Habeck fueled locomotives and serviced batteries. Dave McClain did locomotive maintenance while Phil

Schmierer did vehicle maintenance.

July 1-9

Paul and Ken Finnegan stayed the week and did a phenomenal amount of work on batteries, RAL's, locomotive maintenance, general cleanup, track maintenance, car repairs, operations and special projects. Working with Lew Barnard, a full inspection of the WP GP7 705 was completed and some electrical repairs made towards getting this engine running again.

Alan Hirasawa, Ken and Chris Boza worked for several days and the familiar whine of the UP GP30 849 was heard again for the first time this year. Dave Pires returned with his son and daughter to work in the archives and made considerable progress. It was also great to have long time member Mike Hawkins and his wife visit us from Arizona.

Look for stories on Dunsmuir and Portola Railroad Days in the next issue of the Train Sheet...



After several years being out of service, UP 849 pulled a revenue passenger train on Saturday July 8, 2006. A multi-year repair project to put her back in service was championed by Alan Hirasawa, with major support by Kenneth Finnegan, Brittany Knudson and Guenther Hossner. Four cylinders were pulled and rebuilt to reduce oil blow-by out the stack.

- photo by Kenneth Finnegan