

CABOOSING AROUND THE MUSEUM

- John Walker, Museum Manager

Ok, where did we leave off last time? Oh that's right. We had just headed into July and things were getting busy at the museum. Here we go...

7.10

Jack Zygnier ran RAL's. Norman Holmes has been working on cleaning up Sacramento Northern Bay Window Caboose 1642 which is being readied for possible use as a "Birthday Party" car. Norman Stuart delivered a cement mixer, which he donated to the museum.

7.11-7.14

Brutally hot with temperatures over 100 degrees! The high temps brought on a rash of track problems. And here is a good opportunity to talk about safety and teamwork. Chris Boza was walking around the west end of the museum when he noticed a broken angle bar (the piece that bolts on both sides of a rail joint). After marking it, he started walking the track. Chris found another broken angle bar and a couple that had minor cracks. Chris also found a crack in the end of one of the frogs on track one (which I'm told is kind of a normal occurrence with this type of frog). Chris called Museum Manager John Walker out to look at these items. UP Engineer and FRRS member Roy Lopez was visiting the gift shop and John asked Roy to join him in making an assessment of the situation. While walking out to look at the broken angle bars, John noticed the ground under the rail coming off the cracked frog was disturbed. Upon closer examination, it was obvious that the rail had shifted and sheared a couple of spikes holding it down right out of the ties! Roy nudged the rail with his boot – and it moved!

After considering all of the good advice from Chris and Roy, John decided to red flag the west end of track one all the way out to Malfunction Junction until a more qualified track inspector could look at the track. John phoned Roadmaster Rod McClure and explained the situation. Like a good leader, Rod said "It's your call John, you're the one on the ground looking at it. Do what you think is right. Whether you're right or wrong I'll support your decision".

Phil Schmeier, Chris Boza, Terry Decottingies and Charlie Spikes rallied together the next day and began working on the defects. Most were corrected that day and the red flag was lifted. A

2-3 M.P.H. speed restriction remained on one section until eventually repaired by Roadmaster Rod McClure and crew.

This was a great example of cooperation and teamwork. Our Operating Dept. rulebook often refers to "Higher Authority" and "When in doubt – choose the safest course of action". In this case, a safety problem was discovered and quickly repaired following the chain of command (Higher Authority) and choosing the safest course of action.

7.15-7.16

Chris Boza worked on the volunteer lounge car while Ed Powell serviced the air conditioning unit on the Edenwold sleeper.

Over the last twenty something years, the museum has acquired a lot of "stuff". Tables, chairs, desks, mop buckets, nuts & bolts, nails, Styrofoam food containers, heaters, lamps, old picture frames, paperback books, old computers, stereo speakers, etc, etc. Most of the stuff was acquired with the good intention of using it somewhere, someday. But over time, we just never found a use for some items and they began taking up valuable storage space.

Norman Holmes and John Walker began gathering and setting up for our first annual "Yard Sale". We set up several tables in the parking lot and Norman and Barbara Holmes, along with Duane Vanderveen braved blistering heat for two days and managed to sell \$100 worth of stuff (that we hope no one will donate back to us). While the results were a little disappointing, it was a good start and it did bring in a lot of people who also looked around the museum and rode the passenger train. It also helped us make a little room in our storage.

All good stuff left over was stored in a special place and will be easy to find when we do this again next spring when it's a little cooler. Some stuff was deemed totally worthless and a pickup truck load was taken to the dump. With disposal costs on some items going up (\$13 for a mattress, \$10-15 for a TV monitor) we're going to have to start being a little more judicious on accepting some donations in the future.

7.17- 7.21

Jack Zygnier, Ken Iverson and Charlie Spikes running RAL's. Norman and Duane working on getting power to the SN 1652 caboose. Mike

Barlow, Chris Boza and Jay Sidney working on various projects.

7.22 – 7.23

Linda Brimmer and Gail McClure helping out in the gift shop despite sweltering heat. July has been a busy month with lots of visitors despite the high temperatures and high gas prices.

We enjoyed a visit from Barbara Flannery and family. The Flannery's were impressed with the new displays in the engine house and overall appearance of the museum. They left a very nice donation towards our continued progress.

7.24-7.27

Seth Adams working on the SP SD9 4404. RAL's slowed down this week giving our track crews some time to finish up repairs and maintenance to our tracks. Phil Schmeier single handedly changed out several angle bars and drove a lot of spikes. Thanks Sluggo!

Despite high gas prices the museum has remained very busy as we head into August. Much better than last year. RAL's remain steady. Lot's of preparation work for the upcoming Railroad Days celebration.

Steve Habeck, Rod and Gail McClure, Charlie Spikes, Duane Vanderveen and Norman Holmes have committed several days of good hard work (well into the evenings) rearranging equipment, putting things away and straightening up the building and grounds. Paul Lanyi donated a lawn mower and made a big dent in the weeds and grass around the balloon track. Jay Sidney has worked on various sorting and cleaning projects and Seth Adams has spent a week at the museum helping John with various projects.

Phil Schmeier returned to work on mechanical issues and helped with other projects. James Mason came from Pasadena to work on the volunteer lounge car. Doug Morgan cleaned and straightened up the shop area and with Phil Schmeier, drove to Susanville to pick up two handcars for Railroad Days.

August 24 – 27th Railroad Days!
(See special report)

Craig Simmons, Steve Ross, Duane Vanderveen, Norman Holmes, Paul Lanyi and Jay Sidney pitched in and got all of the mess from Railroad Days cleaned up in short order and tables and

chairs put away. Thanks to them the museum was returned to normal in just a few days.

Labor Day weekend operations went off flawlessly. Good, steady crowds saw operations continue through the entire weekend (unlike last year when operations were annulled on Monday for lack of visitors). Another Safe and successful Operating Season!

Dave Pires and his kids have done a great job working in the Archives and rearranging a lot of stuff in our storage cars this year. Mark Granados also pitched in with cleaning and rearranging the Display Room.

9.07 – 9.13

Steve Habeck has been working on an electrical project on WP caboose 484. Norman and Charlie running RAL's while everyone else is on vacation. Hank Stiles and Doug Morgan working on mechanical items. Norman Holmes beginning the repainting of WP Alco S4 563, which has been in red primer since it was acquired from Foster Farms many years ago. The locomotive doesn't run (yet) but was in need of a paint job as many people mistook the red primer as rust. The goal is to make it look presentable and get everyone to quit complaining about the supposed "rust".

Seth Adams working on the SP SD9 4404 and UP GP30 849 with mixed results. We're still running "push-pull" train rides on weekends thanks to Charlie Spikes, Cody Wilson, Rick Gruninger, Tom Andrews, Ed Powell, Tom Potts, Norman Holmes and Craig Simmons.

9.14-25

Visitors remain strong. Still running a few passenger trains on weekends. Ken Iverson, "Terrible Terry D.," Charlie and Andy Anderson running RAL's.

We closed out September with Norman Holmes running RAL's and finishing up the restoration of Alco 563. The repainted engine looks wonderful and awaits lettering (many of our volunteers don't even recognize it and keep asking where the "new" engine came from). John and Linda are mailing out a Mail order catalog for the gift shop. Phil Schmeier returned yet again to work on vehicle maintenance, track inspection and tried to repair the broken web cam CPU. Unfortunately, Phil failed gallantly on the CPU but it was a good try – Thanks again Phil.

10.7 – 10.10

Work Weekend. Paul Jarmusz of Portland Oregon repainted the women's room; sorted nuts and bolts and helped John and Jay Sarno clean out some boxcars. Jay also constructed some new boxcar steps, which will make climbing in and out of the cars safer for everyone. Ed Powell checked and serviced caboose stoves and did maintenance on RAL engines. Chris Allan, Doug Morgan, Bruce Veilleux and Eugene Vicknair tarped the camp car and Silver Lodge and Bruce and Eugene worked on the roof of the volunteer Lounge car.

We're running short of RAL engineers again and we even pressed FRRS President Rod McClure and Museum Manager John Walker into service! Rod, Norman Holmes, John and UP Engineer Greg Elems of Reno filled the gaps and helped keep our customers happy. David Elems worked on several projects. Wayne Monger worked on extending "Dodgepole Siding". James Mason worked on the "Silver Debris" with Eugene and Bruce. Gail McClure prepared another great dinner for the BOD meeting and all the volunteers. Wayne Monger also donated some photos to the archives. We enjoyed seeing FRRS Life Member Richard Woods visiting from Phoenix, Arizona.

10.11 – 10.13

John cleaning up around the museum while James Mason continues work on the "Silver Debris" (we're gonna have to change the name of this car as it is really beginning to look nice in there). Jeff Sanders textured the inside of the car and welded up the outside access cover.

Norman, Craig Simmons, Charlie, James and Jeff Sanders pitched in to form an ad hoc crew to run a push-pull caboose train for the benefit of a bus tour. The folks had a great time and promised to come back again!

10.13 Friday the 13th! Nothing happened! And this has nothing to do with the fact that the web cam is broken – honest!

10.14 – 10.18

Some rain and a cold wave moving through the area. Several bus tours and school groups coming to visit. The Fall Colors are Gorgeous and we're still getting a steady stream of visitors.

10.19 – 10.31

Ken, Norm, Jack, Charlie and even John are

running RAL's. Getting colder with some rain. Lots of cleanup projects, boxcar cleaning, grounds keeping, etc.

Duane Vanderveen has been working on several electrical projects including installation of several new security lights and ceiling fans in the gift shop.

John finally found some time to overhaul the old storeroom located next to the gift shop. The old wooden shelves in there were drooping and the space was not being used as well as it could be. With the help of Duane and Charlie, the old shelves were ripped out and new metal shelving and a filing cabinet were installed. The modifications also resulted in much better lighting and a much cleaner, well-organized storage room.

Steve and Charlie have been fueling locomotives and checking batteries on our locomotives. Parts of the water system have also been shut down to prevent freezing.

The California Conservation Corp visited again on the 22nd and cleared several acres of brush on the south side of our property, which is adjacent to the senior citizens complex on the hill. Boy is it great to have these kids around! It was a great relief to finally cut back this potential fire hazard. Several trees around the balloon track were "limbed up" again eliminating some blind spots and reducing potential fire danger (looks neater too). There has long been an old tree along Dodgepole siding that has never been trimmed. The tree was growing in all directions and was a real eyesore.

The CCC crews got in there and limbed some twenty feet up the tree removing almost a cord of wood – and the tree is still standing! The area looks a lot better now and hopefully we can now use this area for additional volunteer parking next year.

Still a good stream of visitors. RAL's have slowed down quite a bit but we're still having a better month than last year. Larry Hanlon and John Ryczkowski working on the electrical system of the WP FP7 805.

And that's all for now. Remember: "WP" means "Willing People".