

throttle of the LRD96, aka the Stockton Turn. Regular hogger J. J. Parise has taken the day off, so I get the call to fill his vacancy. The conductor and brakeman are old WP buddies of mine, Larry Boykin and Nick Schon, both holding this preferred run as they approach retirement.

The trip south was uneventful. 6000 feet of train behind three big barrels (no more SD40s on this job). Pulling down track 9 in Stockton yard, I notice the west end yard engine tied onto a cut of cars in 8 rail. The car next to the GP38 was CCT caboose 24! I knew she was enroute to Portola but had no knowledge of her actually being readied for this move, as I had just seen #24 at the CCT carbarn on May 1st. But now she's sitting on the rail next to me. I wonder if...

After a power swap, and a two hour wait (over coffee, at the yard office) while yard crews assembled our outbound train, the yardmaster sent our manifest over the printer. Lo and behold, there's #24 as the rear car on our 111-car train (13 loads, 98 empties, 5242 tons, 7360 feet). Right where she was intended to be, and about to be pulled by the only engineer on the entire UP system tied to her historically! Divine intervention, anyone??

Hard to believe that this 81 year-old lady is still allowed 70mph on the UP; that was the speed indicated on the manifest. But our maximum this trip is 50 due to other restricted cars. Departing Stockton at 0045 on the 15th, we ran on favorable color all the way to Elk Grove. Number 24 passed within 20 feet of the old CCT Lodi freight depot for the final time at 0120 and her last "OS" thru Polk happened at 0200. She was put to bed in the Roseville hump by 0250.

It was indeed a trip to remember, working with three old friends -- Larry, Nick...and number 24.

Portola, she's headed your way!

Dave Stanley and Jeff Moreau are the authors of the definitive book on the Central California Traction Company. This fine volume is available for purchase in the WPRM Gift Shop.

Special thanks to CCT GM Dave Buccolo and FRRS President Rod McClure for their assistance and support in making the acquisition of the 24 possible.

MANAGEMENT CHANGES

John Walker, longtime FRRS volunteer and member who has served as our Museum Manager for the last three years, has resigned his position to take a post with the Nevada State Railroad Museum. We thank John for all his hard work and wish him well in his new position. We're going to miss seeing him around the museum every day, but he has promised he will remain an active volunteer.

A search for a new manager has led to the hiring of another longtime volunteer to fill John's sizable shoes. David Epling has taken on the task and is now getting settled in. David is already looking at some improvements to the Gift Shop. In addition, we have now started accepting walk-in RALs when a locomotive and engineer are available. This has already produced an increase in RAL income.

Finally, a belated welcome to Merrill Thurman, who has joined the FRRS Board of Directors. Merrill was appointed at the January meeting following the resignation of Hank Stiles. Due to personal issues, Director Stiles has had to leave the Board after many years of devoted service.

DEPARTURE

Former Western Pacific engineer Gordon Clyde Thurman passed away peacefully on May 17, 2008, at Fulton Presbyterian Manor in Fulton, Missouri. He was 92 years old. Gordon was born in Girdner, Mo. to Lee and Hannah (ne Lefler) Thurman. He was married Oct. 3, 1948, to Joyce Hartleip, who preceded him in death. Gordon is survived by son Merrill Thurman, who is also an FRRS Director and Life Member, wife Rita, grandchildren Lee (Melissa) Thurman and Victoria (Ben) Hash, two great-grandchildren, sisters Faye Sims, Gayle Morgan and Rosella Russell and nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. Gordon loved hard work, his animals and the great outdoors. More than anything he loved his siblings, his children, his grandchildren and his great grandchildren, referring to them as the "light of my life."

Our condolences go to Gordon's family and friends and we thank him for his service to the Western Pacific.