

Museum Web Page Update – Feb 2016

–Paul Finnegan, Webmaster

Santa Trains 2015 was a huge success. If you were unable to attend and want to see what you missed, or if you were able to attend and want to relive the moment, there is a new “Santa Trains 2015” photo gallery on the wplives.org web site. Use the “About Us” pull down menu to visit the “WPRM Photo and Video Gallery” page. If you have photos or videos of FRRS/WPRM events or activities you would like to share with the rest of us, I invite you to contribute them. Guidelines and the procedure to get your contributions posted are on the gallery web page. Contact me at <webmaster@wplives.org> to explore seeing your photographs online representing the society and the museum.

There are two new entries under the “News” pull-down menu on the wplives.org web site. The first is titled “Train Sheet Archive” and the other is “Notes from the webmaster...”

With the help of Frank Brehm, Eugene Vicknair, Kerry Cochran and Matt Elems, I have collected almost all the old society member newsletters, *The Train Sheet*, as Adobe PDF files. The collection goes all the way back to issue #1. I created a web page with the files organized by year to make any individual issue easy to find and view. New issues will be posted one year after publication. We are confident we have the missing issues, so after they are scanned and posted, this will become a complete collection.

I am also working on a Master Index for the archived newsletters. There is a link to the Master Index on the Train Sheet Archive web page. Once the index is created it will be relatively easy to maintain; but it is taking significant time and effort to glean the information from the 33 years of issues to populate the index. I joined the museum in 1992 and am amazed at the articles from the early issues about how the museum was created. I recommend taking some time to read about how your society and museum were formed and how your favorite artifacts were acquired.

On the “Notes from the webmaster...” page, I will post news about new features or items of special interest on the web site. I also will use this as a place to share some background and more information about the web site in general.

A new feature recently added to the Operating Department page is a photo directory of the

Operating Department members. You can view it from the “Operating Department” web page under the “Museum” pull down menu. If you are in the Operating Department, but not in the photo directory, please send me an appropriate photo of yourself to post.

As reported in my last column, we have four new sign-up tools on the web site. Recently I added a major security enhancement with the addition of Google’s reCAPTCHA anti-robot tool to all of our sign-up tools. If you use one of the tools, be sure to check the “I am not a robot” check box before you submit the form. The reCAPTCHA tool uses a very sophisticated set of algorithms to make sure the user is not a web-bot. If it can’t tell for sure, it presents a set of pictures that the user must select from that match the stated criteria. Since putting it online, no robot has made it past the front door for any of our sign-up web pages.

I continue to make incremental improvements to the collection pages. Recently I have been working on the Boxcars, MOW and Locomotive pages. I created a new tool that inserts links to articles in the *Train Sheet* archive so now some of the locomotive pages have links to the articles about that particular locomotive. I expect this to grow over time.

I am always looking for feedback, content and new ideas. If you have some, please don’t hesitate to contact me at webmaster@wplives.org.

Museum Web Page Update – April 2016

– Paul Finnegan, Webmaster

On Monday March 7th the WPLives.org web site went mobile. A set of six web pages designed for the mobile smart phone or tablet user went live. The pages contain the high priority information a mobile user is anticipated to value about the museum. Major content includes directions to the museum, museum hours of operation, the FRRS calendar, admission and train ride fares, RAL information and society contact information. The main WPLives.org web address has been enhanced to immediately redirect a mobile user to the mobile home page. However, the mobile user also has easy access to the full WRPM/FRRS web site on each mobile page.

The online archive now has almost all The Train Sheets issues going back to the formation of the FRRS in 1983. The archive is under the “News” pull-down menu on the web site. Train Sheet #167 was added to the online archive and the master index on April 1st. The master index is designed to help the user easily find specific articles or topics in the archive.

Our collection of rolling stock is one of the strengths of our museum. The web site has a large number of photographs and information about many individual pieces. Under the “Museum > Museum Rolling Stock” pull down menu is a set of pages showing many of our locomotives, passenger cars, freight cars, etc. Some of the items in our collection (e.g. WP 805A) have their own “mini” web page. I have enhanced the revision control system I developed for managing our web site to now search the Train Sheet archive and insert links into the collection web pages to the individual Train Sheet articles about the item. The revision control system will automatically update the article links each time the Train Sheet archive is updated. I hope the users will find this very helpful when researching a particular piece of our collection.

I created a new passenger car web page for the WP 106. I found a large pdf file, *A HIGHER CALLING – the story of Western Pacific’s “Charles O. Sweetwood”*, prepared by Eugene Vicknair that did not have any links to it. The history is very well done and tells a tremendous story. To share this document I created the web page for the car and added it to the passenger car web page under the “Museum > Museum Rolling Stock” pull-down menu.

Ethan Doty, the Assistant Roadmaster, called a work day for March 26th to work on the west 1/2 switch. I added this to the Museum Event Volunteer Sign Up system. He took some photos at the event and sent them to me so I could create a new “Track Work” gallery on the WPRM Photo & Video Gallery web page under the “About Us” pull-down menu. Ethan also wrote captions for each of the photos. Take a look to see what the team did. If you weren’t

there this time, please feel welcome to come join in next time! Watch the Museum Event sign up and *Latest Museum News Update* on the home page for future opportunities.

We used the newly developed Crew Training Material web page for our annual rule training and exam sessions on April 9th and 10th. We had fourteen students (and three instructors) on Saturday and eleven students on Sunday. I created a down-loadable, static copy of the appropriate sub-set of the web site to use at the training. It can be loaded on a memory stick or disk drive and functions just like the real web site. We used it at training and therefore the training class did not require internet connectivity. All the material we used is available on line on the Museum > Operating Department > Crew Training Materials page.

We showed the new “*Use of Hand and Lantern Signals for Train and Engine Movements*” training video produced by the Operating Department at the training. You can view it on the Crew Training Materials page or on the “About Us > WPRM Photo & Video Gallery” web pages. It was filmed on site at the museum.

With very short notice, the Operating Department learned a school group was coming to the museum on Thursday April 21st. It was added to the “Operating Dept Crew Sign Up” tool which helped pull a crew together so we could run a caboose train for the visitors. I am always looking for feedback, content and new ideas.

If you have some, please don’t hesitate to contact me at webmaster@wplives.org.

Museum Web Page Update – June 2016

–Paul Finnegan, Webmaster

In early June an extensive suite of web pages about the history of the Western Pacific was released. Some of the material is from the old WPRRHS web site, some of it is new. It is under the Historical/Archive Department on the Museum pull-down menu. Eugene Vicknair gave an overview of the new pages at the 2016