

## General Superintendent's Report – April 2018

– Kerry Cochran, Director, Gen. Superintendent

Well, we are about a week away from the 2018 Western Pacific Historic Convention in Salt Lake City. I hope to see several members there and Eugene has a great line up of presentations along with several tours and layout visits.

While the discounted hotel rooms are all booked, if you have not made your plans yet, there still are openings for you to attend. Please visit the website and take a look at the schedule. <[http://wplives.org/news\\_items/2018\\_convention.html](http://wplives.org/news_items/2018_convention.html)>

Members (active and above) should have received *Headlight* #50 and all members should have received Issue #176 of the *Train Sheet*.

I would like to make a request to all members, please take the time to submit articles for the *Headlight*. We are very, very short on written materials for the *Headlight* and need more photos, articles and authors to help us get this publication back on-track. Should there be any questions on the *Headlight* or *Train Sheet* submission of articles, please contact me or the respective editors.

As I mentioned in my February report, we were working on creating a Safety Committee. I am pleased to announce that the committee has been created. The following members have offered to be on the committee: Charlie Spikes, David Elems and Duane Vander Veen. The committee is just getting started and will need to select a committee head that will report to the general superintendent (should the general superintendent not be available, they will then report to the FRRS President) with reports going to the FRRS Board of Directors.

Should you have any interest in assisting the safety committee, please contact me. I am sure the other members could use more help.

To the members of the Operating Department, don't forget about crew training on May 5<sup>th</sup> starting at 10am. The operating season starts on May 26<sup>th</sup>. There has been a lot of work going on in the off-season to update the training material for the 2018 season and we hope to see

you at crew training.

Should you have any questions about the Operating Department, please reach out to Loren Ross, the Superintendent of Operations. You can email Loren at [operating\\_dept@wplives.org](mailto:operating_dept@wplives.org).

“As always, there are so many volunteers that help around the museum all the time and I would be remised if I did not say thank you to all of you. I may have missed some specifically by name, however all of your help is greatly appreciated”.

At any time should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, I may not have an answer right away, however I will get one for you.

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## Historical/Archive Dept Report – April 2018

– Kerry Cochran, Director, General Superintendent

Work continues during the winter on some of the archive materials that have been received last year. A couple of donations have come in during the winter and will be inventoried and placed into the archives next month.

We continue to get inquiries from members, and the general public, on materials that we may have in the archives. As we open the museum for this season, we will be looking for the requested materials and getting answers back to the requesters.

While not all the inquiries have been answered yet, we are still looking into pulling the information out of the Historical/Archive files in order to answer the questions. This has become a large task as most of the archives are not cataloged yet. I have been able to answer some questions, however others are still pending.

In order to answer one of the requests, I was able to find some drawings in my files at home and sent them to the requester, with an indication that as soon as I could get to the

museum, I would look for any other drawings for them. The requester was looking for WP Depot information for the Hayward and Livermore stations. He is going to use them in creating a model for a model railroad layout.

During the last month Eugene Vicknair, Frank Brehm and I have been able to answer several inquiries to the museum about various questions about the Western Pacific Railroad. Several of these inquiries have been from individuals researching the WP for their own personal work and interests in the WP. Several of these inquiries came via email to the Museum Store, which in turn sent them to both Eugene and me for answers.

I have been fortunate to have Frank Brehm as a

resource on the Historical/Archive staff to help me in obtaining answers or the correct resource to look for answers for these inquires.

For part of the past two months, I have been scanning several WP manuals, and our webmaster has placed them on the web site.

Paul Finnegan (the webmaster) and I have been working on getting more items/articles ready to be published on the web pages for the history of the WP and the FRRS. Paul has been a great resource in this endeavor, he has provided me with great insight in reviewing documents prior to us publishing them. If you have not visited the Historical/Archive department web page recently, please consider looking at them to see "What's New" in the Western Pacific Documents

### Museum Sponsors

The Western Pacific played a major role in developing the economy of Plumas County and the surrounding region. The Western Pacific Railroad Museum is proud to be a part of that heritage and to hold a position in supporting the ongoing economic health of our community. We welcome the support of that community in return. Helping to preserve the Western Pacific is good for tourism, good for our regional culture and good for business.

We ask our members and visitors to support our business sponsors, companies who have generously contributed to the museum and its mission to preserve the Western Pacific family.

If you are a business owner, see how you can support the WP Museum, your community and improve your advertising and networking outreach through our sponsorship program.



**H & R Block - David Hansen**

2100 Main St, Ste. B, Susanville, CA 96130

Tel: 530-257-9339



**Sierra Motel**

380 East Sierra Avenue, Portola, CA 96122

530-832-4223



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page. <[http://wplives.org/wphistory\\_wp\\_documents.html](http://wplives.org/wphistory_wp_documents.html)>

#### Needs for the Archives:

We are always looking for help in getting materials properly stored and we need the support of the membership with helping supply storage materials for the archives. Items listed below are needed to help keep our collection stored properly and should you wish to help us out, we certainly would like your donation and help.

- Computer Program to track all the Historical/Archive items (PastPerfect) is the computer program that I have been looking at, however I have not received a cost for that program as of yet.
- Archive Storage boxes for 35mm slides

- Archive Storage boxes for 8 1/2 X 11 materials

Should any member receive any donation and/or get an inquiry about a donation, please get in touch with Eugene, Frank, myself or any member of the board of directors so that we may follow-up with the donor to make sure we properly address the donation or inquiry. I would also like to thank all the volunteers that help us in the archive department.

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## New Audio Tour at Museum

—Paul Finnegan, Webmaster

Bring your smart phone with you the next time you are exploring the museum. We have a new tool to assist you in learning about some of our collection and the history of the society and the Western Pacific Railroad. The idea has been kicking around for years to have some kind of audio tour at the museum. There are various solutions out in the market; a popular one is having low power FM transmitters and the radio wands that people carry around with them. I long ago rejected solutions that require the museum to purchase and maintain equipment. The commercial solutions also tend to be rather pricey.

I realized we could leverage the technology many people carry with them: their smart phone and their data plans. I have created a new web tool at [audiotour.wplives.org](http://audiotour.wplives.org) (which, although it works on a desktop, it is targeted at the mobile device.) This web page has subjects grouped by Railroad Company, then sorted by road-number. The visitor starts at that web page and as they explore the museum they select an entry from the top page and then click [Play] to hear a short audio clip about the subject. The audio plays on their mobile device and the visitor closes the audio clip page to return to the top page. The visitor is using the data plan on their phone, not the museum's Wi-Fi, so it should work everywhere on the property.

The audio page also includes the clip transcript as plain text so the user can read about the subject rather than listen to the audio clip. This may be valuable in noisy or crowded environments. Additionally, most of the pages have more information, related photographs and links to other web pages about the subject. A few even have links to short videos about the subject. The SPMW 208 rotary snowplow and the WP 106, "Charles O. Sweetwood", pages were the first to have video clips included.

A secondary top page has the audio pages grouped by type of equipment rather than by railroad. Each of these entries has a short audio about the type of equipment, (e.g. Locomotives) and has links to the specific pieces of that type of equipment in the audio tour.

Please try the tour the next time you are at the museum, or experience a virtual tour from the comfort of your own home!

