

Track Work September 2018

To keep the trains on track for smooth and safe operation, we need to continuously maintain the track at the museum. Loren Ross pulled together a group of museum volunteers to replace the frog on the west 1-2 switch starting on September 17, 2018.

A frog is (as defined in the Western Pacific Glossary of Railroad Terms):

FROG - A track structure used at the intersection of two running rails to provide support for wheels and passageways for their flanges, thus permitting wheels on either rail to cross to the other.

The frog in the switch on the west 1-2 switch was broken because the ties under the switch were bad and the track moved every time locomotives and cars were moved over the switch. It is a lot of work to replace the frog and the long ties that are needed under a switch, but our volunteers stepped up and got the work done in only three days.

The work started on Monday, September 17th and was completed on Wednesday September 19th. A big thank you is due to the volunteers who stepped up as Willing People. The team included (in addition to Loren): Ethan Doty, Steve Habeck, Greg Elems, Duane Vander Veen, Charlie Spikes, David Elems, and Randy Morton. Randy Morton, the newest member to our track gang, is also a retired UP engineer. He also put time in M-of-W early in his WP career.



New Frog - photo by Greg Elems



In progress... - photo by Loren Ross

Moving Stephen Cavanaugh's WP HO Layout to the Western Pacific Railroad Museum

- Kerry Cochran

Stephen Cavanaugh, a well-known modeler and Feather River Rail Society member, created his Western Pacific Railroad HO model layout in his three car garage at his home in Tracy, Ca. His layout has appeared in the Model Railroader January 1994 issue and in the Model Railroad Hobbyist magazine in January 2011. Stephen passed away on January 7, 2018.

Cavanaugh had a passion for trains that developed in his early childhood years and spent a great deal of his life as a model railroad hobbyist traveling to various roadshows and exhibits. In fact, he was such an enthusiast that he almost perfectly replicated the western pacific railroads piece by piece. You can see the level of detail in action that was featured in the Model Railroad Hobbyist magazine. This was one of his great achievements: "Steve's masterpiece", as one of his brothers put it.

Several modelers, including Robert Hoffman,

Scott Inman, David Stanley, Doug Peterson, Patrick Davis and David Vipond started a project to save and move a small portion of Stephen Cavanaugh's Western Pacific Railroad model layout to the museum. When they ran into problems, Eugene Vicknair and I had several telephone conversations on how to go about saving this model layout.

Once it was clear if we did not move it by a certain date the layout sections would be forever be lost to the dumpster. With Eugene's help, I contacted the family and made arrangements to meet them so that I could get some measurements and see just what we were up against. Once that was done, I contacted Paul Finnegan and asked for his help (knowing he is in the Bay Area and is retired like me) we set a date and met with the family at Stephen home and prepared the remaining sections of the layout for transportation. (This in itself took 6 hours plus 2 hours travel time each way.)

Then on Sunday September 9th, with the help of Eugene, Eugene's friend Chris Kaprielian, Paul and myself, we loaded the layout sections onto a trailer. Paul and I then transported them to the museum. (We started at 7:30 AM and we arrived at the museum at 4:30 PM, another long day)

I want to thank Stephanie and John Busam, Stephen's daughter and son-in-law for all the help in making this take palace. I need also thank the original crew who tried at the first attempt: Robert Hoffman, Scott Inman, David Stanley, Doug Peterson, Patrick Davis and David Vipond and the Sunday crew of: Eugene Vicknair, Paul Finnegan and Eugene's friend, Chris Kaprielian.



Here's the moving crew, smiling now that the layout sections are on the trailer.

James Gronwald's Layout

The 2018 WP Historic Convention was held in Salt Lake City, one of the many events was a layout tour of James Gronwald's Layout.

James models the D&RGW coal hauling in the Soldier summit area in the 1950-60's era. The room is a basement room 14 x 20 feet with a dogleg of 13 x 19 feet. He has around 300 feet of double mainline track. This part of the layout is about 80% done and James's has done some outstanding hand carved mountain work, which you must see to believe. The backdrop scenery paintings by Rob Spangler are spectacular. In May of 2013, James started construction of the second phase of his layout that will be the SLC area of his layout. This phase is the new SLC area with many industrial sidings. This area is about the same size as his first phase. Control is Digitrax DCC.

photos on next page...



Do you model the WP or related lines?

Please share your photos, stories and experiences with us. Send your materials to Bob Sims (bsims@wplives.org) and Kerry Cochran (kcochran@wplives.org) so we can all learn from and enjoy your experience.