

In this invitation you will see the following message:

<Your Name>

*This is your invitation to provide the FRRS with your background check which is required to volunteer at the Feather River Rail Society and/or the Western Pacific Railroad museum.*

*Please follow the Verified Volunteers instructions to submit a background check, we are asking that each volunteer (donate) the \$19.00 cost for the check. Should you have any questions, please contact me.*

*The FRRS Policy for background screening can be found by going to:*

*[https://www.wplives.org/museum\\_policies/PM0033\\_Volunteers\\_Background\\_Screening\\_Policy.pdf](https://www.wplives.org/museum_policies/PM0033_Volunteers_Background_Screening_Policy.pdf)*

*Thank you,*

*Kerry Cochran*

*General Superintendent*

The volunteer manager will review the report provided by the background screener and determine if any negative information has a direct connection with an applicant's ability to fulfill the volunteer's duties with competence and integrity, or that might impact safety.

Background check findings shall be reviewed in a fair, impartial and confidential manner. Because the Feather River Rail Society priority is the safety of the members, staff, volunteers and guests, certain convictions for certain crimes serve to automatically disqualify applicants for volunteer service at the Feather River Rail Society. For example any position that involves working with children will automatically disqualify a volunteer who is a convicted sex offender. A person will be ineligible for volunteer service if the person:

- (1) Refuses to consent to a background screen.
- (2) Makes a false statement in connection with a background screen.

Verified Volunteers will communicate with you during the background process and once you have created an account with them you will receive email updates.

Any questions or special considerations concerning this policy should be directed to the volunteer manager or the general superintendent.

## Reflections of the Western Pacific (part 5)

- Jack Palmer

I made several visits to the Niles (now Fremont) Station and its small storage yard to take pictures of the WP equipment and on November 27, 1981, was pleasantly surprised to see Al Hill whom I met previously in April 1980, when he was the Trainmaster at Oroville.

We had a great time recalling our first meeting and his words of advice in response to my request to go into the yard for pictures and also my ridin' the rails' from Oroville that day up to Portola and eventually Salt Lake City and return. He also informed me he would soon be

reassigned to Milpitas and that we should keep in touch. (I'm thankful we did)

After his move to Milpitas he would occasionally call and tell me "Bring your camera Saturday, I have something to show you". That was September, 1983, and only a few WP units remained in service and their days were numbered so he kept GP-7's numbers 708, 709 and 711 and GP-9's Nos. 715, 728, 729 and 731 long enough for me to get their pictures while



still in WP colors. After that, he was promoted to Ass't. Terminal Supt, Stockton.

One day I told him I would like to go to the Union Pacific facility at North Platte, Nebraska, to take pictures of WP units as they were going through the process of changing their colors to the Union Pacific, and had written to the local U.P. office for their consideration.

In our several conversations after that he asked if I had received a reply to my request, until one day he called and said: "Start packing your bags – I received authorization for you to go to Salt Lake City and North Platte!" This came as a total surprise because I had not asked for his assistance, nor had he even once hinted that he would become involved with my request. I don't recall my response in expressing my appreciation, but I was sincerely grateful for his assistance.

Upon completion of all my arrangements, I wrote to Ex-WP Engineer Bob Smith (who I met in 1980) to inform him of my plans and that I would leave Oakland April 8, 1984, on Amtrak, and the possibility he might be at the controls when we arrived at Salt Lake City.

He was indeed the engineer and was waiting to greet me and then took me up into the cab for a quick look. We had but a brief visit because I was scheduled for a 7:00 a.m. appointment with the Shop Superintendent.

I then met with Mr. William Cocking, Shop Supt., who promptly gave me a personal tour and told me that he did this occasionally for school children as an introduction to the Union Pacific, some of which might become employees in the future.

I first noticed the U.P. Centennial No. 6929 as it was lifted up off its trucks and hoisted up to the roof by the shop Crane and barely clearing the end walls of the shop. (THAT was impressive!)

I took several photos of the "Reno Runaways". WP GP-35 No. 3014 was seen partially assembled by parts salvaged from other locomotives. The WP GP-35 No. 3020 was located outside the shop

waiting its turn and the WP Derrick No. 79 was being serviced.

I then went out into the yard area and took pictures of six WP Cabooses and the remainder of the WP Dead Line.

I left early the next morning and arrived at North Platte April 11, 1984, and was happy to see my car rental was waiting for me.

As I approached the entrance to the Union Pacific's Bailey Yard I was amazed at the sight of this huge facility because it is seven miles long – the largest in the U.S. I immediately realized it would be necessary to develop a plan where I could take pictures of each area separately during my visit.

I first noticed two "slugs" on the track nearest the parking area and went into the yard office where I was greeted by Mr. Berney, Trainmaster, and then directed to Mr. Tom Allred, who after signing my "Release of Liability" form, provided me with my Visitor's I.D., Hard hat and Safety glasses. I was then instructed on the Safety Practices to be observed while on their property.

Mr. Allred and I drove out to the West Hump Yard and Bowl and watched the operator of the computer as it classified each newly arrived box car at the top of the hump and sent down to one of fifty tracks in the bowl to its designated track to become part of a new westbound train. (There's an East Hump too.)

We then went to the "One Spot" which is a small shop building where they repaired Freight Cars. We next visited the Paint Shop which is attached to the north side of the Diesel Shop Building. There is but one rail and is long enough to accommodate two locomotives. And what a sight to behold when we went into the Diesel Shop. There are eleven tracks in this shop and all were occupied. I thanked him for the tour and left for lunch and checked into my motel.

I reviewed a booklet prepared by their Public Relations Department at Omaha, and learned that the Diesel Shop here installs new or rebuilt parts and that parts needing major rebuilding

are sent to Omaha.

When I returned that afternoon I pursued my original plan of following the WP locomotives as they were being processed to meet the requirements of their new owner. I was informed that the WP units were initially prepared in the Diesel Shop. I soon located the WP 3508 and noticed the Nathan M-5 horn was removed and placed in a basket with others and the number boards also removed, and was being checked by shop personnel. It was then washed and allowed to dry before being sent to the Paint Shop. I then began taking pics of my surroundings and was impressed to see such an efficient modern shop.

All eleven tracks were surrounded by concrete platforms built up to the height of a locomotive's frame and tools and parts within easy reach at each work station and bins provided for the parts being discarded. Ramps were found at the ends of the shop that led down BELOW track level (rather than pits) and noticed that the locomotives and rails were supported on a large number of pedestals, allowing for clearance all around for any work to be performed. Here too, everything was within easy reach. I also particularly noticed nothing was found loose laying on the floor on either level. It was fascinating to see all the work being performed on such a large number of units all at one time until 4:00 p.m.

At exactly 4:00 p.m. each day, bells would continue to ring and warning lights flashing while all the Diesel Shop doors opened for any movements to be made or around the shop at that time, and that time only.

The WP3508 was moved over to the Paint Shop at that time and the Paint Gang would take over the next morning.

After masking all the glass inside and outside of the cab, the paint gang donned their protective gear and climbed up onto the platforms which were mounted on an inverted "U" shaped unit mounted on wheels that ran on tracks located on both sides of the engine and began painting the interior of the cab Beige color and then

continued painting the in-side of the doors to the entire hood. When dried, they applied primer to the entire exterior, which looked like "red lead" in appearance.

Another employee came into the shop next morning, laid a chalk-line the length of the hood and applied the lettering to both sides and finally the wings on the front and shield under the cab window.

Then the Paint gang applied all the yellow and when dry masked it in preparation for the gray. When the gray was finished, they removed all masking and then painted the trim and mounted the new number boards, now U.P. No. 657. Scotch-lite was then applied around the frame.

WP GP-40 No. 3514 and WP GP-35 No. 3015 were next and I took photos of all three going through the process and becoming additions to the U.P. Fleet.

The Paint Gang allowed me to assist them in applying the Scotch-lite to the 3015 (now U.P. 794) and cleaning the glass on the headlight. (A kiss goodbye?)

Whenever time permitted, I would go out to other areas to photograph and acquired shots of seventeen Centennials out at the East end and other U.P. units outside the doors of the Diesel Shop at sun-down. During my visits to the four-track servicing area I took pics of MP, CNW, BN, NS, NW, MK, MIL and MKT units, and night shots from the towers, one of which was WP GP-40 No. 3553.

The day before leaving I was paged over the P.A. system to report to Mr. Robert Gay, District Foreman, and was assigned Fireman on Centennial No. 6938 as we negotiated several moves over to the East Ready Track.

Before leaving August 19, 1984, I met with Mr. Berney, and expressed my appreciation for the privilege of allowing me to take photos from down in the "Pits" to up in the yard towers and everything in between, and also for my "Visitor's paraphernalia". I then drove down to McCook and caught the Amtrak for home.