

President's Pin*- Greg Elems*

This year is our 40th anniversary with the formation of the Feather River Rail Society. In August 1983, the WP F7A 921-D was handed over as the first piece equipment to start the collection at the Portola Railroad Museum which today encompasses 159 pieces of rolling stock. In September of 1983, the Feather River Rail Society was incorporated. In December 1983, the UP leased the current campus to the City of Portola with a sub-lease to the FRRS. Over the ensuing years, many more pieces of WP equipment came under our umbrella along with some other notable pieces.



Fast forward to 2004 and the Portola Railroad Museum became the Western Pacific Railroad Museum. At that time, we narrowed the focus on our collection and goals for the society to focus on the Western Pacific and its related subsidiaries and connections. We had a core collection of WP equipment, railroad papers and location that made this a logical move. Over the years, some non-WP equipment was de-assessed and other WP related pieces added to the collection. While we do have non-WP equipment, some pieces are part of the telling of the WP story. One item that comes to mind is the SP bay-window caboose 1337. As was discovered some time ago, this was the caboose WP leased from the SP to test steel bay-window cabooses. The use of that caboose led directly to the WP 426 series of cabooses. There are many other pieces of equipment that have a history with the WP even though they are not WP pieces.

So this year is significant for the fact we've been around for 40 years. Nineteen years ago, we narrowed our focus to the WP. The question is, where will the next 20 or 40 years lead for the society? We hope to go big in the future with the start of the Whitman Multi-Purpose Building, land acquisition and more track laid to lengthen our train ride. All this will take time and energy that has to be integrated with our current

restoration plans. We hope to acquire a few examples of the late 1970s WP freight cars and engines that are still out there. And we now have a 1910 WP Pullman coach to restore for use with our WP 0-6-0 steam engine 165. Lots of exciting projects!

Along with the Whitman building, we are working on improving the museum and making it more ADA accessible. Grounds improvements, drainage improvements and added walkways being the items on the top of the list. Talks with UP on several fronts for land and equipment are going on to help move our plans forward. Talks with other railroads on ex-WP equipment are on going as well. As these plans develop, we're able to do some items, but others will require us to fully control the museum property, so that is why we're in negotiations for land purchase from the UP.

I invite you to come up to Portola and see what is going on. Check out our ideas and the projects under way. We have some exciting things to show off. Our plans are a positive move forward for what we can accomplish in the next 20 to 40 years. Also, if you know a WP, SN, TS, etc. fan who is not a member, or just someone who enjoys getting hands on with rail preservation, bring them along and invite them to join the FRRS. We are also always looking for more volunteers to help move things along.

Additional Grants!*- Patty Clawson and Eugene Vicknair*

In addition to the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development Fund grant described on page 1, we have also received a \$10,000 grant from Plumas County for improvements to the drainage and storm water management along the north side of the building. We also have several other grants in process or under consideration, including \$70,000 from two grants for ADA and public access improvements and \$400,000 in additional funding for future phases of the Whitman Building.