

can be seen in the photo on page 4 of the March 1980 *CTC Board*.

Even though the Western Pacific did not buy a General Electric "Universal"-type locomotive until the order for U30B's in 1967, the U25B demonstrators 753/754/755/756 did spend some time hauling trains on the WP in 1961. Between April 16 and April 21, 1961, the 10,000-horsepower four-unit set of U25B's made a single round trip between Stockton and Klamath Falls, and then a round trip between Stockton and Salt Lake City. Year later, some of the Great Northern's U25B fleet was seen on WP rails by way of the pool power run-through agreement.

Unlike our U30B 3051, the 5057 is in nearly complete condition, and will only require a moderate amount of work to return it to working condition. Wayne Monger is heading up the work to return the 5057 to operation by the end of 1988, and wants to hear from anyone else that might be interested in helping him. You can contact Wayne Monger at 916-938-4208. We also ask that before any work is done on this locomotive that you contact Wayne. Thanks.

For our members who are interested in reading more about the General Electric U25B, we suggest two two-part articles that go into the details. These two articles are the "General Electric U25B" in the July and August issues of *Railroad Model Craftsman* and "U25B Biography" in the August and September issues of *Trains Magazine*.

Former WP Power and cabooses on the Western Region. West of Green River, WY On January 7th 1988

SW-1500's

UP 1317 ex1503 Paramount
UP 1501 1501 Oakland

GP-35's

UP 783 ex3002 Salt Lake
UP 784 3003 Modesto
UP 786 3005 Stockton
UP 787 3006 Milpitus
UP 788 3008 Salt Lake
UP 790 3010 Stockton
UP 791 3012 Salt Lake
UP 795 3017 Reno
UP 797 3019 Salt Lake
UP 798 3020 Reno

GP-40's

UP 652 ex3502 Bend
UP 654 3504 Milpitus
UP 655 3506 Las Vegas
UP 656 3507 Salt Lake
UP 657 3508 Hinkle
UP 661 3512 Idaho Falls
MP 662 3513 Idaho Falls
UP 663 3514 Hinkle
MP 665 3516 Stockton

GP-40-2's

UP 903 ex3548 Clearfield
UP 904 3549 Reno
UP 905 3550 Las Vegas
UP 906 3551 Idaho Falls
MP 907 3552 Las Vegas
UP 908 3553 Idaho Falls
UP 911 3556 Stockton
UP 912 3557 Stockton
UP 913 3558 Stockton
UP 914 3559 Kemmerer, WY

Cabooses

WP 429 Stored Salt Lake
WP 431 Active Stockton
WP 440 Stored Glens Ferry, ID
WP 443 Stored Rupert, ID
WP 446 Stored Lathrop
WP 459 Stored Lathrop
WP 464 Stored Shoshone, ID
WP 468 Stored Oakland
WP 471 Stored Stockton
WP 476 Stored Glens Ferry, ID
WP 479 Stored Glens Ferry, ID
WP 482 Stored Pocatello
WP 484 Stored Lathrop



Current News of the Feather River Route by Wayne Monger

The proposed revival of rail service on the eight-mile long former Sacramento Northern Chico Branch was permanently derailed on October 20, 1987. That evening, the lengthy efforts by Whytehouse Railways added up to zero as the Chico City Council voted for the removal of the nearly two miles of street trackage through their city. The prospective shortline operator and local rail activists (FRRS members) had been able to convince the Chico City Council to delay the vote for over eight months while they negotiated for purchase of the line from the Union Pacific, freight rate agreements with their connection — the "friendly" SP — and for commitments from prospective on-line shippers. In the end the "business as usual" attitudes at the SP, plus the endless roadblocks set up by Chico City Manager Fred Davis ensured that there would never again be "dirty old trains" running down the middle of Park Avenue and Main Street out to the Chico Airport.

After the decision there was a flickering of hope that Whytehouse Railways could get a railroad operating on the few miles of remaining track to the south of Chico to Durham. But even this hope disappeared on December 20, the day that the option with the UP for purchase of this section expired.

The actual removal of the street trackage will probably take place this coming summer. The Union Pacific is obligated to pay ten percent of the estimated \$800,000 cost of removing the tracks, and the State of California will pay for the rest. Though the ICC approved the abandonment of this line in 1985, the entire line out to the Chico Airport may not get pulled at the same time. It seems that the City of Chico overlooked the fact that they own the last three miles of track out to the airport, and that they must now file with the ICC for abandonment of that section before it can be pulled out. Oops! So it will be a little longer before the tracks between downtown Chico and Chico

Airport will be removed and replaced by the "Fred Davis Memorial Bikepath."

Another section of the old Sacramento Northern mainline, the 12 miles between Dozier and Libfarm, has not seen a train in at least 15 years and has been scheduled for abandonment. Approved on November 18, 1987 and effective December 3, 1987, it does not (yet) affect the Western Railroad Museum's outside connection from Rio Vista Junction. Just prior to the abandonment, U.P. ran the only train of the year to the Western Railroad Museum's connection at Dozier. This train delivered the long awaited (after three years) electric locomotives donated from Kennecott Copper in Utah. The three electric locomotives were in pieces, and distributed between six gondolas. Also delivered to this museum group was caboose WP 438, which had been donated by the UP to public television station KIXE in Sacramento.

June 17, 1987 slipped by rather quietly this year and very few people realized that on this day the corporate identity of the Western Pacific, Tidewater Southern, and Sacramento Northern disappeared. Even though the merger with the Union Pacific took place in November 1982, the actual corporate identities remained, as nothing more than "paper railroads."

General Electric locomotives are in the news this time around. Western Pacific's former U23B's in the 2251-series finally came to the end of their 15-year lease from the First Security Bank of Utah in November 1987. These locomotives have been in storage at North Little Rock, Arkansas for three years now. They have been stripped of parts by the shop personnel at the modern Jenks Shop, and have been heavily vandalized. First Security Bank "sold" them back to the UP in the first week of January 1988, because they were generally too far gone to be returned to operating condition. Your museum may attempt to acquire one of these locomotives in the future (before



Photo by George Cockle

they are sold to a scrapper), as they are really the only former WP locomotive type that will be available for a very long time. Meanwhile, the UP has been receiving their 75 new high-tech General Electric locomotives. These locomotives are called "DASH 8-40C," and are numbered 9100 through 9174. The first one was delivered to the UP on December 8, and it is expected that the last one will be on the railroad by the third week of February. These locomotives are currently the most powerful **single** locomotive ever **mass** produced at 4,000 horsepower each. This claim by GE and UP takes into account the five 4,200 SD45X's produced by EMD as testbeds in the early 1970's, and the single 4,000 horsepower M640 produced for CP Rail by MLW in Canada. We will be seeing plenty of the new 9100's on the old Western Pacific mainline, all are to be assigned to TOFC/COFC trains west of North Platte, Nebraska.

With the advent of double-stack trains on the WP, some tunnels have caused clearance problems. One of the biggest headaches for the railroad was Tunnel 3 on Altamont Pass, where the double-stack trains had to slow to 5 MPH due to tight clearances. After seeking a solution for over a year, the UP finally eliminated the problem. The month of September found heavy equipment stripping off the hillside from above the cement-lined tunnel, and a shoo-fly around the tunnel site was installed. The last train to actually pass through Tunnel 3 was the SLOAZ of September 22. On October 1, with all of the dirt and rock removed from around the cement lining, an explosive charge quickly removed what little remained. Trains were back on the original alignment by October 5.

In July, an Oroville judge sentenced 20-year-old Steven Myers of Stockton to four years in prison for the shooting of UP engineer Gary Clark on November 29, 1986. The shooting took place near Merlin in the Feather River Canyon where the Stockton man was using a high-powered hunting rifle for "target practice." A single bullet crashed

through the window of the lead locomotive and hit engineer Gary Clark. He was evacuated by helicopter to a Chico hospital, where he arrived near death. A newspaper article about the sentencing noted that engineer Clark was recovering from his wounds, but may never work again. At that time he still had more than 100 shards of broken glass and bullet fragments in his chest, which may be impossible to remove.

Effective November 1, 1987, almost all trains between Salt Lake City and Oakland over the former WP are being operated by three-man crews. The exceptions to this are some of the local trains, the trains to the BN connection at Bieber, and trains on the Tidewater Southern — in other words those trains that still regularly use cabooses.

Another portion of former Western Pacific street trackage will see removal from service within the next two years. Unlike the street trackage in Chico mentioned earlier, this section sees heavy train traffic on a daily basis. We are talking about the one mile plus of Tidewater Southern street trackage on Ninth Street in Modesto. The City of Modesto has been trying to get the trackage removed since 1958. In 1987, \$13 million dollars of federal money was made available, thanks to the Congress over-ride of President Reagan's veto of the 1987 Highway Bill. Modesto's plan is to consolidate UP and SP trains along the SP's right-of-way through Modesto, which is 100 feet west of Ninth Street. But this may be a greater change to the operations over the Tidewater Southern south of Stockton than anticipated. UP will probably gain trackage rights over the SP between the SP-UP crossing at Lathrop and Modesto, and then get the trains back onto Tidewater Southern tracks just south of Modesto. If this were to happen, the northern half of the Tidewater Southern would become a lightly used branch ending just north of Modesto. All traffic for Modesto and Turlock, including those 100-car grain trains to Foster Farms in Turlock, would run via the SP between Lathrop and Modesto. So the sight of a full-sized grain train blocking traffic in Modesto in the middle of the day is something we will not see for much longer.

Another stretch of interurban trackage has made news with grain traffic in 1987. In September 1986 a local Yuba City company converted the old Del Monte cannery into a grain storage facility. After making a small bundle on that deal with the government, this company decided to look for more storage space in the area to house surplus grain. Between August and October 1987 the UP delivered around 650 carloads of surplus grain to the Yuba City area. The grain was usually delivered in cuts of 25 cars by a single locomotive off of the Stockton-Bieber train. The unloading area for 1987 was not in Yuba City itself, but rather at the current end of track on the old SN's Tarke Branch (formerly the line to Colusa) just west of Sutter. For many years now this line has seen just two or three movements per year, mostly to place or retrieve stored boxcars. Now in only two months time, over 650 loaded 100-ton grain hoppers have been shoved out over track that is best remembered as the line that was restricted to a single SW-1 for motive power! The strangest movement during this time on the Tarke Branch was a single GP-35 bringing 60 empty grain hoppers back into Yuba City. This movement found a caboose at each end of the train, with the locomotive in the 41st position in the train.

In December 1987 the first coal-unit train traveled over the Feather River Route in almost four years. This train, starting at Sharp, Utah, was destined for the new coal-burning power plant for Corn Products in Stockton. Since the new unloading areas was not quite ready to receive a train, the train was taken to the Port of Stockton for unloading. The port's ex-Conrail Century-636 helped move cars around during the unloading process — a job it has been awaiting for several years. The Port of Stockton had planned a few years ago to become a coal export port, but it was quickly found that the ship channel to San Francisco Bay was too shallow for a fully loaded ship. Now the ship channel deepened, but the coal export market is

poor. We probably won't see coal export trains down the Feather River Canyon for quite some time still.

It seems that the controlled siding at Robbers Creek on the "Highline" was very quietly removed sometime this past summer. The west switch at Robbers Creek was torn out by the derailment of the STBR in October 1986. Then sometime in early 1987 the east switch was damaged somehow, and the MofW forces decided to tear out the switch instead of repairing it. With both switches out, the MofW forces came along later and tore out the rest of the siding. This act must have been done rather quietly, as a few months later, one of the dispatchers in Sacramento was trying to set up a meet between two trains at Robbers Creek (a very rare occurrence anywhere on the Highline these days). The dispatcher told the train to head into what he thought was a stub-end siding, but the train crew called back on the radio and said they couldn't! When the dispatcher asked what they meant, the train crew reportedly told the dispatcher that they were just then going by what was left of the siding — rails and ties stacked in nice neat piles. Oops!

The members of the Feather River Rail Society owe a bit of thanks to Jay Tatum and the other members of the Longview (Texas) Model Railroad Club. Back in June while the 805-A was being transported by the UP from Louisiana to Portola, it was set out at Marshall, Texas. After sitting around for a few days, while the local UP offices were unaware of what it was and where it was going, the 805-A was tacked onto a local freight for delivery to a nearby scrap company that deals in locomotive parts. The local fans, who knew that it was supposed to be heading for California, mentioned to the UP trainmaster that he had better check with someone in Omaha or St. Louis before that train crew delivered that "old F unit" to the scrap company. To say the least, the confusion was quickly cleared up, and the 805-A was once again heading in the right direction — thanks to some local railfans!

We recommend these independent publications for further reading:

The Lark

News of Northern and Central California, Western Nevada, and Southern Oregon. Published "monthly" by FRRS members Vic Neves and Wayne Monger.
\$12.00 yearly subscription
Address: The Lark
P.O. Box 23721
Oakland, CA 94623-9991

Northwest Railfan

News of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, British Columbia. Published "monthly."
\$.50 per issue subscription price
Address: Dean Ferris
2126 N. 50th
Seattle, WA 98103

The Spike

Railroad News of Northern California, Humor/Satire for the Railfan. Published quarterly.
\$.50 per issue subscription price.
Address: The Spike
2671 Monroe Street
Santa Clara, CA 95051

The Streamliner

Publication of the Union Pacific Historical Society. History, modeling tips for anyone interested in the Union Pacific Railroad. Published quarterly.
\$12.00 per year membership/subscription.
Address: Union Pacific Historical Society
P.O. Box 5653
Arvada, CO 80005-0653

Flimsies!

Hot news of California and the West.
Published monthly.
\$1.00 per issue
Address: Flim Baden
P.O. Box 3165 - FX
Costa Mesa, CA 92628

The Mixed Train

Publication of the Camerail Club of Omaha, Nebraska. Current railroad news and history of the Midwest - especially the UP, C&NW, BN, and regional shortlines.
\$5.00 per year membership/subscription
Address: Joel Boucher
3031 Fourth Avenue
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51501

WESTERN PACIFIC 2600 cuft AIRSLIDE COVERED HOPPER CARS

WP 11591-11600 B1t Aug 63
WP 11601-11604 B1t Sept 58
WP 11605-11616 B1t Aug 60-June 62
WP 11617-11662 B1t June 64-May 66

They came to the WP in light gray with black lettering and now are being repainted into bright silver with red "Union Pacific". WP used the cars in flour and sugar service and the cars are still in this service today.

Built by General American and designed primarily for sanitary and economical bulk shipment of dry, granular or powdered commodities.

The term "Airslide" comes from Airslide conveyors built into the hoppers of the car, a low pressure source of air is required at each unloading site. This air is introduced into manifolds below the car, carried to a plenum chamber where it passes through the special Airslide fabric "fluidizing" or aerating the material above it and causing the lading to flow to a single pair of outlets at the bottom center of the car.

WP had 72 cars in the 2600 cuft capacity and as of Jan 88 45 are still in service now for the UP. Series 11591-11600 leased from North American Car Corp (No. NIHX 60300-60309) are off the roster.