

- Four new videos were posted on the museum's YouTube channel.
- New "handle" created for our YouTube channel: youtube.com/@WPRM
- WP Cloud Server upgraded and usage expanded.
- Significant improvements made to the society's mobile web pages.
- Twenty news items added to News Archive web page.
- Members of the Historical/Archive Department made a special visit to the California State Railroad Museum's library and archives in Sacramento.
- With help from CSRM providing the one missing issue, the complete set of WP's *Headlight* magazines from the 1940's are now posted on the website.
- Ninety-seven new subscribers to the WPRM News Mailtrain service. This brings the total subscribers count to 387.
- Twelve email blasts were made to the WPRM News subscribers.
- New Mailtrain subscription list created for FRRS Board Meeting material.

Not to forget our team:

All the volunteers who supported the museum in 2022.

Webmaster for keeping our website up to date.

Four issues of the *Train Sheet* were published per schedule.

Two issues of the *Headlight* were published and sent out to the members.

Western Pacific Coach 302 Arrives

- Eugene Vicknair

After a false start at the end of September, the morning of October 14 saw 1910 built Pullman passenger coach Western Pacific (first) 302 being loaded onto its massive steerable low boy trailer in North Judson, Indiana at the Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum. Although there were some issues and minor crisis points, the carbody and its trucks (travelling on their own trailer) began the cross-country journey.

The trucks arrived on Wednesday, October 19th and were unloaded thanks to the skilled efforts of David Elems and Roger Stabler. Then the wait began for the main event.

Unfortunately, the rescheduled arrival time placed the delivery of WP 302 right at the beginning of the second weekend of the *Pumpkin Patch Express*, expected to be our biggest weekend of the event. Target arrival was early Saturday morning, October 22, so at first light Bragg Crane arrived and set up. Unfortunately, a breakdown in communications meant we had no updated location on the truck and the driver was fighting weather and

headwinds coming across Utah and Nevada. For safety reasons, the decision had been made to keep the museum closed to the public while the cranes were prepped for lift and doing actual lift work, so the opening of the museum for the Pumpkin Patch Trains was delayed.

About 11:30 a.m., member Tom Mueller called me to ask if our new railroad car was dark green and on a large low black trailer. When I confirmed, he notified me that the load was outside of Lovelock, Nevada, about 145 miles away. Doing some quick math, we realized that the truck would not arrive before 4:30 p.m. that day due to the low speed it needed to travel for safety. We conferred with the Bragg Crane crew and they agreed no lift would happen that day, but they did not have an opening to return for about a week!

Thankfully, the Bragg crew offered to give up part of their Sunday and return to complete the lift. We cannot thank them enough for their generosity in doing this. Plans were hastily changed, the cranes secured for the night and the crew headed home in time for the museum to open at 12:30, starting off the biggest day of the *Pumpkin Patch Express*.

The Bragg crew called me about 2 p.m. as they arrived back at their yard and confirmed they had seen the 302 coming west on Interstate 80 in Sparks. Our time estimate looked accurate. About 3:00 p.m., another friend of the museum, TV producer Jack Sutton, spotted the truck at the California-Nevada border, where the trucker was reviewing his paperwork for California. Jack gave the trucker Greg Elems' phone number and we finally had communication.

About 4:30 p.m., Greg, Michael Clawson and I met the trucker on the eastern edge of Portola and helped guide him into the museum. After securing the truck, all focus was on closing out the Pumpkin Patch day and prepping for the lift first thing in the morning.

The Bragg crew was back at 6:30 a.m. and joined the FRRS crew to help get 302 off the trailer. David Elems, Steve Habeck and Roger Stabler, with help from Greg Elems, Eric McKay and Steve Lee helped maneuver the 302's trucks into place using Western Pacific 1503 and our telehandler.

The Bragg team set up and had the trucker pull his load over the east end of Track 1, poking the nose of the truck between the Troop Sleeper and WP derrick MW 37. After some quick rigging, the 302 was lifted and the truck backed out of the way, leaving 302 free in the air. Quick work by the Bragg and FRRS crews got the trucks positioned then the cranes slowly lowered the carbody down, adjusting the position of the trucks and body to get everything aligned. Just after 8:30 a.m., WP (first) 302 was fully back on its original home rails for the first time in 100 years.

Free from the crane rigging, WP 302 soon found itself coupled to Western Pacific SW1500 WP 1503 to be moved from the lift area. It was quite amazing to watch one of the oldest Western Pacific passenger cars be switched by the railroad's newest switcher, passing WP passenger coach (second) 320, one of the cars that replaced 302, while WP 0-6-0 165, which did not arrive on the railroad until 3 to 5 years after 302 left, built up steam a couple tracks away. The overlapping

eras of WP history coming together was almost overwhelming.

With the Bragg crew packed down and WP 302 switched to its temporary location, the museum opened for business at 10 a.m. on the dot. All day visitors were directed to check out the new arrival. Plans are to restore WP 302 to its 1910s appearance and operate with in conjunction with WP 165. Work has already begun to secure any holes in the roof against rain and snow and it is scheduled to get the car over the inspection pit for a preliminary survey in spring 2023.

A fundraiser has been started to help defray the movement costs of the 302. Please send any donations to WP 302 Fund, PO Box 608, Portola, CA 96122.

Thank you to Bragg Crane, Gateway Transportation, Barnhardt Crane, Ron Schlatter and Sons and the staff of the Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum for their work on this move. And most of all, thank you to Les Beckman for contacting the WPRM and choosing us to be the home for this amazing artifact.

WESTERN PACIFIC 302:

- Built 1910 by the Pullman Company
- Part of a 51 car order for 84 seat coaches purchased by the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, cars 888-898 delivered to D&RG while cars 301-340 were lettered for and leased to the Western Pacific
- Lease terminated and car delivered to Rio Grande circa 1922-23 and renumbered D&RG 899, replaced by new WP coaches 301-320
- Renumbered Denver & Rio Grande Western 930 by 1926
- Sold to Algoma Central 407 in 1949
- Sold to the Michigan Northern in the 1970s for excursion service and later used on the Kalamazoo, Lake Shore & Chicago
- Sold to Les Beckman for preservation