



THE TRAIN SHEET

News from the Feather River Rail Society



Preserving "THE FEATHER RIVER ROUTE"

Issue - 189

April/May/June 2021

President's Pin

- Greg Elems

Major track work was started on May 17th, with a crew from the Goose Lake Railway coming down from Oregon to do the work. The materials didn't arrive until Wednesday from Salt Lake City. They used their time waiting on the materials to pull spikes and ties. The task of replacing the 325 ties started in earnest on Wednesday afternoon. We had staged some of our ties out on the balloon track in 2019, turns out they were needed also. In the end, the number of ties replaced exceeded 330.



The outside rail from the Milward switch to the frog of the switch to the UP interchange was pulled up. Rail from the old WP siding on the south side of the mainline, which UP had donated to the museum in the late 1980s, was used to relay on the balloon. While this was taking place, it was discovered that the spikes sent for the project were old scrap metal candidates. So David Hutton and I scrambled to round up spikes to keep the project moving. Again, kegs of spikes that had come to the museum and were stored around the museum for years were located and used to spike the new rail down on the replacement ties. A quick word about the ties: the US military had built a yard at a base, then never used it. Sometime later the decision to pull the yard up was made so the ties were basically new with just the spike holes. But that made them seconds and we were cut a nice deal on them to make the cost about a third less than the cost of new ties.

With the new ties, rail and track joint bars in place, we tested the track on Thursday afternoon with the 1100. I'm now confident in letting the WP 165 run out there. We do have some spot tamping to do and will need to install gauge bars to help the ties maintain the gauge, but otherwise we are in good shape. I want to thank the crew from the Goose Lake Railway for bidding on the job and coming down and working between their own track projects.

On to other things, we have a 20 yard dumpster in the parking lot, which took no time to fill half full. We have a lot of material to fill it, and may even have to rent a second one. Currently the arduous task of busting old rotten pallets down to go away in the dumpster is taking place. We have a lot of trashed ties from the balloon, I'm not sure if they are worth trying to make available for the members for their garden needs or not.

Tim Steeper has been finishing the construction work in the west end of archive car, where our computers will be, and the entry way area. The archive car is looking better all the time.

Eugene Vicknair and Janet Steeper have been working in the Museum Store. Let me say that it was overdue for this cleaning. Janet is exploring options for a new epoxy coating for the floor. Possible window film for the north side windows may get installed. The Z-scale layout is waiting to be moved, ever so carefully, with Ethan Doty's and Bob Sims' careful planning and attention. There are a lot of details to attend to in the store but with Eugene and Janet's work we will have a great looking store for the visitors to come in and support the museum.

-THE TRAIN SHEET-

Issue 189 - April/May/June 2021

Published July 12, 2021

News from the Feather River Rail Society and the Western Pacific Railroad Museum at Portola

Editor - Paul Finnegan

Email: trainsheet@wplives.org

Contribution Deadlines: Last Day of March, June, September and December.

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FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY

WESTERN PACIFIC RAILROAD

MUSEUM at PORTOLA

PO BOX 608, Portola, CA 96122-0608

Museum Phone: (530) 832-4131

Fax: (530) 832-1854

The museum is open:

July-September: Thursday - Sunday
Thur. and Fri. 12 Noon to 4 PM (until 9/26)
Sat. and Sun. 10 AM to 5 PM
(weather permitting)

October & December: Special Events Only

If you wish to visit during the closure period, it is advisable to call in advance and find out if the museum will be open.

Entrance to the museum for members is free. Non-members are required to pay an admission fee, details are inside this issue on the inside of the back cover.

The Feather River Rail Society, a tax-exempt public benefit California corporation, is the historical society for the Western Pacific Railroad and operator of the Western Pacific Railroad Museum in Portola, California.

The FRRS is not associated with the Union Pacific Railroad.



- BOARD OF DIRECTORS and OFFICERS -

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Table of Contents – Issue 189

President's Pin	1
.New Silver Sponsor! XELECTRIX	2
Origin of WP Medallion	3
New Roof Over Our Heads/New Floor Under our Feet!	3
WP 705 Restoration Update - May 2021	4
Things Around the Museum: The MILWARD Switch (errata)	4
New (mobile friendly!) Tour at the Museum	4
2021 Crew Training a Success!	5
Support the FRRS when you shop at Amazon!	5
Membership Report	5
The Answers Are Out There - WP's San Jose Branch	6
Modeling the Western Pacific Railroad (NMRA Branch Line Newsletter)	6
WP 165 Work Session May 2021	8
FRRS Historical/Archive Department Collections	9
Sponsors	9
WP Mileposts on the Website	10
2021 WP Historical Convention Scheduled	10
Subscribe	10
Membership/Mission Statement/Goals/Admissions/Fares	11

Just in as we were going to press...New Silver Sponsor!

XELECTRIX Electrical Contractor
Sacramento RV & Mobile Home Park Electrical Service
7250 Auburn Blvd. PMB #201
Citrus Heights, CA 95610
Website: xelectrix.com
Email: service@xelectrix.com
916-967-1922



- WEB PAGES of INTEREST -

FRRS Official Site	www.WPLives.org
CZ Virtual Museum	calzephyr.railfan.net
California Zephyr	californiazephyr.org
Western Pacific Pages	www.WPLives.com
WP Virtual Museum	wpmuseum.railfan.net
Tidewater Southern Pages	www.TidewaterSouthern.com
Central California Traction	www.trainweb.org/tractionco

**New Roof Over Our Heads!
New Floor Under our Feet!**

- Greg Elems & Janet Steeper

We had some roofers from D&D Roofing come onsite in May and did a fast and efficient job of patching and fixing the roof. A bit of good news on that is, it came in several hundred dollars under the quote. We are now in line for the roofers to come and finish the job with the coating that will help in reflecting the sun and make it completely water tight. It's been 2 decades since they put the last coating on.

We have a new floor in the Museum Store thanks to High Desert Prep Inc., out of Sparks, Nevada. Work was started on Monday, June 21st. Everyone will recall the sad condition of the old red floor. This new epoxy floor was completed on Thursday, June 24th. The floor was ground and patched the first two days, then coated with two coats of dark grey epoxy and a non-slip additive. I want to give a shout out to Charlie Spikes and Bob Sims for gate duty thereby making the process run more smoothly. High Desert Prep managed to make silk purse out of a sow's ear.



Museum Store floor completely primed on 6/22/21. Base coat will be applied next.

- Photo by Greg Elems

We are putting in new show cases and merchandise over the next few weeks. We will have more news later on the store rebirth, and thanks will be going out to everyone who helped.

Origin of WP Medallion

- *The Headlight* September, 1948 Page 7

Thirty-eight years ago, Charles Frederick Craig, now assistant to the general manager, designed the Western Pacific medallion which has been in use ever since. In 1910, when Western Pacific began operations, Charlie's artistic ability went to work and, using the Feather River route motif, he came up with a medallion which has stood the test of the years. The medallion's background is black, with imposing white letters top and bottom spelling out



Western Pacific. A circular center section spells out Feather River Route and is pierced by a red feather.

Within the past couple of years, Charlie designed a companion Safety First medallion closely resembling the WP medallion. In fact, at first glance, the difference is often missed. Charlie Craig came to the Western Pacific from the Northern Pacific thirty-nine years ago and we thought it about time he received proper credit as the author of our identifying medallion.



WP 705 Restoration Update - May 2021

- Kerry Cochran, General Superintendent

In an effort to get some work completed on the WP 705, we started a campaign to raise funds to repaint the unit. Thank you to our donors for your support.

As of May 18th, we have raised \$5,818.00 through all the support from our members and public. Our current work in progress to repaint the unit consists of the following consists of three phases.

Preparation

- remove dirt and grease
- rust removal
- sanding of paint lines and numbers
- dust and dirt washed off for primer

Prime the locomotive

Final paint

- orange applied for lettering, numbers and stripes
- masking of orange items
- green applied
- masking removed
- black applied to trucks and fuel tank

Preparation has started, thanks to Dave Roth and Greg Elems.

We need volunteer help to perform this work, please contact president Greg Elems. He will coordinate the efforts for volunteers to work on the unit. WP 705 is currently spotted near the shop for access to water and air.



Removal of the old lettering (5/26/2021)
-Photo by Greg Elems

Things Around the Museum: The MILWARD Switch (errata)

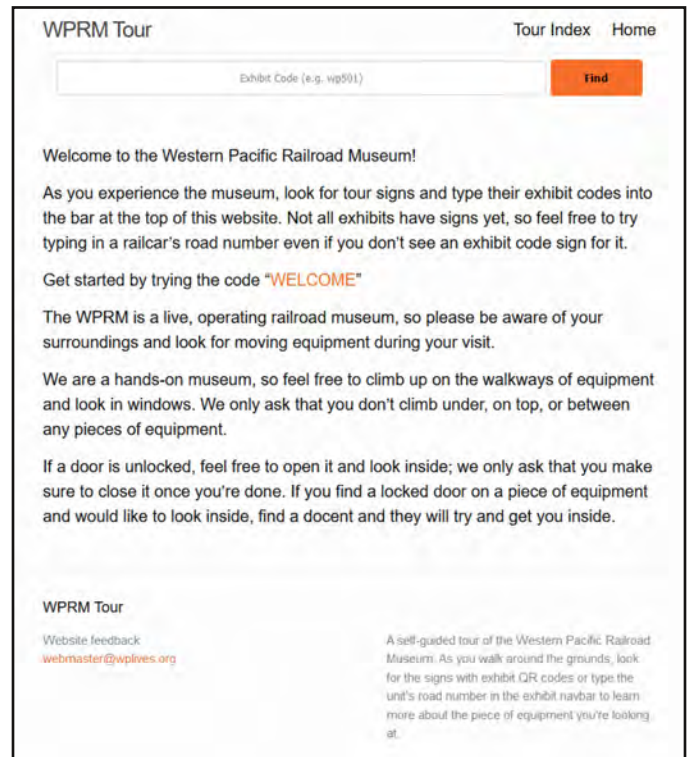
- Paul Finnegan

In *Train Sheet* issue #186, I published the legend of how Milward Switch got its name. In speaking with Steve Habeck at the museum in April, Steve informed me that he was the hoghead on that move and that the locomotive was WP 608, not WP 2001 as reported. The article was based on a framed story that hung in the Operations Office for years, so the legend of Milward Switch that we have known for a long time was not quite right. I wanted to set the record straight.

New (mobile friendly!) Tour at the Museum

- Kenneth & Paul Finnegan

Three years ago, Paul created a set of web pages that was intended to serve as an audio tour guide for visitors to the museum. During this year's off-season, Kenneth created a new framework for the material that is better suited for visitors to use on their mobile phones to learn about things around the museum. Working together, we have released the new tour site. It can be found at tour.wplives.org and on the society's website on the Visit Us pull-down menu.



2021 Crew Training a Success!

*Loren Ross
Superintendent of Operations*



On Saturday June 5th, 2021, the Operating Department held its first annual Crew Training session in two years. The training was conducted by General Superintendent Kerry Cochran and was attended by the following members:

- David Elems,
- Matthew Elems,
- Fred Elenbaas,
- Don Nelson,
- Bill Parker,
- Jackson Parker,
- Ed Powell,
- Loren Ross,
- Craig Simmons,
- Charlie Spikes
- and Janet Steeper.

We also had two NEW members attend, Jay Jacobs from Truckee and Jeff Pierce from Heber Valley Utah.

After a morning of classroom training, everyone was invited to head out into the yard to conduct a little “knock the rust off” hands-on training. Especially with two new members, and no training or operation in the last year, this was a chance for everyone to dust off their gloves and remember what it’s like to handle our equipment. With Don Nelson at the controls, we used the Quincy 1100 to grab a couple of loaded gondolas and we shuttled them around the newly constructed balloon track where we worked on hand brakes, air hoses, coupling and uncoupling the cars, dynamiting the cars, and how to examine the cars looking for defects. We also worked on throwing switches and how to examine those mechanisms for defects.

Operations begin on July 3 and July 4, and we are expecting a lot of visitors. May we all have a safe and enjoyable operating season!!!



2021 Crew Training

- Photo by Kerry Cochran



amazonsmile

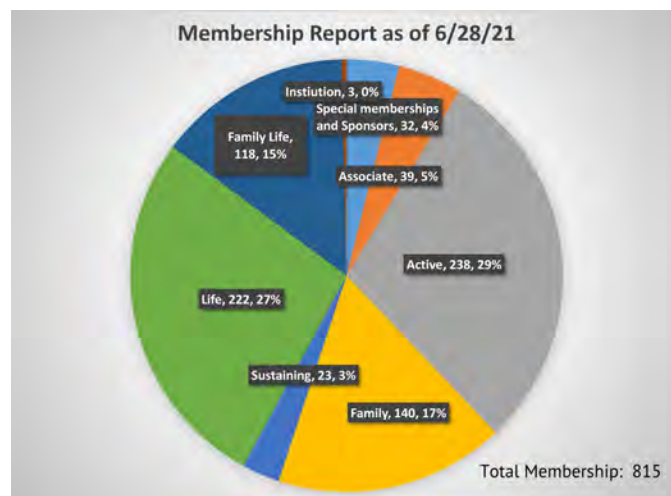
You shop. Amazon gives.

When you shop on smile.amazon.com select the Feather River Rail Society as your charitable organization, Amazon will donate a portion of your eligible Amazon.Smile purchases to support our society.



Support the FRRS when you shop at Amazon!

This quarter Amazon Smile donated \$160.90 to the Feather River Rail Society. As of June 8, 2021, Amazon Smile has donated a total of \$1,520.08 to the FRRS. There is information on how YOU can support the FRRS when you shop at Amazon on the society web homepage, WPLives.org.



Modeling the Western Pacific Railroad (NMRA Branch Line Newsletter)

I have mentioned the NMRA (National Model Railroad Association) in one of my articles on modeling. While I was reading the last issue of the Pacific Coast Region's newsletter, "Branch Line" (Jan-Feb-Mar 2021) I came across a part of the newsletter entitled "The Answers Are Out There" by Robert Pethoud.

This article caught my eye, as it had to do with the Western Pacific's San Jose Branch.

It came out of a design challenge for a model layout that would fit in a small bedroom.

I bring this up, as an example of modeling the WP. This small layout can bring hours of enjoyment in the modeling hobby by giving you something that is small and can be a challenge to test your skills on so many levels. (Wood working, Building, Model making, Track laying, Scenery, and I could go on....)

This article is a reprint (with permission of Robert) and I hope it gives our members more insight to modeling the WP.

- Kerry Cochran

The Answers Are Out There WP's San Jose Branch

By Robert Pethoud

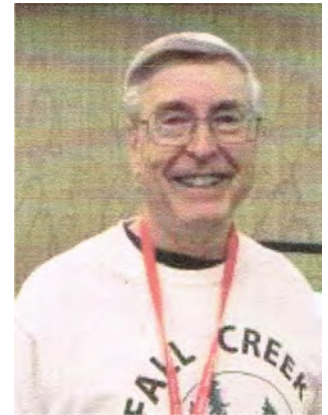
We model railroaders are a creative lot. Given the track arrangement of a prototype railroad's branch line, we can come up with as many different ways of representing it in miniature as there are wheels on a mile-long train of loaded triple-deck auto racks. For the 2021 Bay Area SIG Meet, the Daylight Division's own Bruce Morden posed a challenge to attendees of designing a model of Western Pacific's San Jose branch to fit in a square bedroom measuring 11.5 feet on a side. He provided track diagrams from WP's Training Manual Maps, ca. 1958, and Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for the relevant areas. The Training Manual Maps even gave the names of the industries served by the branch's many spurs.

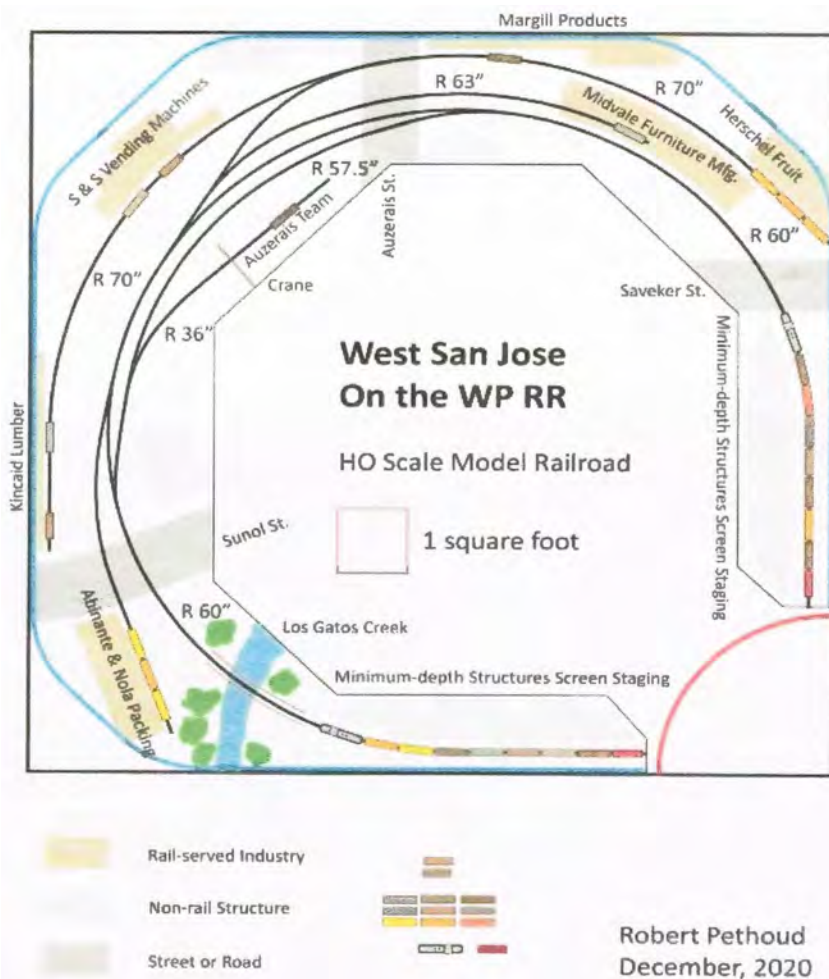
Half a dozen layout designers-Dean Deis, Cal Sexsmith, Doug Smith, Steve Marquess, Mike O'Dorney, and myself-took up the challenge and created a very diverse group of plans. From a three-level layout with a double helix to an ingenious arrangement of modules, they displayed an embarrassment of riches in creative ideas. I'm proud to say that my design finished among the top six entries. You'll find the track plan I created on the next page and I'll try to describe my approach to Bruce's challenge.

Western Pacific's San Jose branch has a lot to offer to a potential modeler. It's length of about eight miles (that would be 485 feet if shrunk to HO scale) included a six-track yard, several passing sidings, interchange with SP, and nearly 100 spurs serving scores of industries both large and small.

Unless you have an aircraft hanger to house your model railroad, you'll have to pick and choose what to include and what to leave out. Having been on a minimalist kick for the past few years, I zeroed in on about one-half mile of the branch. Those familiar with my Fall Creek Branch will not be surprised to learn that the ½-mile piece I chose includes Sunol passing siding and a few spurs, including a switchback. The result, in fact, resembles nothing more than Fall Creek Branch-basically a British-style exhibition layout-lengthened from 12 feet to 30 feet and coiled around the walls of that spare bedroom.

Of the plans submitted for the design challenge, mine had the smallest number of turnouts and the largest radius curves. We practitioners of scale model railroading would not arbitrarily shorten the model of a 50-foot auto car or an 85-foot Pullman because the result would not look right. Yet we make do with ridiculously sharp curves never found on the prototype, simply because we must in order to fit the trackage into our available space. And, of course, the result does not look right. By using an around-the-walls design, I knew I could employ larger than usual curve radii, so I decided on this plan to see how far





I could take that enlargement. It turns out that a 5-foot radius can fit inside the given room and results in a prototypically-reasonable 14-degree curve! This makes for a very realistic appearance and I doubt that I can find a model steam locomotive with a rigid wheelbase long enough to have trouble negotiating that curve.

The five spurs serve just seven industries. These small numbers in this bedroom mean that each industry can be impressively large--no shoebox-sized factories here--and they can be spaced well apart, resulting in an uncrowded appearance which can enhance the realism. With these huge curves and uncrowded tracks, you may be tempted to operate with lengthy freight cars. Resist that temptation. Instead, even as we enlarge the curve radius, consider back-dating the layout's era to the late 1940s/early 1950s so as to justify mostly 40-foot freight cars, with a few 36-footers thrown in. The shorter cars mean more spotting locations per industry and more cars fitting on the siding, which

increases the potential for challenging operation. And here's a bonus: modeling the transition era means you must use cabooses, which further complicate your switching operations in ways that rightfully annoyed the actual train crews of the time, but which gladden the hearts of today's rabid model railroad operators.

Working on this layout design challenge for the Bay Area SIG Meet turned out to be an excellent pandemic pastime. It cost essentially nothing and provided many hours of brain stimulation in the quest for a model railroad plan featuring realistic appearance and challenging operation, all based on a historic prototype. The absence of judged competition or prizes was no disincentive, but instead served to encourage me to try new ideas which might not appeal to volunteer judges. If you'd like to experience the thrill of creating your own prototype-based plan, just track down some current or former track arrangements from a favorite railroad, grab a few sheets of paper and a pencil, and go to work.

Until next time, you can reach me with comments and/or questions at pethoud@comcast.net

(reprinted from Modeling the Western Pacific Railroad (NMRA Branch Line Newsletter) with permission)



WP 165

The WP 165 Steam Team held a work session May 19th - 22nd. The work has moved into details, lots of small but critical tasks, to bring 165 back to life.

There are more recent photos of WP 165 on the society website in the "Around the Museum 2021" gallery.

- Photo inside the cab by Greg Elems 6/8/21.

Catch the Early Train!

*Get your Train Sheet by email and you will get it before the post office even receives it and it is in COLOR!
(and you save the FRRS money too!)*

*Send an email requesting email delivery to **membership@wplives.org** with your name and email address.*



FRRS Historical/Archive Department Collections

- Paul Finnegan

On June 5th the FRRS Historical/Archive Department announced a new set of web pages that contain a wealth of information from our archives. The entry point for this resource is the "Archive Collections" link on the H/A Department home page.

The Feather River Rail Society is dedicated to the preservation, interpretation and education of the public as to the history and people of the Western Pacific Railroad. These new web pages provide access to some of the collections in our archives. We will continue to add more material to it from our archive over time as our volunteers make it available.

The material currently on the new pages include:

An index of all captioned photos in our online H/A collections

Unabridged table of the captions form all non-Meeker H/A photo collections

AWK Railroad Book Master Inventory

Four collections from Carl Walker:

Central California Traction Company

Tidewater Southern Railway

Western Pacific Railroad

Yosemite Valley Railroad

Charles R. Pfenning WP Dispatcher Collection: a collection of rail passes, photos, newspaper clippings and other memorabilia of his father's career was donated by Gary L. Pfenning in memory of his father.

Frank Hibbs' Collection which contains WPMW Equipment, Motor Cars and Track Gang Collection.

Garth Groff's Collection: a photo collection freight cars, SN equipment, SN and WP locomotives.

The Western Pacific Railroad Corporate Archives / Kenneth J. Meeker Collection: a

collection of WP corporate materials.

A collection of photos by our society's founder Norm Holmes of WP Maintenance-of-Way cars.

The first installment of Norm Holmes' extensive personal slide collection.

A set of collections from society members of photos from the early days of the FRRS.

Virgil Staff Collections which comprise a wide variety of railroad photos.

The set of pages contains several thousand photographs arranged in groups to help interested parties find what they are interested in.

Everyone is invited to come and explore this new resource.

Museum Sponsors

The Western Pacific played a major role in developing the economy of Plumas County and the surrounding region. The Western Pacific Railroad Museum is proud to be a part of that heritage and to hold a position in supporting the ongoing economic health of our community. We welcome the support of that community in return. Helping to preserve the Western Pacific is good for tourism, good for our regional culture and good for business.

We ask our members and visitors to support our business sponsors, companies who have generously contributed to the museum and its mission to preserve the Western Pacific family.

Also see new Silver Sponsor on page 2!



H&R BLOCK[®]
 DAVID HANSEN - SUSANVILLE

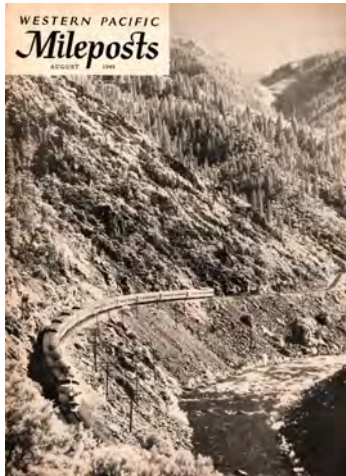
H & R Block - David Hansen
 2850 Main St Ste 7, Susanville, CA 96130
 Tel: 530-257-9339

WP Mileposts on the Website

- Paul Finnegan, FRRS Webmaster

Several years ago, I took an interest in our archive's *Milepost* magazine collection. The Western Pacific published an employee newsletter, *Mileposts*. Two hundred and fifty-four issues were published from August 1949 through March 1983, just before the merger with Union Pacific.

Working with Kerry Cochran, I have been searching our archives and collecting the magazines, then sorting and cataloging which issues we have. My intention was to start scanning them and posting them to the Historical/Archive Department's web



page. The old WPRRHS website had a web page that was "under construction" that said it would have them, but none were ever posted. My intention was to start scanning them last year, but COVID got in the way and I never made it to the museum to work on scanning them.

Kerry found a disk in the archives that had scanned Mileposts from 1954, 1955 and 1956 and uploaded them to our cloud server. I used them to create a new page "WP Mileposts" on the H/A home page and released it on 3/3/21. Within a day or two, I got an email from former FRRS member Steve Baldwin thanking me for posting the *Milepost* magazines. It turns out, he was the person who created the disk Kerry found and had left it with the Museum Store six or seven years ago to post on the website! After more email communications with Steve, it turned out he had many more issues scanned (and more un-scanned that he is willing to scan for us) so he worked with me to get more issues posted. I am most appreciative of Steve's help, and his offer to work with me, to get this project completed. He has saved me a couple hundred hours of work and advanced the project's schedule probably by at least a year.

We now have all issues posted on our website. Additionally, I created a Google Custom Search Engine so a user can search only the WP Milepost collection on the web page. I also added a button that shows or hides a table of contents for each issue. There is also a button that show/hides all the tables of contents. The idea here is a user can show all the tables of contents and then use the browser's search (control f) to look for specific words in article titles.

2021 WP Historical Convention Scheduled

The 2021 WP Historical Convention date is set to be September 17, 18 and 19 in Reno.

Please see the Convention Insert of this issue of the *Train Sheet* for more information, watch the website and subscribe to the "WPRM News" email list to receive information as plans are finalized.

Subscribe!

- Paul Finnegan
Webmaster

Would you like to receive notices and information about the FRRS and WPRM by email? As part of the new web server system, we have a new tool, *Mailtrain*, that we are using to email special announcements to FRRS members and other interested parties. To subscribe to the *WPRM News* email list use the subscribe tool on the "About Us" drop-down list on the society website. Each email will have an unsubscribe link in it if you change your mind later.



2021 Members' Meeting - Photo by Kerry Cochran

- FRRS Membership -**Yearly Dues**

Associate \$25.00
 Active \$50.00
 Family \$80.00
 Sustaining \$150.00

Single Life Membership - \$1800.00

Family Life Membership - \$3000.00

Institutional - \$60.00 (annual membership for 501(c)3 groups)

Renew or change your information on
 the FRRS website! Go to:
<https://membership.WPlives.org>

These are the dues for the duration of one year, with Life and Family Life being a one-time payment.
 Five year payment plans are available for life memberships.

Associate memberships do not have a vote, receive *The Train Sheet* but not the *Headlight* and are for one person only.

Active memberships receive both *The Train Sheet* and the *Headlight*, have voting rights and are for one person only.

Family memberships receive both *The Train Sheet* and the *Headlight*, have two votes and include two adults and all minor children residing at the same address.

Sustaining memberships receive both *The Train Sheet* and *Headlight*, have voting rights and are for one person only.

Life memberships receive both *The Train Sheet* and *Headlight*, have voting rights and are for one person only for life.

Family Life memberships receive both *The Train Sheet* and the *Headlight*, include two adults and all minor children residing at the same address, and have two votes (one per member) for life.

Send all applications, renewals and address changes, including email changes, to:
 Feather River Rail Society - Membership Dept. - P.O. Box 608 - Portola, CA 96122-0608
 Address / email changes may also be sent to membership@wplives.org

Mission Statement

"The Feather River Rail Society is dedicated to the preservation, interpretation and education of the public, as to the history and people of the Western Pacific Railroad."

Mission Goals

To preserve and interpret the history of the WP, the "*Willing People*" as a vital link in the development of the rail industry on the West Coast, including the steam and diesel evolution, WP's influence in the passenger tourism industry, the impact of freight competition between neighboring railroads, and WP's influence in the lumber, mining and agriculture industry from Plumas County throughout California, Nevada and Utah.

WPRM Admission and Train Ride Fares for non-members (effective April 2, 2020)**Admission**

- Adult (ages 19 - 64): \$10.00
- Youth (ages 5 - 18): \$5.00
- Child (age 4 and under): free
- Senior (65 and up) and Active Military: \$8.00
- Family (defined as 2 adults plus any related children 18 and under): \$25.00

Admission and train ride tickets are good all day.

Admission and train rides for FRRS members are free.
 Cab rides are extra fare with member discount.

Train Rides (all day)

- Adults 19 - 64: \$4.00
- Youth 5 - 18: \$2.00
- Child 4 and under: free
- Senior (65 and up) and Active Military: \$4.00
- Family (defined as 2 adults plus any related children 18 and under): \$10.00

Cab Rides

- Adults 19 - 64: \$20.00
 - Youth 5 - 18: \$10.00
 - Senior (65 and up) and Active Military: \$20.00
- Cab rides are for one (1) ride only.

***The Train Sheet* needs your photos and articles!**

If you are working on projects for the Society, volunteering on restorations, performing archives work, helping out at off-site events, etc., or if you get some nice photos of FRRS or museum happenings that you want to share, please contact us to have them printed in *The Train Sheet*.

Photos should be at least 5" high by 7" wide and 300 dots per inch.

Articles should focus on FRRS related events, people or your own personal experiences with the Society.

To contribute, contact the editor - Paul Finnegan, by email at trainsheet@wplives.org.

The Train Sheet

Feather River Rail Society
P.O. Box 608
Portola, CA 96122-0608

PRESORTED
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Change Service Requested

**We are pleased to announced that the
WESTERN PACIFIC RAILROAD MUSEUM
reopened to the public on
JULY 1st, 2021 at 12:00 NOON**

Operating hours for 2021 are:

Thursdays - Fridays: 12:00 Noon to 4:00 p.m.

Saturday - Sundays: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



Summer Weekend Train Rides:
Saturdays 11:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Sundays 11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

