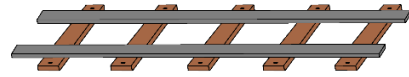


# On Track



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If you are receiving this newsletter for the first time, welcome to the fold! We continue to catalog our visitor logs, and your name and email appeared! If you wish to be taken off our list, just let us know, but we hope that you will stay with us, follow us online, and return as a visitor sometime soon. **Additional financial support will never be turned down (maintaining and operating a steam locomotive is expensive)!** Previous editions of this newsletter may be found on our [website](#). If you have comments on the newsletter, please send them to [nmheritagerail@nmheritagerail.com](mailto:nmheritagerail@nmheritagerail.com) or to your humble editor, [John Taylor](#).

## FROM THE PRESIDENT:

A hearty **Thank You** to all who participated in and helped make this another successful run to Tractor Brewing, Wells Park. I have to admit that the attendance for this event was significantly less than our two previous Tractor events (by about half). We are looking for ideas to help increase our pre-event public exposure, e.g., marketing and advertising, and ways to provide a more-engaging and encompassing experience. We'd be happy to hear your thoughts on how to make our events more attractive to the public. Please submit your thoughts and ideas to [president@nmheritagerail.com](mailto:president@nmheritagerail.com). Our next trip out on the rails is for a contracted, private event for the Santa Fe Railway Historical & Modeling Society on 26-27 June. Unless something changes, this event will take place on the new turntable lead-in track (see more about that below).



R. Duck has graciously provided NMHR with a variety of “promotional” pictures. Shown is just one of the promotional images that R. Duck provided for us to use. We just found out that R. Duck wasn't able to secure permission from BNSF to use their logos on their models. We are now



working to determine a good alternative logo, which will probably require that we don't use the Santa Fe words and instead use NMHR or 2926 in the logo.

The materials for and the process to reconstruct the turntable's diesel-engine fuel tank has started. It should be done soon, but the Tractor event contributed to its small delay.

Guzman Construction is working steadily to replace the section of track from the city's southern property limit to the south edge of the turntable, i.e., the lead-in track to the turntable. The construction began at the end of April and is expected to be completed no later than the end of May. The prefabricated track panels, which were built offsite, have been put in place (see image) and are being joined and will soon be leveled. Herzog is scheduled to bring their right-of-way equipment in to distribute, level, and tamp the ballast.



A small contingent of NMHR members met with a city official at the Tender Shops to discuss who NMHR is, what we want with the Rail Yards, and what we'd like to accomplish. We toured the city official around the Rail Yards and turntable and discussed ours (and WHEELS Museum's) wants and needs. We also discussed NMHR's South Rail Yards Access and Use Agreement. The city is working to get us an updated and extended use agreement.

Our VP and engineer, Matt Casford, is working tirelessly to get the full PTC system installed on 2926. We have had discussions with Wabtech, NMDOT, and Rio Metro to find out what they require and what NMHR needs to do to be compliant with FRA regulations. It is proving to be a long and arduous process, and we are encountering an unexpected combination of cooperation and resistance. At this point, NMDOT/Rio Metro is not willing to host or be responsible for any aspect of our operations. Mr. Casford continues to work all avenues available to us to get full PTC installed.

This wouldn't be a proper newsletter if we didn't ask for your financial help supporting projects like the trackwork and the upcoming PTC install. The track work was many tens of thousands and the PTC will be even more, so please consider donating to help us cover these not insignificant costs. Thank you!

### Capital Outlay Corner:

Not much is happening on that front. We'll let you know if anything changes.

**Profile of a member:** In the early days, he was known as the King of the Needlescalers; after that he was our Storekeeper Extraordinaire; now he is perhaps the most knowledgeable of every one of our docents. Of course, this can be none other than Pete Adair.



Born in Cincinnati in 1942, Pete and his family traveled quite a bit in his youth, eventually ending up in Los Alamos in 1947 and then moving to Albuquerque in 1952. He graduated from Sandia High School in 1961 and joined the Air Force, where he maintained aircraft navigation systems until leaving the service and entering UNM in 1965.

While at UNM, Pete took several absences from school to earn money for college expenses, including off-continent jobs at Palmyra Island in the South Pacific and Amchitka Island, Alaska working with electronic communications systems for Holmes and Narver. After graduating from UNM in 1971 with a

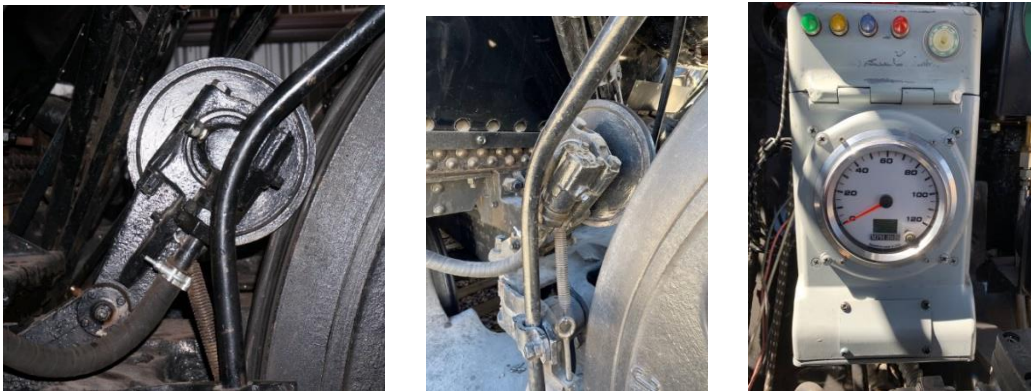
degree in Business Administration, he went to work for Radio Shack. His boss noted that he was a terrible salesman but could repair the equipment. With that stellar endorsement, he left the sales world after a few months and joined a government contractor, Wackenhut Services, Inc., in Las Vegas, Nevada, working in the field of electronic countermeasures at the Atomic Energy Commission's (AEC's) Las Vegas headquarters and the Nevada Test Site.

While in Las Vegas, Pete married the love of his life, Michele Forney, on July 28, 1974, and together they had three daughters and eventually three grandchildren. Michele, a dedicated horsewoman, passed away in 2022, but Pete continues to maintain her horse, two dogs, and a cat that was rescued from the 2926 restoration site.

One afternoon in 1974, as he was in the parking lot getting ready to leave for the day, he was approached by an AEC representative who offered him a job with that agency, and, as they say, the rest is history. Pete worked for the AEC and its follow-on agencies for the next 30 years, the last 24 of which were at the Albuquerque Operations Office. He continued to work in electronic security, performing inspections of computer security, technical security, and alarm installations across the AEC (and later DOE) nuclear weapons complex before retiring in 2004.

Pete found out about the 2926 very early on (his badge number is 85!) when he overheard an interview on KOB radio. He was involved in the movement out of Coronado Park in 2000 and has continued to be a stalwart of the organization, most recently as an invaluable source of knowledge on our photograph collection and as one of our premier docents.

**How does it work:** The original speedometer was driven from a wheel on the rear driver on the engineer's side. The fixture connected to the hub of the wheel is a gear mechanism that converted the rotation of the wheel to rotation of a cable. The cable, after passing through the conduit (which is still installed) directly drove the indicator on the speedometer gauge.



Although the drive wheel and conduit are still in place, the speed monitoring system has been replaced by a 12 VDC, GPS-based speedometer that drives an analog dial visible to the engineer. The GPS system uses an antenna that is attached to the top of the cab. The GPS components supply a signal with a pulse rate of 4,000 'pulses' per mile. By introducing the time over which the pulses are received, the pulse rate can be converted to voltage to drive the new Speedhut commercial meter: 80 pulses-per-second (pps) at 72 mph, 102 pps at 92 mph, and 111 pps at 100 mph.

The electrical output from the GPS system also feeds a custom-built overspeed detection circuit that provides a visual warning to the engineer that a set speed threshold has been exceeded. A custom-made overspeed detector uses a microcontroller to compare the pulse-rate output from the speedometer to preset limiting values, to warn the engineer of an overspeed condition, and, if an overspeed situation is detected, opening the overspeed Magnet Valve to initiate application of the automatic train brake.





**A short historical note:** Among the litany of colorful terms for railroad workers there are two that bear further explanation: “snipes” and “gandy dancers.” Before the days of steam, the men on naval ships who manned the sails were logically called sailors. When steam engines arrived, the men who operated the engines were looked down on by the sailors and, in fact, were treated poorly by all the officers and crew. In the years following the Civil War, a naval engineer named John Snipes argued for and got better accommodations and treatment for his fellow engineers, so the laborers who “worked below” were called snipes. Eventually, the name was taken up by the railroad laborers who maintained the roadway. The foreman was known as a “King snipe” and the laborers were just plain snipes. To keep the record straight, laborers who followed the extra gangs were known as gandy dancers.

Although rail tracks were held in place by wooden ties (*sleepers* outside the U.S. and Canada) and the mass of the crushed rock (*ballast*) beneath them, each pass of a train around a curve, through centripetal force and vibration, produced a tiny shift in the tracks, requiring that work crews periodically realign the track.

The term “gandy dancer” is a combination of the name of the now-defunct Chicago-based Gandy Manufacturing Company, a maker of track-lining tools, and the description of the railway workers’ dancelike movements made when aligning rail with a specially manufactured lining bar, called a “gandy,” as a lever.



For each stroke, a worker would lift his gandy and force it into the ballast to create a fulcrum, then throw himself forward using the bar to check his full weight so the bar would push the rail toward the inside of the curve.



**What's new in the store:** If you don't see something that you would like to see, let us know. Our online store will go live on June 1. Stay tuned!

**How you can help and other tidbits:** If you are interested in donating to our cause (because operating a steam locomotive is expensive!) go to our [GoFundMe](#) and [Venmo](#) links! Be sure to check out our [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [Instagram](#) pages as well! Other potential sites of interest: our friends at the [Wheels Museum](#) and activities at the [Albuquerque Railyards](#). Please see our Membership page to discover our other volunteer opportunities.



**Congrats to Sydnee Hamblin—winner of our Tractor Brewing medallion raffle!**



*Thanks to all our members  
and friends who have served!*

