

NEW MEXICO STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

AND
RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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BUCKS and ASBESTOS

The NMSL&RHS is looking high and low for dollars. The Board is working with state government seeking support for the 2926 restoration. VP Bob Scott is in the quest looking for corporate and philanthropic support.

The Wheels Museum has been a big help. With Wheels help, the tender restoration is complete. Jack Messer has been our biggest supporter overall, and may donate again with the pending tender assembly crane lifts.

Members and visitors here and there have thrown bucks in the kitty. T-shirt sales and new memberships have helped keep us going.

Sandia Laboratory donated some very necessary ultrasound equipment. A retired Sandia employee, the late John Gieske, used it for ultrasound testing on the tender wheels. Other Sandia employees will carry on Gieske's work by performing ultrasound testing of the boiler.

Local businesses donated a trailer for storage, and the old rail car used for education and office space. Services provided by volunteer electricians have helped wire the office and our storage containers.

The National Radio Astronomy Observatory's Very Large Array donated railroad ties for cribbing, rail materials for panel track and VLA employees built the track. The list of assistance and support is extensive. We need all that and much more.

(Continued on Pg 3, Column 3)

—Late Word From The CMO—

ABATEMENT TO BEGIN

THESE ARE NOT REGULAR WORK SESSIONS FOR NMSL&RHS MEMBERS

GranCor has scheduled their first abatement task for Monday, August 20. The work may require several days. Their crew will require *minimal* help from us.

CMO Bob DeGroft and CSO Jon Spargo will determine who is needed on site during GranCor's work. They do not want a crowd.

As many as four but no more than six of our members may be needed. Any members who are available for the GranCor work sessions should let Bob know. He will then contact any members he needs.

GranCor also had good news regarding stray spots of asbestos we may run into. When they encounter a situation such as Mike and Clem did in the firebox, they stabilize it by brushing it with Latex paint.

Bob will have paint and brushes on site to cope with future encounters in odd places.

WHERE WE HAVE BEEN AND WHERE WE ARE NOW

A Status Report By Bob DeGroft, Chief Mechanical Officer

Not so long ago, April 21st to be exact, serious work on the long anticipated restoration of AT&SF 2926 Locomotive began. Five years from the time we moved the locomotive and its tender onto the restoration site we began removal and disassembly of parts from the locomotive itself.

Those five years were not wasted. There was major progress. Our small group of dedicated volunteers, supported by generous rail fans, converted some bare concrete and dirt into an efficient restoration facility---and while doing that, we also restored the locomotive's massive tender. In doing so, we developed onboard talent, discovered additional talents, and learned to work as a team. We can now proceed more quickly with restoration of the locomotive .

Where We Have Been

With the help of cash donations, donated services and skills, occasional contracted assistance, and many hours of our own volunteer labor, we accomplished the following:

1. Cleared an urban forest, prepared the site, and built panel track for tender trucks.
2. Installed four 40ft steel containers for parts storage, machine shop, and supplies, and wired the containers for machine power and lights.
3. Installed equipment sheds and worksite office space.
4. Installed a donated milling machine, lathes, related equipment and accessories.
5. Acquired (and maintained) through purchase, loan, construction or donation such needed equipment as fork lifts, gantry crane, car mover, and many smaller items.
6. Acquired a large inventory of hand tools and small power tools.
7. Reconditioned an old donated refrigerator car into education center/office/computer system space.
8. Designed and implemented an education program, and built a networked computer system to track finances, membership, and restoration activity.
9. With digital technology and our computers, we began photographing and documenting each part removal and related activity. Resulting data is entered into a database that is approaching one-half terabyte in size.
10. Also during the five years, we have held several open houses, assisted WHEELS museum in cleaning the old AT&SF shops, networked with other organizations, published a quarterly newsletter, built an informative website, etc.

From a bunch of determined volunteers, an empty lot, a million pounds of rusty iron, and little else five years ago, the NMSL&RHS has become a multi talented organization with a professional restoration team and a fully functional restoration facility.

That doesn't mean we are home free by any stretch of the imagination. There will be more challenges, we will still be looking for financial support, donations and assistance. But, as we enter our sixth year since starting the restoration, we are ready to move the restoration along at an accelerated pace.

Where We Are Now

Since that April 21 kickoff, more than sixty separate tasks have been started on the locomotive. Well over half of them have been completed.

(Continued on Pg 4 Column 2)

This newsletter is published quarterly by the New Mexico Steam Locomotive and Railroad Historical Society, a Non-Profit Corporation.

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From the editor

ACTION FOR ALL AGES

There is no age limit among rail fans. That certainly holds true for the NMSL&RHS restoration team. Our members are of all ages, sizes, gender, ethnic origin and background.

In this issue, Mike Hartshorne's "Banging On A 2900" column features Ed Strebe, our oldest active member. Ed can be seen on site for most work sessions, where he is usually joined by a few other septuagenarians.

Machinist Ralph Johnson, a Boeing retiree almost matches Ed at 75 years young. Sandia Labs retiree, Dick Sons, and newsletter editor Doyle Caton, round out the regular 70s group.

Other "old guys", are our founder, Ed Bukove, (now in Omaha) and Indiana machinist Dick Downing. Though they live in other states, they provide support from afar and are at the worksite when they are in New Mexico.

In addition to our regular worksite activity, it is the responsibility of this group to lay a foundation for the next generation—and that generation is coming on strong.

The next issue will feature some very energetic younger members who are already hard at work preserving steam history.

We "old guys" are certain they will carry on just fine—our piece of history will live on.

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HOW TO HELP 2926 LIVE ON

If you are reading this on the web site many miles from Albuquerque, you obviously cannot show up for regular work sessions. However, there are many ways you can help.

—First, join NMSL&RHS. Just by joining, you are supporting the restoration of 2926.

—Visit Albuquerque for a few days or weeks when you can. The CMO will find something you can do to actively participate in the restoration. Some out-of-state members participate in this manner a few times per year.

—Buy a hat, coffee cup, t-shirt, sweatshirt or other memorabilia with the 2926 artwork.

—Spread the word to friends and family. Rail fans are everywhere, and many are willing and able to step up and help 2926 come alive.

—When you can, contribute whatever you can. NMSL&RHS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corp. All donations are tax deductible, and are applied directly to the restoration of 2926.

BANGING ON A 2900

Toolmeister Ed Strebe Is Living Proof That Senior Citizens Can Make A Significant Contribution To The 2926 Restoration Project

Mohawks and Hudsons versus quadratic equations? The New York Central or the square root of the sum of the squares? No brainer—STEAM LOCOMOTIVES win! The young man looking out the window of a Tonawanda, New York geometry class room at New York Central rail traffic was hooked for life. If Edward L. Strebe were a biologist he might call this start of a lifelong interest "imprinting".

Ed was born September 4, 1931 in Berkley CA, the son of a traveling auditor for Remington Rand. He and his family were moved back to the home office in the Buffalo, NY area when he was 8 years old. A few short years later that view from his geometry classroom made him a rail fan for life.

Still later, after a stint at a Fort Wayne, Indiana Junior College, Ed's education took a turn that set a lifelong career course. He switched to Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. Ed got his BA in 1954 and his internship at St Paul's of Tremont church in the Bronx (where he learned things he won't tell me about). He was ordained a Lutheran priest 50 years ago this month---Aug 4, 1957.

WOW! Half a century. Congratulations, Ed!!

Good pipe organ music is a big deal in the Lutheran tradition and Ed loves it. While he was still in study he found Betty Staebell by a lucky accident and had the good sense to marry her in 1955.

Right out of the Seminary, Ed was called to be pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Plymouth MA for four years. From 1961 to 1968 He was Pastor of St. Mathew Lutheran in Pawtucket, RI. Three boys and a girl were added to the Strebe family between the Bronx and Pawtucket. Life was good.

Then he got the calling to serve as pastor in a dual parish in Las Vegas and Springer New Mexico. An 11 page letter from the interim pastor told Ed the "unvarnished and unsanded" story. Move from civilization to the frontier, take a big pay cut, and assume a professional position that in modern politically correct terms would be described as a bunch of "challenges". We used to call those problems. God talked Ed into it and somehow Ed talked his wife into it.

Ed must have gone into high gear when he got to New Mexico. A 140 mile round trip every Sunday to provide services in two communities, an MA in Guidance and Counseling from NM Highlands University, and long service as a volunteer fireman in Las Vegas. Ed says his neighbors never knew when the saw him if he was coming as their pastor or their fire captain. He polished a lot of brass and still has a love for an antique fire truck.

In 1983 Ed was called to San Diego where he was again a pastor for a short while and then found a great job with the Lutheran Emigration and Refugee Service. He helped folks from Poland, Iran, Ethiopia, Columbia and other origins become Americans. After he retired Ed and Betty found Rio Rancho on a visit to New Mexico. They bought a house there in 2001, and sold his San Diego home 90 minutes after it went on the real estate market. In October of that year, he found the NMSL&RHS and became a regular.



When Ed began with the Society we owned a locomotive trapped on an industrial siding at Menaul and First Street. There was very little that could be done to 2926 on the siding. The few work sessions were limited in scope, and it was BYOT (bring your own tools).

When we moved 2926 in May of 2002 to 1833 8th Street we owned a locomotive on a rented sheet of concrete and little more. We started collecting tools and building an infrastructure. When we got our first storage containers we filled them with hand-me-down tools. With those first few tools and a growing infrastructure, the restoration project was underway.

As time went along, our machine, power and hand tool inventory grew exponentially. It soon became obvious that the Society really needed a Toolmeister. (That's practical algebra for you Ed.)

Meister? That is a German word. Who was apt to yell out in German during work sessions? Ed of course. Problem solved! We had a toolmeister.



Ed puts our new parts washer to good use.

Ed naturally slipped into the job of organizing the Society's tools and supplies. Ed only buys quality tools now. We haven't busted a cheap wrench since Ed took over. That has been a blessing for the project. Ed is still pretty busy pinch hitting in Lutheran parishes all over Albuquerque.

Between tool jobs Ed is very good at liberating shiny brass fittings from 60 years worth of grease, grime and Albuquerque city park paint while he hums something from Handel or Bach. If you don't yet know Ed well, you haven't been to many Lutheran services or many of our work sessions. I highly recommend that each member of the Society spend some time working alongside Ed.

And, by the way, *put your tools away where they belong* or you might hear some high volume German!

Mike Hartshorne, President NMSL&RHS

(Continued From Pg 1)

We Need More Help

At this point, the 2926 project is about to hit one of the biggest financial bumps in our road to restoration. Asbestos abatement (its all gotta go) will cost us about \$60,000 for the boiler. The abatement is something we cannot



Asbestos impound area: All pipes, fittings or other appurtenances with asbestos that are removed from the locomotive are stored in this impound area awaiting GranCor remediation activity.

do alone. Thus, it is a hard cash expense.

A few of our volunteers will train to assist the asbestos professionals. The benefit is two-fold. First, it will help reduce cost. Second, it will reduce the possibility of having locomotive parts damaged during the abatement process.

Our abatement plan, under the direction of Safety Officer Jon Spargo is on file in the WHQ for all to read.

Mike Grandjean of GranCor did a great job of asbestos awareness training for the members on the 4th of August, 2007. (We have a video copy for those who were not able to attend.)

An asbestos impoundment area has been established and pink painted asbestos wrapped pipes are accumulating as pipe fitter Rick Kirby works on disassembly. There is a contract for about \$4,000 with GranCor for abatement of the asbestos in the turret and backhead so the cab can be removed.

That \$4,000 takes a big hunk out of what we have in the bank. To keep productive work going while we look for the \$60,000 for the boiler we need to find the money to abate the cylinders on the locomotive, the air pumps and insulated lines now off the locomotive.

And to make things more interesting Clem Harris and I got the top five courses of bricks off the flash wall at the back of the firebox right after our asbestos training but then had to stop when we found asbestos at the corners.

You should have heard what Clem said! Just guess. I can't put it in print.

You know what is next:

Please help with our mid-summer asbestos abatement fund drive.

In addition to precious hours of volunteer labor we need hard dollars. They are called hard dollars because they are not easy to find.

If you can help please remember that the NMSL&RHS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization so contributions are tax free. No donation is too small or too big.

Thanks in advance.

Mike Hartshorne, President NMSL&RHS

SAFETY OFFICER SPEAKS

Asbestos! Asbestos! Asbestos!

What is a Safety Officer to do?

Asbestos is a wonder mineral that found its way into a myriad of industrial, home and consumer products. It would still be in wide use today if it were not discovered that the inhalation of certain types of asbestos fibers can lead to some very serious medical conditions, most of which are fatal!

Accordingly, not one but **two** government agencies, OSHA and the EPA, have weighed in with some heavy duty rules about how to deal with the substance. Ignoring or violating these rules has some pretty serious consequences.

As you might already know, or at least suspect, 2926 is covered with the stuff. Luckily we have the technology to deal with it. Unluckily we do not, for the moment, have the funds to fully employ this technology (See "Bucks and Asbestos" elsewhere in this newsletter).

For the moment we have in place a newly minted Asbestos Safety Program which is on file in the WHQ building and many members have undergone some awareness training so that they know what they are dealing with.

The bottom line, for now, is:

If you don't know where it is find out!

If you do know where it is, avoid it!

If you must work near it, don't disturb it

Hopefully, this will only be a temporary problem. Once the dreaded stuff is properly removed we can happily go about the business of restoring 2926.

I am also happy to report that several more members have gone through annual safety refresher training course.

We will have one more safety refresher session later this fall. You are reminded that this is now an annual requirement if you wish to continue working at the restoration site.

Jon Spargo, Chief Safety Officer

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RESTORATION SITE VISITORS

We frequently have visitors from various parts of the country drop in for a tour of the restoration site. We welcome everyone and give them a close up look at 2926.

Recently, however, we had two very special out of state visitors. They were Wolf Fengler and Jim Campbell from the San Bernardino Rail Historical Society.

Wolf visited in July. He spent some time looking over the restoration project and visiting with members of our crew. He had a chance to get better acquainted with NMSL&RHS members at Rick and Gail Kirby's potluck.

Jim Campbell and his wife took time out from a trip viewing remnants of Route 66 to visit Albuquerque in August. Clem Harris and

(Continued From Pg 1)

The stack and stack lifter assembly have been removed. The power reverse and its valves are being serviced. The cab has been stripped, and is awaiting abatement after which it will be lifted free of the boiler.



Crew members and a VIP visitor watch as the stack assembly is lowered from top of locomotive. The visitor, second from left is Bill Hume, Chief Policy Advisor to Governor Bill Richardson. Hume spent a large portion of the work session observing the activity.

One of the brake system air tanks is ready for ultrasound testing. The pilot is off the engine and is being stripped prior to repair. Many pieces of piping now rest in storage, much of it in a containment area awaiting asbestos abatement. The huge air compressors are on pallets awaiting abatement before they can be taken down for inspection. And a milestone was reached Saturday August 11---with much fanfare, the first superheater pipe was removed.



Superheater manifold looking forward



Superheater manifold looking backward

Everyone got in the act. Clem Harris and Larry Koblinski spent the morning atop 2926 fighting rusty bolts to get at the top of the superheater manifold. They even chased Ed Strebe to NAPA for an expensive impact socket.

Inside the smoke box, Randy McEntire, Robert Griener, and John Taylor loosened the bar that held all the tubes in line. Mike Hartshorne dutifully followed all of them around, atop, and inside getting digital photographs of the activity and parts removed.

After lunch, Travis Atwell, Jim Hills, and several others joined the fun. A scaffold was moved to the front of the locomotive. With Chief Safety Officer Jon Spargo and machinist Ralph Johnson looking on from below, and Mike Hartshorne and Doyle Caton photographing and videotaping, the rest of the crew went to work. They gingerly removed the first twenty foot unit.

Using a forklift, the tubes were transferred to some sawhorses where



How do we get this pipe out? McEntire, Atwell, Harris and DeGroft at conference in the smokebox.

(Continued on Page 5, Column 4)

some of the soot was blown off and they were moved aside to await inspection and testing. What a mess! Everyone had a chance to collect a little soot.



Milestone is reached, but much work left: Guided by McEntire, Ormson and DeGroft, the first superheater pipes slide forward from smokebox onto scaffold.

This will be the only one we remove until Travis manufactures the connector that will allow us to begin experimenting with pressure testing the unit. Once we get the process worked out and the FRA inspector approves of our method, we'll tackle the rest.

On other tasks, Ed Strebe and Ralph Johnson got the petticoat ready for welding of cracks, and Rick Kirby fought the biggest union on the engine. With Robert Griener's help, it came free.



Superheater pipe is moved by forklift to a workstation for cleanup. Photo by Mike Harts-horne from top of 2926.

Pete Ormson made final wiring adjustments to the machine shop, and Dick Sons and Pete Adair got started on cleaning the fireman's side air tank.

On Saturday August 4, we got most of the firebrick out of the firebox. We stopped when we found that the first course of brick had asbestos packed in the corners. Final brick removal awaits a check by the asbestos remediation team.

With five years experience under our belts, and such teamwork now in evidence, the restoration of the locomotive should move at a much faster pace than our work on the tender. It is a much larger project than the tender, and we were wise to start with the tender before tackling the locomotive.

(Continued from Page 3)

Travis Atwell gave them a thorough tour of the restoration site.

Their visits to the 2926 site follow visits by NMSL&RHS members to California earlier this year to participate in a 3751 operation. The back and forth visits are good for both groups, and for the well being of both locomotives.

These two locomotives, 3751 and 2926, represent the first and last of the AT&SF's large fleet of 4-8-4 locomotives.

The back and forth visits are a direct benefit to the NMSL&RHS. We can learn a lot from these guys who have been there and done that and are already operating a 4-8-4.

On a more grand scale, it is also good for the future of large historical steam. With such cooperation and the presence of a generation of younger members like Wolf, Jim, Travis and Clem, high speed steam will live on.

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NMSL&RHS MIDSUMMER BREAK We Take A Break From Working On 2926 For A Mid-July Potluck At The Kirby's

Twice per week, NMSL&RHS members get together for hard dirty work on 2926. By early summer, it was time for a break and some relaxation.

Rick and Gail Kirby had a great idea—a midsummer potluck at their place. It happened on Saturday July 14. Members and spouses had a chance to kick back in a relaxing atmosphere.

The potluck was very different from a work session. Recently retired 'Pigpen' Bradford was hardly recognizable without his layer of 2926 grime and soot. He cleans up very well.



Bob DeGroft and a clean Steve Bradford are in deep discussion as Karla DeGroft and Pat Laws Caton chat nearby. Ken Dusenberry, Ed Strebe and Mike Harts-horne are in background.

The potluck also provided an opportunity for everyone to meet and visit with Wolfgang Fengler. Wolf is a member of the AT&SF 3751 crew from the San Bernardino Rail Historical Society. (See article on visitors.)

The break was enjoyed by all. We expect to have more such events in the future.

EMAIL AND DIRECT DISTRIBUTION EDITION

This version of the newsletter is designed for email and direct distribution. It substitutes additional photos in the space used for mailing label and return address on the postal version.



Heavy Accessories, The Gantry Crane, And Mobile Workstation

NMSL&RHS 'home built' gantry crane is very useful. At left, the smokestack is being lowered onto a pallet. Bill Hume appears to be directly under it. He is actually at a safe distance beyond the smokestack.

At right, Travis Atwell guides one of our air compressor onto a pallet. The pallet rests atop our 'mobile workstation'.

The 'mobile workstation' has its own history. It is actually an extra heavy steel trailer used in the AT&SF backshops as a parts conveyance. It may have hauled 2926 parts at one time



Superheater From The Top

In photo at left, Clem Harris and Larry Koblinski work on top of 2926 to remove the superheater access panel.

The panel was removed and lowered to the ground. The picture at right is a vertical view of the superheater through the panel opening..



Snapshots

Candid photographer Mike Hartshorne got these pics.

Left, three of the old guys (Strebe, Lawrence Harmon, and Caton) loafing in the shade at the front of Lurch the car mover.

Right, he caught (read that framed) Jim Hills peeking through the smokebox petticoat prior to starting worn on it.

