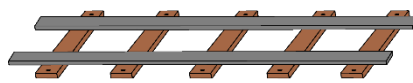


On Track



Vol. 4, Number 4, April 2025

If you are receiving this newsletter for the first time, welcome to the fold! We continue to catalog our visitor logs (some from several years past!), and your 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 or to your humble editor, [John Taylor](#).

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

We still need your support to help us accomplish some of the goals we have for the restoration site and the South Rail Yards. As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, we have a critical need to fund some specific projects. An inexhaustive list of projects and costs include:



- PTC hardware \$20,000!
- ~~New driver brake shoes \$10,000~~ (a big Thank You to George T. for his generous donation that will cover this expense!)
- Concrete work at the Rail Yards for public safety \$5000
- Metal shipping container for secure on-site storage (i.e., a conex) \$6000
- Dumpster service \$2400/year (a big Thank You to John J. for sponsoring this for the first year!)
- ~~ADA concrete work at the restoration site \$2000~~ (a big Thank You to George D. and his volunteers, Chris R., Howard L., and Terry R., for jackhammering the old post footings, preparing the area, supplying the concrete and concrete finishing expertise to get this work done! It looks great!)
- Quincy compressor cylinder head repairs \$2000
- Parts/spare Dual-stage locomotive compressor \$10,000
- 14 New washout plugs \$10,000

At the recent Rail Yards Advisory Board meeting in early April, NMHR was given permission to brief their board on our work with ASU's Department of Architecture. Mr. Albert Leffer, via Zoom, presented a shortened version of the briefing he gave to the membership at February's Annual Membership meeting and talked about "The Conductor's Turntable" roundhouse concept. The purpose was to let city officials know that we are considering bigger plans related to the Rail Yards. One of our next steps is looking into what it will take to have a ground penetrating radar survey of the south Rail Yards performed. This will provide information on the extent of the existing roundhouse foundation, service pits, and underground utilities. Albuquerque city officials have given NMHR the okay to pursue this effort.



Albuquerque's Roundhouse Back in the Day

NMHR had an unexpected visit by Mr. Ed Dickens, Steam Locomotive Operations – Executive, and Mr. Austin Barker, Assistant Director. They were kind enough to drop by our restoration site on their way to a class in Arizona. The primary purpose of their visit was to talk about the driver brake shoes and that led to many other discussions regarding steam locomotives. Ed was kind enough to volunteer his help in finding us a shop to fabricate new brake shoes as the company we used (about a decade ago) no longer does this work.

NMHR purchased seven, 275-gallon IBC totes for use in our yard. Five of them will be used to store the oil we will pump out of the tender so that we can reuse it and three will be used to create a gravity-feed water system for the various tasks around the yard. We will have to separate the locomotive and tender to inspect the drawbars, a regular maintenance item, and replace a leaking oil shutoff valve. Hence the reason we need to pump the oil out of the tender! Other maintenance items include lapping compressor and cab valves. We also placed an order for the 14 washout plugs and we expect to have them within the next 6-8 weeks.

A small team of volunteers drove to Deming, NM to Mr. Walter Dixon's acreage to pick up the contents of the car that was reported on in the last newsletter. They loaded the stake-bed truck and trailer with all sorts of stuff (e.g., brake components, doors, trim, pull-down bunkbed frames, etc.), that we are now sorting through. Loading and unloading the passenger car wheel set was especially tricky to load and unload. Another trip is planned in the near future to pick up even more stuff.

NMHR has a **CRITICAL** need for someone to take the lead as a Membership Coordinator as our current coordinator had to resign from the position. The duties of the position include:

- Tracking incoming new memberships by coordinating with the treasurer for mail-in applications, store personnel for in-person applications, and online (PayPal)
- "Welcome" new members with basic information and the New Member Handbook.
- If they desire safety training, finding out what the member is interested in and/or interested in doing.
- Encouraging new member to take one of the many needed positions detailed in the "Job Descriptions..." document.
- Coordinate with Henry Roberts to keep his MailChimp email addresses up to date so that he can send a New Member Welcome email.

And speaking of critical needs, we are still in desperate need of a Board Secretary. The duties of this position include:

- Responsible for the preparation and submission of notices of all meetings and other activities to the members;
- Responsible for keeping minutes from the Board of Directors and all membership meetings;
- Maintain a file of corporate correspondence and other records;
- Certify and keep at the principal office of the Society the original, or a copy, of the Bylaws;
- Keep a book of the minutes of all meetings;
- Be responsible for maintaining the current list of Society members;
- Provide administrative support for annual audits;
- And probably a few others.

This is one of many positions we need filled so please consider donating your talents to the organization so that we can continue to move forward.

Capital Outlay Corner

The City of Albuquerque is working with their selected contract bidder to get updated costs for the proposed work and will provide NMHR with that information. No update on the \$200k of 2024 funding is being worked with the county and NMDOT because it involves work on the 1st St grade crossing. The 2025 legislative session closed on 22 March, and we were appropriated \$120k for continued work at the Rail Yards.



Profile of a member: Our restoration site has a few thousand visitors every year. They range in age from infants to senior citizens and everything in between. These are the people who provide donations and spread the word about our wonderful machine. So who shepherds these folks through the intricacies of a 20th century steam locomotive? Our team of docents, of course. This month we feature one of our stellar docents who also helps manage the store—Jim Wolken.

Jim hails from the Midwest, in particular several small towns in the great state of Nebraska. He graduated from Tecumseh High School (now Johnson County Central High School) in 1970 and went on to college at Peru State College (also in Nebraska), earning a BS in education (with focuses in geography and history) in 1974.

Jim seems to have specialized in rural Nebraska because his early teaching assignments included such major metropolitan areas as Guide Rock and Hershey. After five years of dealing with junior high students (more than enough for most sane people), Jim decided to try his hand at working for the railroad, and he hired on as a clerk for the Union Pacific in North Platte, Nebraska. He had apparently found his niche, because he stayed with the UP as a

clerk, a train order specialist, and telegrapher in Nebraska and Kansas until retiring in June of 2012.

Jim's principal hobby is "train riding." He just hops on a train (no hoboing--mostly passenger trains I think!) and rides. He has ridden about 90% of the Amtrak routes and most of the VIA Rail Canada routes. In fact, his bucket list includes riding the Canadian rails from Winnipeg to Churchill on Hudson Bay to see polar bears up close and personal!



Polar bears in Churchill along Hudson Bay

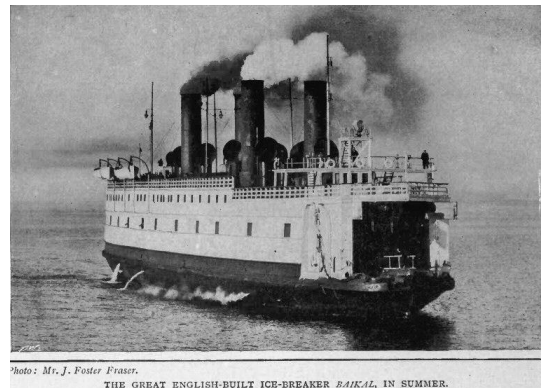
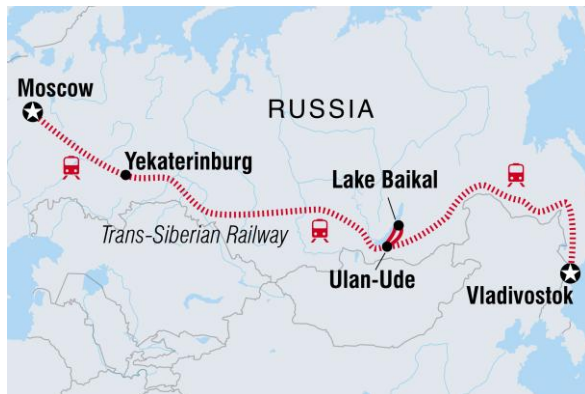
One of his pre-retirement train rides took him through New Mexico, and he liked what he saw, even though he characterized the Land of Enchantment as "like living on the Moon." After retiring from UP in 2012, he decided to move to Albuquerque where he volunteered for AMP Concerts, an entertainment organization, eventually rising to the paid position of state coordinator of all AMP volunteers.

Jim found out about 2926 through the good offices of Rick Marsden shortly after moving to Albuquerque and immediately found a job as the docent-in-chief. He still finds time to get on a train and "just go somewhere," with some of those "somewheres" visiting his son (a radiologist), daughter (a high-tech welder), and two grandchildren who are still back in Omaha.

So, those of us who turn wrenches or run conduit owe Jim and his crew a vote of thanks for taking charge of our visitors and showing off the results of our work.

A short historical note: The longest railroad in the world is Russia's Trans-Siberian Railroad which runs 5,771 miles from Moscow to Vladivostok. It was built under the direction of Nicolas II, the last tsar of Russia. Construction began in 1891 and was completed in 1916. It was doubletrack for its entire distance in 1939 under Josef Stalin. For a time, trains had to cross Lake Baikal (the deepest lake in the world) by ferry, but a route around the lake was completed in 1904. The entire line was electrified between 1929 and 2002, allowing heavier trains to travel the route.

The entire trip takes six days and four hours and crosses seven rivers in addition to circumnavigating Lake Baikal.



How Does It Work: You may have wondered why the outside of the tender is covered in rivets, especially since the tender does not have to withstand any significant internal pressure. Perhaps that question has “baffled” you for a time! Or perhaps various possible answers to the question have been “sloshing rhythmically” around in your mind!



Well, speculate no more—as you know, the tender carries up to 24,500 gallons of water which weighs in at a whopping 208,250 pounds. Those of you who have spent some time riding trains know that they frequently sway or rock a small amount as they move along tracks that may not be perfectly symmetric. They also move around curves, some of which may be quite long. Water being a liquid, will move with the movement of the tender (inertia and momentum in action!).

The centrifugal force which occurs when going around a curve would push the water to the outside. When the curve straightens out, the water would move back to the other side as a unit. If the tender is rocking rhythmically, the water will move back and forth (i.e., slosh), occasionally setting up a resonant frequency that will push the tender further and further into the rocking motion. If these sorts of movements with nearly a quarter of a million pounds of water were allowed to happen, they would be sufficient to tip the tender over and pull both it and the engine off the track.

Fortunately, the designers understood this problem and installed both radial and longitudinal baffles (shown below) to prevent resonant sloshing or excessive centrifugal movement on curves. The rivets you see on the outside of the tender are what hold these internal plates in place!



So why, you ask, don't we have baffles in the boiler? After all, it holds between 5,000 and 6,000 gallons of water, that's 42,500 to 51,000 pounds, which well might also try to slosh rhythmically. The answer is that the 270 tubes and flues fulfill the same function in the boiler as the baffles do in the tender and prevent the resonant movements that could derail the engine.

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.



April 2



April 3

National Grilled Cheese Sandwich Day



April 12