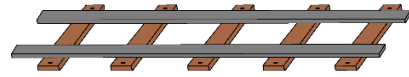


On Track



Vol. 3, Number 9, September 2024

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:

This is usually where my general plea for your financial assistance is located. Right now, we have a critical need for funds for some very specific projects and we really need your help. As NMHR makes strides to have a bigger presence and hold public events at the Rail Yards, we need to raise \$5000 for concrete restoration work for volunteer and public safety, \$6000 so that we can purchase a metal shipping container (i.e., a conex) for on-site storage (and something big to put our logo on for all to see 😊), and \$2400/year for dumpster service so that we can keep our area clean. Please donate anything you can, through our usual channels and keep an eye out for a fundraising announcement, to help us with our activities at the Rail Yards! Thank you!



We continue to prepare for our 2nd Annual New Mexico Railroad Days at the Rail Yards Friday-Sunday, 27-29 September. Come out and join us as 2926 makes its first public appearance, and any steam locomotive, at the Rail Yards in over 70 years! Get the full information by following this [link](#). We will have food trucks, exhibitors, vendors, cab tours, speeder rides, and car shows. We are also hosting nighttime photography workshops on Friday and Saturday. Details and tickets are available [here](#).

The tool car is showing incremental progress with the concentration of effort being on configuring and connecting the 480-V genset. I am told that the requirements for working with and connecting 480-V systems are specific and we are working to satisfy Amtrak's requirements. Fortunately, we finally located a generous electrical supplier who is loaning us the high-pressure crimping tool for large gauge wires. We will be working on these crimps and connections soon.

Progress on the turntable is making incremental progress but NMHR, along with the city of Albuquerque, is still waiting for the state capital outlay grants to be distributed before any work can begin. In the meantime, the city will work with NMHR to develop a statement of work (SOW) so that a request for quote (RFQ) can be released to qualified contractors. The city's environmental health department did confirm the presence of lead-based paint and hydrocarbons (i.e., grease and oil) on the turntable. So, as I've mentioned in other

newsletters, capital outlay funds will now have to be used to mitigate these environmental concerns and a remediation requirement will have to be included in the upcoming SOW.

In other turntable news, the hydraulic drive system's diesel motor now has a refurbished radiator, thanks to Chris Rosol and crew, and at least it won't leak all over the place now! As an unfortunate consequence of the lead-in track replacement, the turntable must remain stationary for the time being. The lead in track was, purposefully, left longer than necessary so that an exact fit can be made when the turntable tracks are laid and the work is completed.

Profile of a member: Every organization needs a Nate Phillips, a person who is always there when you need him and willing to do whatever needs doing—just tell him where and when and what tools!



Nate was born in Durango, Colorado but moved to the Duke City at the tender age of four. A Sandia High School Matador from the get-go, he graduated in 1967 and decided to try his hand in the business world by going to the Albuquerque Business College. That was a non-starter, so he enlisted in the Air Force where he was a teletype operator for the next three years. (You remember teletypes—those wonderful machines that sent electric signals to another machine directly or punched holes in tapes that you put into another machine to decode the original message. They were phased out about the time Nate left the service in the early 1970s.)

During his four-year Air Force career, Nate was stationed at Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha, Incirlik Air Force Base in Turkey, and Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs. After leaving the Air Force, Nate attended Southern California College (now Vanguard University) in Costa Mesa, California, where he married Vivian in 1978 and graduated with a degree in elementary education in 1979. He soon discovered that managing a classroom of 30 energetic young hellions was not for him, so he took a series of jobs—managing credit cards for a bank and working as a mixer in a bakery—until he happened upon an opportunity to work for the Post Office in a small town in New Jersey. He recalls that the post office in the town was an old home, and he did it all—sorting the mail, working the counter, and delivering the mail (on foot, of course).

In 1988, with his wife and now three small children, Nate moved the family to Albuquerque to be closer to his parents. His Post Office job transferred with him, and for the next 22 years he delivered mail in the Northeast Heights, mostly working out of the Manzano station. Over his career he walked, drove the little jeeps, and eventually drove the vans.

In the summer of 2000, after the 2926 had been moved to the Menaul siding, Nate dropped by just as Charles Incendio was closing the site and got a personal tour. Nate had spent some of his youth at his grandparents' home in Durango just across from the tracks of the Durango and Silverton, so he was already a train guy (in fact he recalls asking for two things one Christmas—a train that ran on tracks and a baby sister—he got the latter!). After the Incendio tour, he was hooked, and he has been our go-to guy ever since.

When not at the site, Nate and Vivian are active in the Tramway Community Church and he has had quite an acting career as a background worker in productions such as “Better Call Saul,” “Longmire,” and the “Lone Ranger.”

Give Nate a tool and a job and he is off to the races. He is just as comfortable spending eight hours removing a bolt that hasn't been graced with a wrench for half a century as he is giving a tour to a crowd of awe-inspired visitors. Like I said, every organization needs at least one Nate Phillips!



A short historical note: New Mexico Heritage Rail (NMHR) has its roots more than a quarter of a century ago. By the late 1990s it was becoming more and more obvious that something would have to be done with the ATSF 2926. Its four-decade tenure in Coronado Park had taken a toll—rust was eating away at the boiler sheathing, exposing the underlying asbestos insulation and vandals had stolen or broken gauges, lights, and other parts. In fact, it had come to the point that Albuquerque was on the brink of washing their hands of the exhibit and selling it for scrap.

A group of dedicated railroad enthusiasts, led by Albuquerque pharmacist Ed Bukove, saw the handwriting on the wall and decided to act. On August 4, 1997, the Albuquerque Steam Locomotive and Railroad Historical Society (later changed to the New Mexico Steam Locomotive and Railroad Historical Society) was formally chartered by the New Mexico State Corporation Commission to:

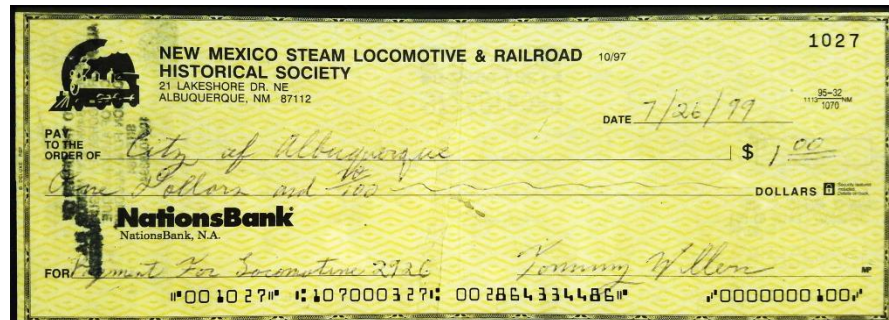
Move and restore to running condition, if possible, the steam engine #2926 situated in the Park next to I-40 and between 2nd and 3rd streets, Coronado Park in the City of Albuquerque, New Mexico.



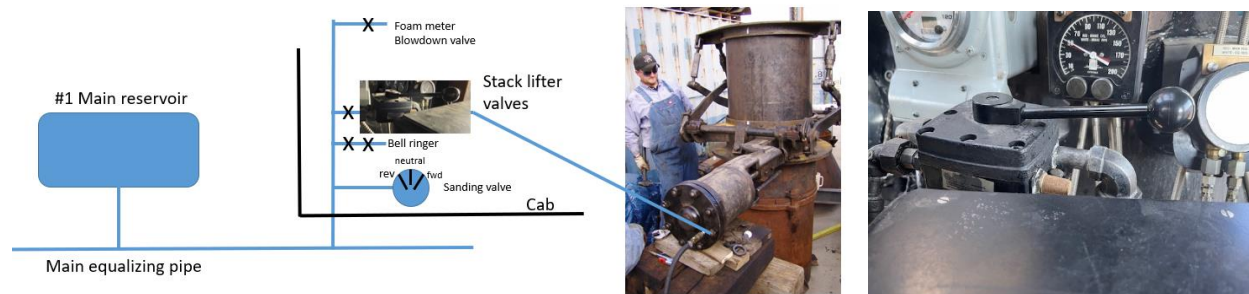
The first meeting of the organization, which included representatives from the city of Albuquerque, the Urban Council, and the Landmark Commission, as well as “charter members” of the Society: Ed Bukove, Rob Emons (the first secretary), Frank Gerstle (the first president), Tommy Willers (the first treasurer), Charles Incendio (the first vice-president), and our own Doyle Caton was held in August 1995.

A contract between NMSL&RHS and the City of Albuquerque was finalized in early July and on July 19, 1999, Albuquerque's Chief Administrative Officer, Lawrence Rael, signed a bill of sale transferring the “Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company Steam Engine Number 2926, and its tender and a caboose” to the Society “free of any liens or encumbrances” for the price of \$1.00. The Bill of Sale was

signed by Society president Frank Gerstle on August 6. The check was presented to Mayor Jim Baca on August 14, 1999.



How does it work: One of the characteristics of the 2900 class of locomotives was its air-operated stack lifter. This feature was not on the as delivered 2926 but was installed during the 1947-1949 overhaul. The idea is that a tall stack provides good draft for the fire and exhausts the smoke and steam high enough to avoid the cab and (hopefully) most of the passenger cars. On the other hand, a short stack avoids problems with low hanging wires and tunnels. The stack lifter air supply has an isolation valve behind the brake stand and a horizontal raise-neutral-lower control valve, also behind the brake stand.



What's new in the store: Our online store has lots of interesting products—just follow this [link](#) and check out what we have available. If you don't see something that you would like, either in our Shopify store or in the restoration site store, just let us know and we'll look into it.

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 needs and opportunities.



NMHR hopes that everyone had an enjoyable Labor Day!

