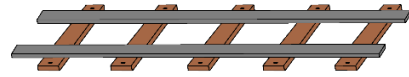


On Track



Vol. 3, Number 11, November 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:

We continue working to reach our financial goals. As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, we have a critical need to fund some specific projects, and we really need your help. First and foremost, NMHR is pushing forward with purchasing the hardware required to equip 2926 with PTC and making all the modifications to the locomotive to support it. The expected cost for the equipment and modification is standing at around \$20,000! To add to that, 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 any amount that you can as every single dollar helps. You can donate through our usual channels, and also keep an eye out for a fundraising announcement, to help us with our activities with the locomotive and at the Rail Yards!



We wrapped up our operations for 2024 last month with a chartered photo shoot for Lerro Photography. Pete Lerro is out of Pennsylvania and is well known in the steam locomotive photography community and others (you can see some of his work at www.lerrophotography.com). He, his crew, and his attendees said they had a great time and are looking forward to doing this again. NMHR received a special surprise when Rio Metro gave us permission to make runs across the Alvarado Transportation Center so that we, and their marketing department, could capture some images.



Photo by Pete Lerro

Now that 2926's season has come to an end, we have a lot of maintenance work to do on her. First up is a hydrostatic test on the boiler for our five-year inspection. After that is a laundry list of things to do: rebuild the fireman's side air compressor, which we'll get started on after the hydrostatic test; reset the pressure relief valves; make a spare copper gasket for the manway; repair the engineer's side mud ring studs, finish the job board; replace the leaking unions with new ones; repack the crank rod on the Worthington lubricator; lots of valves to lap; remove the main boiler inlet check valve assembly so that the seats can be remachined; finish reconfiguring and reinstalling the piping on the blowdown; reconfigure the terminal blow down valve connection, and others! There's lots for us to get done so if you haven't been around for a while for lack of work, now's your time to again lend a hand to get 2926 ready for 2025.

We are making slow and steady progress on the PTC for 2926. Our PTC team is working with John Howard to develop a magnet-based speedometer sensor, using 2926's original speedometer wheel, to feed into the PTC. The sketch shows the notional position of the magnets. These magnets induce a known timing signal, based on their radial and angular position, in the pickup sensor and the system is calibrated to the locomotive's speed.



Sketch by John Howard

Profile of a member: I'm sure that all of you has admired the mirror-like black sheathing that covers our boiler. As some of you may remember, that wasn't always the case—Rust Prevailed! However, a group of stalwarts including Wild Bill Wilhelm, Ed Burggoff, and led by Scott Eckstein are responsible for this remarkable transformation. This month we feature Scott, a sheet metal worker extraordinaire.



Scott is a Pennsylvania boy from Harmony, PA. He graduated from Zelenople High School in Zelenople, PA, home of the Golden Bears, in 1964, and enlisted in the Army as a teletype operator (recall that Jerome Adams had similar training). After two years wearing olive drab, he went to work in Pennsylvania in the pre-cast concrete business, working in that field for 27 years. In the meantime, he met and married his lovely wife, Elaine, and together they had two sons. During his years in the world of concrete, he acquired considerable skills

in working with sheet metal and staybolts, both stock and trade for his later days with the 2926.

In 2003, one of his boys moved to Albuquerque and Scott and Elaine decided that the Land of Enchantment might be a good place to be. With more than a quarter century of experience, finding a pre-cast concrete job was a slam-dunk and Scott went to work for Beaty Masonry. Elaine has had a full career taking care of the home and family, spending quality time with their granddaughter Trinity.



Retiring in 2011, Scott began helping friends with minor repairs and in July 2011 he discovered the 2926. He had always been a model railroader, specializing in O and S scale. He served on the Board of the Train Collectors Association and organized a huge show at the Hotel Albuquerque in 2019. Unlike most of these

endeavors, this one made money for the organization. When he is not railroading at O, S, or Standard Gauge, Scott enjoys wood turning. Using his “fancy” lathe, he “turned out” many vases, bowls, and platters.

Scott is your foundational “jack of all trades,” and continues to make his mark on NMHR.

A short historical note: It is frequently reported that the mainline of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway never actually reached Santa Fe. This is not true. However, the process of getting the rails there was not straightforward. The railway executives were focused on keeping construction costs down and making money, and the city of Santa Fe, referred to by some as “the still primitive capital,” did not offer nearly as much economic promise as Albuquerque, San Marcial, Deming, and the transcontinental route to California. In addition, the engineers noted that the 18.1-mile route into Santa Fe from Galisteo Junction, as Lamy was then known, would require difficult construction and considerable excavation, bridging, and possibly even some tunneling.

Given the anticipated expense involved, executives from the New Mexico and Southern Pacific Railroad, a construction subsidiary of the AT&SF, told the Santa Fe city fathers that if they wanted a railroad, the railroad would do the work, but the city would have to pay for it! The citizens overwhelmingly supported getting access to the mainline and approved a \$150,000 bond to make it happen. Grading the route began in November 1879 and the first train reached the capital city on February 8, 1880.

For the first few months, trains ran from Kansas through to Santa Fe, but as the rails raced south, AT&SF management decided to have a stop at Galisteo Junction. From there, the mainline service would continue south, and a local train consisting of a locomotive, a baggage car, a smoker (a coach where smoking was allowed), a coach, and a caboose would make four or five roundtrips daily to meet the mainline service. These locals could also pull freight if it was destined for Santa Fe. This model went on for decades.



Train arriving at Lamy in 1937

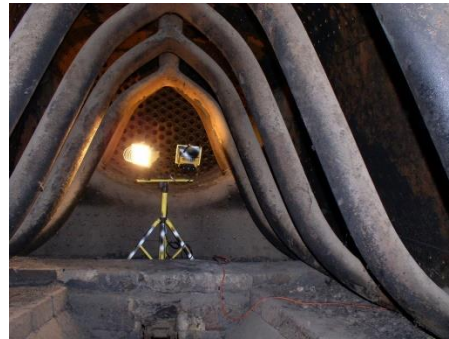


Sky Railway running towards Lamy - 2023

As automobiles became more prevalent, AT&SF dropped its locals to once a day with other shuttle service into the capital provided by Harveycars (essentially oversized sedans used to carry tourists as part of the Harvey Company’s Indian Detours program). The single local pulled mostly freight, and the few passengers were consigned to the caboose where they rode in the cupola while the conductor did his paperwork below. As of September 1, 1961, all passenger service was discontinued, and the only runs were Monday, Wednesday, and Friday freight runs from Albuquerque, picking up and setting out cars at Bernalillo, Santo Domingo, and Lamy before going into Santa Fe, where the locomotive overnighted before returning to Albuquerque the next morning.

Today, Sky Railway (formerly Santa Fe Southern) provides tourist specials from Santa Fe to just outside Lamy on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, making room for freight deliveries from Monday through Wednesday (details of the Sky Railway specials can be found at info@skyrailway.com).

How does it work: Some of us have spent “cheerful” hours inside the firebox measuring wall thickness, ringing out staybolts, or performing other soot-covered chores. Once inside, you encounter a forest of wishbone-shaped pipes (notice how your clever editor has managed to weave a Thanksgiving theme into this article!). These are called safety circulators, although you will also hear them referred to as security circulators or thermic siphons.



These devices, which were first added to engines in the early to mid-20th century, serve several important purposes. The first of these is to improve circulation, especially from the mud ring to the center of the crown sheet (the metal cover over the top of the firebox). This helps to prevent the crown sheet from losing its water covering and prevents dry spots in the mud ring where a phenomenon known as departure from nucleate boiling (DNB) can occur, leaving only a vapor layer on the metal and drastically reducing the heat transfer. Both problems can lead to rapid temperature rise of the crown or side sheets, ultimately leading to metal failure and possible boiler explosions.

The second purpose of the circulators is to significantly improve boiler efficiency. Historically, locomotive boilers were not particularly efficient at turning the energy in the combusting fuel into energy in the steam. In fact, some boilers had efficiencies as low as 10%. By putting the safety circulators directly into the combustion chamber and firebox, the radiant and convective heat transfer is significantly enhanced, improving the overall efficiency of the locomotive and decreasing the cost per ton-mile to transport freight or passengers. In some tests, installation of circulators or syphons increased the heating area of the firebox by 15% to 45% and improved overall efficiency by nearly 10%

In addition to the efficiency and safety improvements, installation of circulators provides more structural support for the crown sheet, protecting against crown sheet and side sheet collapse in case of low water events

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.

*Happy thanksgiving from
your friends at the 2926!!!*



(But, Don't Eat Too Much Turkey!)