

NEW MEXICO STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

AND
RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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A CLOSE LOOK AT AT&SF BACKSHOPS REDEVELOPMENT

In November, the City of Albuquerque purchased the historic AT&SF rail shops on the south side of the City's downtown area. The city purchased the property for \$8.5 million, with some state money and private investments helping to meet that figure.

The long vacant shops and surrounding area are now getting a close review from a group of experts in redevelopment of such properties.

A panel from the Urban Land Institute (ULI) is reviewing possible uses of the shops. The ULI is an international non-profit organization with experts in a variety of disciplines including public policy, land use planning, architecture, real estate, property development and urban renewal.

The panel members will interview a wide range of groups interested in the preservation and redevelopment of the historic property. At the end of the review, the ULI will make recommendations to the city concerning options for redevelopment.

A primary goal of the redevelopment is to save the historic structures that were built in the 1915 to 1925 time frame. In light of that goal, there will be some assumptions regarding the redevelopment.

Those assumptions include space for WHEELS museum and construction of 30 units of affordable housing.

WHEELS museum will focus on the history of wheeled transportation that was so critical to the development of New Mexico and the western U.S. From the wooden wheeled carrettas of the Conquistadors, to the railroad that built the shops, to Route 66, WHEELS will recognize the importance of the wheel to the development and growth of the state we refer to as the "Land Of Enchantment".

After interviewing almost 100 groups and individuals during a weeklong session, the ULI will make its recommendations at a public meeting.

After receiving the recommendations, the city will move forward with a request for bids from developers to take over management of the project.



WHY IS THIS GUY GRINNING?



"Pigpen" Bradford is perched far inside the 2926 firebox, at the flues. To learn why he has such an insidious grin, see page six. For further elucidation regarding the dark side of Bradford's activity read the following by NMSLRHS president Mike Hartshorne.

THE DARK SIDE OF THE FORCE

Pete Adair got lucky. His wife was gone when he got home. As the garage door went up with her car gone he thought, "Thank God"!

Some of the rest of us weren't so fortunate. I got caught trying to get in the back door unobserved. Steve Bradford had the same problem. Mike Swanson is single so he gets a pass on this one. Dave Traudt can't talk about what happened to him. Clem Harris maintains that his wife doesn't get upset about things like this. I don't believe him.

It all started when Clem got in the firebox that morning with Kevin Evans and started using a come-along to yank out a couple of bundles of super heater tubes. A couple of rows had been man-hauled out on earlier sessions but something perverse came over this work session. A competition of man against machine and black had commenced.

Kevin had to leave and Clem wanted help. I put away my camera and got in the smoke box to find Clem with an incorrigible grin shining through blackface.

Using a come-along, we started dragging bundles of tubes out of flues as fast as we could rig and haul them. We banged on tubes and pushed each other. Down on the concrete Steve, CMO Bob DeGroft, Dave, Mike, Pete and others were hustling to get the bundles across the work platform and down for stacking on cribbing made from railroad ties.



Step 1: Deep in the smokebox, a come-along begins the long pull of a superheater pipe bundle from its resting place of more than 50 years.

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From the editor

NEW YEAR STARTS WITH A BANG FOR NMSL&RHS

Well—maybe not as much of a bang as a blast from Pigpen's soot gun. (See page six).

The year 2008 looks very favorable for increased activity in restoring AT&SF 2926. A sparkling, restored tender is sitting proudly on the site. It awaits only warm weather to get its new black finish—complete with original white lettering in Railroad Roman font.



A cold day in January: With most of 2926 shrouded in plastic for asbestos removal, NMSLRHS members brave the cold to work on appliance removal.

All of the asbestos on 2926, except for a small area at the front, has been removed. Removal of that final portion will happen in early March. The old locomotive looks a bit naked, but in surprisingly good shape.

Most appliances have been removed. Some have already received restoration attention. Restoration of others is in progress.

Superheater pipes have all been removed, and neatly stacked on site. Once the pipes were removed, attention was directed to the flues. (That is where the soot gun came into play.)

The boiler is now fully exposed for ultrasound testing. That represents a major step in the process. It will be done very soon, and will provide a view of just what has to be done to bring the boiler up to FRA specifications.

Our self imposed rule of recording all restoration steps has resulted in a massive database. The database includes: 1) digital photos all items removed; 2) details of their removal; 3) storage location; 3) restoration progress on each item; and 4) digital copies of the original 2900 drawings that were located in Chicago. The database is nearing half a terabyte in size.

Work sessions see a number of hardy souls hard at work—often in the face of foul weather.

Visibility is also increasing. Visitors pop in regularly to check on our progress. The most recent visitors included a rail tour group from the West Coast. The group included avid rail fans from several states and Great Britain.

As the new year begins, and we look down the road to better weather, we are really upbeat. That light at the end of the tunnel is beginning to look a lot like the headlight of AT&SF 2926.

BANGING ON A 2900

Steam Power Is Where You Find It: John Taylor, The Nautilus, And AT&SF 2926

If you believe in the infectious theory of “railroad disease” then it is easy to understand why a nuclear engineer and historian is banging on a 2900 steam locomotive.

John's elementary school days 40 or 50 years ago in that fine railroad town of Needles, California probably got him inoculated. His folks were teachers, but his classmates had family working for the ATSF.

Later, his commute from Needles to the Thatcher School in Ojai, California must have permanently adjusted his immune system. It started by rail on AT&SF's El Capitan to Pasadena.

As a Navy ROTC student at Stanford getting a bachelors degree in engineering and a masters degree in nuclear engineering he probably did not realize that he would be infected for life. After all, the relationship between nuclear fueled steam turbines and oil powered steam piston locomotives isn't something that is easily evident.

Somehow John got through Admiral Rickover's interview and spent four years on the first nuclear submarine, the Nautilus, as reactor control officer.

Old stories would lead one to believe that all submarine crew members are small guys—say well under six feet. John, a large framed guy standing more than six feet one inch, debunks that tale. He stated that he was not even the tallest guy on the Nautilus.

John inferred that even though the nuclear subs may have been touted as “more spacious”, they actually had little more room than older conventional submarines. He said the tall guys either learned to duck when entering the submarine's many low spaces, or they carried blue bruises on their forehead.

Is it possible that is why he has not volunteered to enter the 2926 firebox that he is pointing to in the picture on page three? Maybe he saw enough tight places during his US Navy tour.



John Taylor as a young naval officer.



The USS Nautilus, John's First Steam Assignment Was Nuclear Fueled Steam.

When John left the Navy in 1975 he went looking for a job with “no coastline and no water”. He had a good offer from Albuquerque's Sandia National

Labs. The high desert was far enough from the sea, and similar enough to his native Needles that he settled into life in New Mexico.

John now has spent the last 33 years at Sandia working on environmental impact studies for the transport of radioactive materials and doing national security work in arms control and non (nuclear) proliferation studies.

While he was at it he took up a study of local New Mexico history and has published books on the New Mexico Civil war battles (Bloody Valverde, Battle of Glorietta Pass). He also worked on the history of the catholic church near his Peralta, NM home, an effort that produced an award for religious history. I've read them all and enjoyed them.

Just when he thought his life was full and rewarding he read a newspaper article about the NMSL&RHS, called me up and accepted an invitation to check out the 2926 restoration.

The infection long held in check by a busy life vigorously reemerged, now bolstered by his steam experience in the Navy. Next thing you know he was inside the 2926 tender's water cistern scratching out caliche on his hands and knees.

Fair weather and foul John has a cheerful way of doing any little thing needed done at a work session and has turned his hand at everything from hauling out superheater tubes to needle scaling corrosion off the boiler. He also frequently provides trash hauling services for the worksite using a beater of a pickup that Ed Strebe says is so old that its wheels turn backwards. (Ed would know about things like that.)

John was also railroaded into a position on the Society's Board of Directors a year ago and has since put in plenty of behind the scenes effort on our education program, the Centennial Train proposal, fund raising, and planning for the Society's future.

He predicts his future may include a happy retirement from Sandia at which time I predict that he will fall deeper into the railroad illness.

Of course he will spend a good deal of time with his wife Lynn, and a lot of time as father to four daughters and grandfather to two granddaughters.

He will research more historical topics, tend to his horses and apply his considerable energy and talents to his newly adopted iron horse—the 2926.

We're lucky we have him in our 2926 family. And if you are reading this, John, there is a bunch more trash that needs hauled.—Mike Hartshorne



John Taylor, Civil War Historian In Period Uniform With Civil War Arms



This system is oil fired, not nuclear, it is piston driven instead of turbine, but it is still steam, and John is real happy that he does not have to duck to avoid bulkheads.

RAIL HISTORY LOSES A COUPLE OF GOOD GUYS

December and January saw the passing of two of our favorite railroaders. They were Chales Davis, of Albuquerque, a founding member of NMSL&RHS, and Kansan Lloyd Stagner, rail historian par excellence.

CHARLES G. DAVIS

FOUNDING MEMBER NMSLRHS

Charles Girard Davis, a life long resident of Albuquerque, passed away December 3, 2007 at the age of 93.

“Charley” to all his friends, had a special affection for AT&SF 2926. His love for the giant locomotive (and its many siblings) came quite naturally. He was the son of an AT&SF engineer. Charley’s father operated many of AT&SF’s high speed 4-8-4 locomotives.

As a student at Albuquerque High School, he was close enough to Albuquerque’s rail center to hear the trains and the whistle at the Santa Fe shops.

After high school, Charley attended the University of New Mexico where he obtained a mechanical engineering degree. After college, he worked at Martin Laboratories in Albuquerque.

When WWII began, Charley enlisted in the U.S. Navy. While in the Navy, he served as a shipboard engineer. His active military service ended with the end of the war and a rank of Lt. Commander. He continued active involvement in the Navy Reserve and Navy League.

He was a life member of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), a member of, the American Society of Professional Engineers ASPE, holding Professional Engineer license #839.

Charley was active in helping get the NMSL&RHS organized and operating. During the past couple of years, he was unable get involved in restoration activities. However, he still checked in with other members by phone frequently, just to make sure we were still making progress on his beloved locomotive.

LLOYD STAGNER

RAIL HISTORIAN

Lloyd Stagner was a one-of-a-kind rail author and historian. Many of us have read and enjoyed his outstanding works.

Some our members, including historian John Taylor, knew and corresponded with Stagner. John along with several other NMSLRHS members have been considering a history of 2900 series locomotives. They received encouragement from Stagner, who not only possessed great knowledge of the 2900’s, but had a special love for the huge 4-8-4’s.

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Stagner's passing leaves a real gap in rail history. The following is a notice of his passing by Hurst Laviana of the Wichita Eagle.

From the *Wichita Eagle*

RAILROAD HISTORIAN LLOYD STAGNER DIES AT 84

By Hurst Liviana

Lloyd Stagner's life was about railroads.

"He knew trains inside and out," said life-long friend James McClellan. "He was a walking, breathing historian. I mean he was an absolute authority -- one of the foremost authorities on passenger trains in the country."

Mr. Stagner was working on his 32nd book about trains when he suffered a heart attack at his Newton home Jan. 11. He died late Friday at Via Christi Regional Medical Center-St. Francis Campus at the age of 84.

"He was a very prolific author and very highly regarded," said Gale Meek, who served with Mr. Stagner on the Great Plains Transportation Museum's board of directors. "He researched things carefully. He didn't write about things he didn't know about."

Up until the day of his heart attack, Marilyn Stagner said, her husband regularly fielded phone calls from people all over the country seeking information about railroads.

"Sometimes two or three a day," she said. "If you wanted to know something about trains, you'd ask Lloyd."

McClellan said he met Mr. Stagner at Wichita's Union Station when both were 16-year-old railroad buffs.

"He'd probably been at it ever since he was 5 or 6 years old," McClellan said. "We started talking and carried on from there for 68 years. He was a railroad man anyway you looked at him."

Both men went on to long railroad careers, with Mr. Stagner holding a variety of jobs during his 34 years with the Sante Fe Railroad. He published his first railroading book in 1975, and his fascination with trains continued long after his retirement in 1979.

Although he was no longer on the board of directors of the Great Plains Transportation Museum in Wichita, Mr. Stagner continued to volunteer there and often served as a tour guide when schoolchildren visited.

In recent years, he also was active with the Northern Flyer Alliance, a group that has been lobbying to bring rail passenger service back to Wichita.

Meek said that if Mr. Stagner will be remembered for something besides his railroad knowledge, it will probably be for his gentle demeanor.

"He was just an absolute gentleman," he said. "You couldn't ask for a nicer friend. He was very, very personable. Anybody who asked him a question, he did the best he could to find an answer."

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That's not the dark part. Each bundle of tubes brought with it a choking smoke of lighter-than-air soot that was getting everywhere. Everywhere includes every inch of one's overalls, hard hat, goggles, gloves and epidermis.

After half a row of tubes Clem and I were at equilibrium with the soot. The guys on the ground were getting irritable as we swung down bundle after bundle and they too experienced the dark side of the force.

When they protested that they didn't have any place to put the extracted tubes Clem and I joked "that sounds like a personal problem" and kept fighting carbon and steel. I figured there was no point in stopping. We could not get any dirtier.



A bit of tugging, and a bundle of tubes emerges from the smokebox.



Another bundle of super heater pipes heads across the concrete to a storage rack.

Steve "Pigpen" Bradford is widely regarded for his ability to attract railroad dirt of any kind. Maybe his karma was rubbing off on us. Everyone succumbed to the dark side of the force.

When we were finally out of tubes to pull we pulled off our masks and Doyle Caton lined up a few of us at a safe telephoto distance for a photo he just called "Dirty Half Dozen".

Sweat has a fine way of gluing carbon into skin, deep. My gloves were black inside and out as were my hands. A cold water rinse did little good for that. I drove home in a blackened daze still not realizing how grubby I'd gotten until I reached my back door.



Steve Bradford, Lawrence Harmon and Dave Traudt lift a pipe bundle onto cribbing.

Within moments my wife had assessed the situation, suspended her usual sweet affect, and banned me from further entry, maybe forever. I peeled off everything while standing on a door mat that was soon irrevocably black and subsequently discarded. My socks *inside* my boots were solid black (as were my feet).



Dirty Half Dozen: Several other members got a serious dose of the soot, but these six, Pete Adair, Dave Traudt, Mike Swanson, Clem Harris, Mike Hartshorne, and Steve Bradford managed to get the dirtiest. In this picture, they have already done a bit of preliminary cleanup. In the accompanying article, Mike describes the remaining cleanup (and related challenges) upon arriving at home after the work session.

The rest of me wasn't much better. All my clothes went directly over linoleum to the washing machine along with my work gloves. I ran the machine twice with lots of soap. After some negotiation I was permitted to tip-toe through the house on a pair of rubber thongs straight into the shower while touching NOTHING!

I ran the hot water heater cold a couple of times and used most of a bar of soap, two wash rags, and a half a quart of shampoo before I passed inspection. Then I had to clean the driver's seat in the Cherokee, my cell phone, wallet, leatherman, work ID, and everything else in my gym bag—which itself was already going round in circles with the overalls and such.

All the while I got a very professional lecture about my activities of the day. I compared notes later with the other new pigpen sticker awardees and found my homecoming was not unique.

Phew! At least that big carbon footprint of a job is done. But is it safely clean to work on the 2926 now? NO! The precipitated smoke is now ankle deep in the firebox. There is still a vast quantity of lamp black left inside the flues. Before we have a tube cutting party that all has to be cleaned up.

If you see Steve headed into the firebox with a 1" airline get away upwind from the smokebox door. With blasts of compressed air and a supply of old rags to use as wadding Steve has lately been firing each one of those flues like black powder cannon shot over a Civil War battle field. If you are not wary you may become one with the soot and join the dark side of the force. (See me with evidence for your pigpen award.)—Mike Hartshorne



Stored Pipe Bundles: There are a lot of superheater pipes in a 2900 locomotive.

SAFETY UPDATE

By the time you read this article our "asbestos" problem should either be solved or be very near to being solved. The folks at Gran-Cor have done an outstanding job for us resulting in zero asbestos exposure for any of our members. We can now put the asbestos issue to rest and get on with the business at hand.

Also, by the time you read this we will have had the first of our Annual Safety Refresher training sessions. There seems to be some confusion about safety eligibility to work at our sight. If you have had either an Annual Safety Refresher or a New Member Safety Orientation during 2007 you are good for the duration of 2008. However, during 2008 you must complete an Annual Safety Review in order to be eligible to work in 2009.

In the WHQ building you will find posted an updated version of the Work Site Rules and Regulations that includes all of our safety rules. Also, an updated Authorized Worker list is posted that will show the exact status of each worker. If you are not on that list it is because you need to complete an Annual Safety Review. Out of town members should contact me directly to arrange to have their authorization updated.

One very important thing to remember is that you must have and maintain adequate medical insurance. At the time of the Annual Refresher you will be asked to acknowledge this on the attendance sign in sheet. If your medical insurance lapses, you will not find your name on the authorized worker list.

Jon Spargo, Chief safety officer

HOW FAST CAN IT RUN?

That is a question we hear often. Here are the best facts we can muster.

We have found no documented dynamometer figures for the 2900 locomotives. However, there are figures for No. 3784. Like 2926, that locomotive had roller bearings. Except for very minor details and a slightly lighter weight, 3784 was identical to 2926. Here are some quotes from the Brasher book, Santa Fe Locomotive Development.

"On March 17, 1942, locomotive 3784, one of the first 4-8-4s with all roller bearings including Timken roller-bearing rods and crank pins was recorded between San Bernardino and Los Angeles with 1,060 tons in 13 cars on Train 7 at 107 mph. . ."

". . . In April, locomotive 3784 operated 16,644 miles; of this 3,620 miles, or 21.8 percent of her total mileage, was run at speeds exceeding 75 mph. . ."

". . . Retired Santa Fe employee Don Sheets has reported Number 3784 achieving a speed of 114.96 miles per hour, recorded on dynamometer car Number 29 during a speed run at the end of A.A.R Tests conducted over the same district in 1947."

There is no available documentation on the slightly heavier, but otherwise identical 2900's. It is safe to say that they could run well over the century mark, and they literally delivered the mail—and did it very quickly.

THE OTHER SIDE OF “PIGPEN” BRADFORD’S GRIN

Mike Hartshorne told several members to “ go look at the front of 2926”, and a number of us responded. He was actually setting us up for a blast from Bradford’s newly discovered toy—a jury rigged compressed air gun. When Hartshorne clanged the 2926 bell, Bradford, perched inside the firebox, let loose a blast of air that forced a huge cloud of soot out the front of the smokebox.



Bradford missed us with the blast of soot, but there was a considerable amount of cleanup to be done after the incident.

