SAGEBRUSH HEADLIGHT

VOL. 22, NO. 3 NEWSLETTER OF THE NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM 82nd Edit.

Union Pacific M-23 with McKeen trailer at the 32nd Avenue Depot, Omaha, Nebraska. *Photo from the George N. Andrews Collection. NSRM*

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The Nevada State Railroad Museum is an agency of the Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs

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http://www.nsrm-friends.org

Open Daily 8:30 to 4:30
Admission $2
Children under 18 FREE

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Railroads and Photography:
150 Years of Great Images

An Exhibition at the
Nevada State Railroad Museum
Carson City
September 1, 2001 to March 31, 2002

NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM
2002 OPERATING SCHEDULE

STEAM UPS

May 18 (Saturday) ..... Armed Forces Day
May 25-27 (Saturday - Monday) ..... Memorial Day Weekend
June 15 & 16 (Saturday & Sunday) ..... Father's Day Weekend
July 4-7 (Thursday - Sunday) ..... Fourth of July Weekend
July 20 & 21 (Saturday & Sunday) .....
August 3 & 4 (Saturday & Sunday) .....
August 17 & 18 (Saturday & Sunday) .....
August 31, September 1 & 2 (Saturday - Monday) ..... Labor Day Weekend
October 20 (Sunday) ..... Symposium
October 26 (Saturday) ..... Nevada Day Parade
November 29 & 30 (Friday & Saturday) ..... Thanksgiving Weekend
December 14 & 15 (Saturday & Sunday) ..... Santa Train

Steam Train operates 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Fares: Adults, $2.50, Children 6-11, $1.00, 5 and under FREE
SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends-

Well here it is, the Holidays. Where did the year go? I am very happy to report that the museum and the Friends *appear to be in excellent shape. It certainly has been a very busy year and the coming year appears to be even busier.*

As many of you may already know, the traveling exhibit, Railroads and Photography: 150 Years of Great Images *is a huge success and is being well received by locals and tourists alike. Also, work is progressing on the new upcoming exhibit on the Chinese in Nevada, which will be opening in 2002. In addition, a new exhibit on the V&T Railroad will take the place of the traveling photo exhibit, at its conclusion. So you can see that 2002 promises to be very busy and exciting.*

As many of you realize, the Sagebrush Headlight *publication has been sporadic at times. We are currently correcting this. If you have a particular interest in a subject relating to the museum or railroads in Nevada, and would like to contribute an article, please contact myself, or Dan Thielen at the museum, and we will advise you on the criteria. Please "bear in mind" that you do not have to be a professional writer, as all text will be edited by the museum staff. However, this is a way in which you might share your research, and become a published writer. You will also be helping to make the* Sagebrush Headlight *a better publication.*

It was mentioned in a previous column that the Friends *wish to increase membership. It is the goal of the Board to double the membership during the coming calendar year. That sounds like a big task, but actually it is not. If each one of us brings in one new member, we have achieved our goal. That's all there is to it! GOOD LUCK!*

Here's wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. See you in 2002.

- Ron Allen, President.

AROUND THE MUSEUM...

NEW ADMINISTRATOR NAMED

The Nevada State Railroad Museum welcomes Marcia Wolter Britton, the recently appointed Administrator of the Division of Museums and History. "There is limitless potential to develop cultural opportunities in Nevada and I'm delighted to lead the museums and history team," stated Britton.

A broad background of work in both public and private museums in Wyoming, North Dakota, and Montana, has prepared her for this position.

As Division Administrator, she will work with Department and Division staff, and public and private partners to enhance collections, to preserve and interpret Nevada's history, natural history, and culture for both residents and visitors to the state. Britton is committed to public outreach, and to building statewide and regional constituencies and partnerships. With an academic background in public history, anthropology, folk life, and museum education, she has pursued specific interests in cultural/heritage/eco-tourism and regional culture, including American Indian culture.

Most recently, Britton was Chair of Education at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming, where she managed education efforts for a five-museum complex. She also served as a division director at the State Historical Society of North Dakota with responsibility for publications, visitor services, historic site interpretation, and public programs, while working with statewide constituency groups such as the American Indian Advisory Committee and the Local History Council.

Britton holds a Master's degree in history museum studies and American folk culture from the Cooperstown Graduate Program, State University of New York, Oneonta, and an additional Master's degree in anthropology and folklore from Wayne State University in Detroit. A native of California, her interests in regional culture are derived from living and working in Minnesota, upstate New York, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, Wyoming, and now Nevada.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday Evening Program
January 9, 2002
Kimball Car and Carriage Manufacturing Co.
Randy Hees
7:00 pm

***Friends* Board Meeting**
February 7, 2002
6:00 pm

Wednesday Evening Program
February 13, 2002
Railroad Dining Cars
Bob Nylen
7:00 pm

Wednesday Evening Program
March 13, 2002
150 Years of Railroad Photography
John Gruber
7:00 pm

***Friends* Board Meeting**
April 4, 2002
6:00 pm

Wednesday Evening Program
April 10, 2002
The Great Desert Railroad Race
Ted Faye
7:00 pm

PHOTO EXHIBIT EXTENDED!

The Nevada State Railroad Museum is pleased to announce the extension of the exhibition *Railroads and Photography: 150 Years of Great Images* through March 31, 2002. This stunning collection of the most important railroading photographs of the past 150 years is presented in the new changing gallery. The gallery was designed and built to provide the museum with an area of controlled lighting, which will allow images to be shown in their best possible light. The *Center of Railroad Photography and Art* has graciously extended the exhibition that will end with CRPA President John Gruber speaking at the museum.

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NEW EXHIBIT CONSTRUCTION

Construction has begun on *Connecting the United States: The Chinese and the American Railroad.* This new exhibit will demonstrate the deep involvement of the Chinese in the development of the western United States through railroading. In particular, the display will show Carson City as a socio-economic hub of the West. The exhibit was made possible through a grant from the Nevada Humanities Committee, a state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and significant financial support from the Friends of the Nevada State Railroad Museum. Dr. Sue Fawn Chung, visiting scholar from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, was at the museum in November to assist staff in the direction of the exhibit. Plans are being made to develop an extensive educational component in conjunction with the exhibit.

MCKEEN PHOTOS DONATED

The Railroad Museum recently received a collection of early McKeen Company photographs of Union Pacific M-23, and a McKeen-built bus. One of the images graces the cover of this issue, and two more are featured for the enjoyment of the reader.

Interior of the McKeen chair car. Note the unusual suspension. *Photo from the George N. Andrews Collection. NSRM*

RESTORATION REPORT

By Chris de Witt

The McKeen car restoration continues albeit slowly. Fortunately visitors comment on how far it has come along since their previous inspection. This gives us hope.

Developments with the car that are of note include the discovery of a number in the correct place and of the correct magnitude to cause us to think the car number (i.e. the serial number) might be 77. Page 78 of the McKeen study indicates that the builder's number is 70. Physical research has not confirmed this and it is understood that there is some debate regarding this issue.

Re-examination of some of the drawings are now beginning to make sense in light of what we are learning, however the one we want is always the one that has the smudged detail or ambiguous reference. As an example, Restoration Specialist Lee Hobold has been spending a great deal of time trying to decipher the construction details of the engine room woodwork. Examination of the existing components and their location in the engine room has caused some confusion. Examination of the McKeen drawings prior to any work leads to additional confusion. But after the reconstruction is completed the drawings make perfect sense, even though the design doesn't. It would appear that the carpenters in the McKeen plant didn't have a clear idea of how everything was to go together, and added bits of wood until McKeen was satisfied that enough work had been performed. Then they quit. Anyway, Lee is doing a great job in the nose of the car.

Restoration Specialist Rick Stiver has picked up the rear truck project and has completed the truck bolster, spring plank, springs and sundry. Leaf spring sets were taken from the rear truck of the car purchased from Wisconsin for this project. They were too wide so Rick unbanded them, cut them to width, and rebanded them. Rick endured the pain of attempting to make sense of the McKeen drawings of a rear truck, and has interpreted them nicely. In his quest for an appropriate finish he has driven the shop crew to distraction with the incessant hammering required to distress the weldments, thereby giving the appearance of a casting.

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Restoration Specialist Jeremy Harding has focused on the baggage section. Given the small amount of information available, he has executed a good interpretation of the way it most probably appeared. It is a wretched color but McKeen didn't seem to have a very good fashion sense. The doors are in the works and soon the baggage section will be finished.

We have acquired a shop volunteer, Bev Smith. He comes in every day of the week, and works a full shift. He has been working on foundry patterns for McKeen components, notably, the ceiling register and the driving centers for the power truck. He also edge laminated the baggage and engine room doors. He typically moves so rapidly that he appears to be standing still.

The castings for the window frames were picked up and most of the machining is done. They are soon to go out for powder coating, a faux brass finish.

We determined a color for the under frame and sent a paint chip out to be matched.

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When it came back it was a perfect match to the new paint. It was casually noticed that the paint chip appeared slightly different than when it went out. Close examination revealed that the paint store had painted the chip, thereby allowing for a perfect match. This was excellent work on their part.

Following a fatal boiler explosion in Medina, Ohio, we understandably received a call from our boiler inspector. He was concerned with our locomotive boilers. After discussing it, I decided to inspect the fireboxes using an ultrasonic thickness gage. The bricks were removed from locomotive No. 8, and the tests run. The firebox is old, but in acceptable condition. The bricks were replaced and the tests filed. Sometime in the next five years we may wish to undertake heavy maintenance to the firebox, but not today.

The volunteers finally complained loudly enough about the locomotive No. 8 fireman's injector and its cranky disposition. Accordingly, it was taken down. Some pipes were renewed and others adjusted. The joints were ground and lapped, as was the boiler check. Packing was replaced and a new packing gland machined. The injector was repositioned and the whole reassembled. So far the volunteers have been pleased with its operation.

Exterior of the McKeen 15-passenger chair car at the McKeen factory in Omaha, Nebraska. *Photo from the George N. Andrews Collection. NSRM*

Meet Volunteer Jack Gibson

Jack Gibson was one of the founders of the Friends of the Nevada State Railroad Museum, volunteering at the museum before there was even an Interpretive Center or the Friends. In fact his record of being a founder goes back to the 1930s. While still in high school in San Mateo he and his railfan friends organized the Northern California Railroad Club in the basement of the home of Francis Guido, who became known as "Mr. Western Railroader." Actually Jack started the *Western Railroader* as the club publication, and when many of the members went to war Francis became the publisher, editor, and man of many hats.

Following the war, Jack returned to Los Gatos and his wife Margie and daughter Diane. He took up driving to San Francisco to attend meetings of NorCal as the club was then known. There were four others in Los Gatos that made the trip with him, and a pickup in Palo Alto. Jack was made refreshment chairman of NorCal, which meant that on meeting day, Margie had to boil coffee and bake cookies, and the total load, including refreshments, and six railfans, made the trip to San Francisco.

Tiring of the monthly chores for Margie, she suggested that they start a club in San Jose. "But how do we know there is anyone interested in railroads in San Jose?" was Jack's retort. We don't claim that Margie nagged him, but Jack and the others rented a room at the De Anza Hotel, put a little blurb in the San Jose paper, and 23 people showed up. The name chosen was the Central Coast Railway Club and today it numbers in the high hundreds.

But Jack wasn't content to let things coast as they were. So he started another publication for the club called *The Ferroequinologist* which means, if you break it down, "Student of the Iron Horse."

Which brought him to Carson City in January 1976 as production foreman at the *Nevada Appeal*. He had previously retired from the *Visalia Times-Delta* but the *Appeal* needed help so he went back to work. He has been retired since July 1, 1982.

Volunteering at the Railroad Museum isn't the only thing Jack does. He also is a volunteer at the Nevada State Museum,

has been president of the Docent Council, is a tour guide, but probably most importantly, he is the editor and producer of the *Nevada State Museum Newsletter.*

Jack has fired and run all the steam engines at the museum, and his favorite was firing the *Inyo*. He spent time on the motor car, and most jobs around the museum. So, if you see Jack around the Railroad Museum you can imagine he is thinking of something else that he can get into. – The Yard Bull.

Sagebrush HEADLIGHT

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FRIENDS OF THE NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

PLEASE PRINT

NAME _____ AGE _____

SPOUSE, if family application _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

OCCUPATION _____ PHONE (_____) _____

Amount enclosed $ _____ Check here if renewal ☐

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

FRIENDS OF THE NSRM
P.O. BOX 1330, CARSON CITY, NV 89702

Thank you for your membership. You will be receiving your membership packet in the mail. (Not included with renewals)

In addition to memberships, the FRIENDS accepts tax deductible contributions towards the furthering of Museum activities and goals.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES
(Renewable Annually)

INDIVIDUAL/GENERAL:
Certificate, membership card, voting privileges, SAGEBRUSH HEADLIGHT newsletter, Nevada State Museum newsletter, Historical Society Quarterly (all members over $25), free Museum admission, 15% discount in Museum Store.

Check one:

- ☐ Senior & Student $15
- ☐ Single $25
- ☐ Family $40
- ☐ Sustaining $50
- ☐ Contributing $100

CORPORATE: (Same as above with special framed certificate.)

- ☐ Regular $100
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