

SAGEBRUSH HEADLIGHT

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THE NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM
An Agency of the Division of Museums and History
Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs

Spring 2010



Self-propelled Passenger Cars in Nevada: Part II

Stephen E. Drew, Chief Curator (retired) California State Railroad Museum

The Virginia & Truckee Railway was not the only Nevada short line to own and operate one of William R. McKeen's progressive, steel motor-cars. Nor was it first: the short-lived Silver Peak Railroad at Blair had bought their 55-foot car No. 12, the *Mary*, from McKeen in 1908. This photo is from the NSRM archives.

Silver Peak Railroad

The Silver Peak opened in 1906 and operated 17½ miles of track in Esmeralda County – from Blair to the Tonopah & Goldfield Railroad at Blair Junction. The line primarily served the 120-stamp Silver Peak mill. Operating with a two-man crew, the passenger-and-baggage motor car's leisurely trip over the line took 45 minutes. The fare was \$1.75 and in 1912 passengers averaged three per trip.

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**NEVADA STATE
RAILROADMUSEUM**

2180 South Carson St.
Carson City, NV 89701-5999
775-687-6953

www.nevadaculture.org/museums
Open 8:30 to 4:30 Fridays through
Mondays except Dec. 25 and Jan. 1
Admission: \$5. Children under 18
and members of the Friends of the
Nevada State Railroad Museum
are admitted FREE



The museum is an agency of the
State of Nevada

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**Submissions for the Summer Sagebrush Headlight must
arrive at the editor's desk by Tuesday, June 1, 2010.**

NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

Summer 2010 STEAM-UPS

Saturday/Sunday May 8 & 9: Mothers Day

Saturday/Sunday/Monday May 29, 30, 31: Memorial Day

Saturday/Sunday June 19 & 20: Fathers Day

Saturday/Sunday/Monday July 3, 4, 5: Independence Day

Saturday/Sunday July 24 & 25

Saturday/Sunday August 14 & 15

Saturday/Sunday/Monday September 3, 4, 5: Labor Day

Trains depart from Wabuska Depot, 10:00AM till 4:00PM

Steam Train Fares: \$5.00; ages 4-11 \$3.00. Three and under
free. FNSRM Members HALF PRICE with Membership Card.

NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

2010 MOTOR CAR OPERATIONS

TC&GB Motor Car No. 401 will operate every

Saturday & Sunday May 1 through September 26,

departing from Wabuska Depot, 10:00AM till 4:00PM,

except when the Steam Train is operating.

Motor Car Fares: \$4:00; ages 4-11 \$2:00; Three and under free.

FNSRM Members HALF PRICE with Membership Card.



Coming at you—May 9. See insert for details.

The 39th Annual Nevada Railroad History Symposium will take
place in Carson City during **Columbus Day** Weekend. This year's
theme is: **Engineering Landmarks on Nevada's Railroads.**
PLEASE NOTE; The Symposium brochure/registration form will
come to you as an insert in the next *Sagebrush Headlight*.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well here it is almost spring time and events will begin to blossom at the museum. Unfortunately the limited schedule is still in effect, due to the budget cuts. However, we are not letting that subdue our enthusiasm. We have a full list of activities outlined for the season.

The biggest event planned for the early season is the official unveiling of the McKeen motorcar No. 22, which will take place Sunday afternoon, May 9, 2010. This date is very significant, as this is exactly one hundred years from the date that the car was delivered to the Virginia & Truckee Railway here in Carson City. Many activities are planned for that date, including limited rides on the car by the general public. **Friends** members will be allotted a limited number of rides on each trip at the usual half-off the ticket price. Watch for more information from the museum staff about the McKeen Car Centennial event as the date gets closer. Please keep this date in mind, as no one will want to miss this event.

Speaking of motorcars, the very successful motorcar training class is occurring again this year. The dates for this class are April 16, 17, and 18, 2010. Become a Motorman on the No. 401 in a three-day class designed to teach you safety and operational procedures that qualify you to drive the motorcar or to participate in other activities, including working on the steam train. Only eight students per class, so if you are interested, please get your application in. The applications are available on-line at the **Friends** website. Here's hoping to see everyone at the museum this season.

—Ronald J. Allen

Please Note: Admission fees and train fares at NSRM have changed. See details on Page 2.

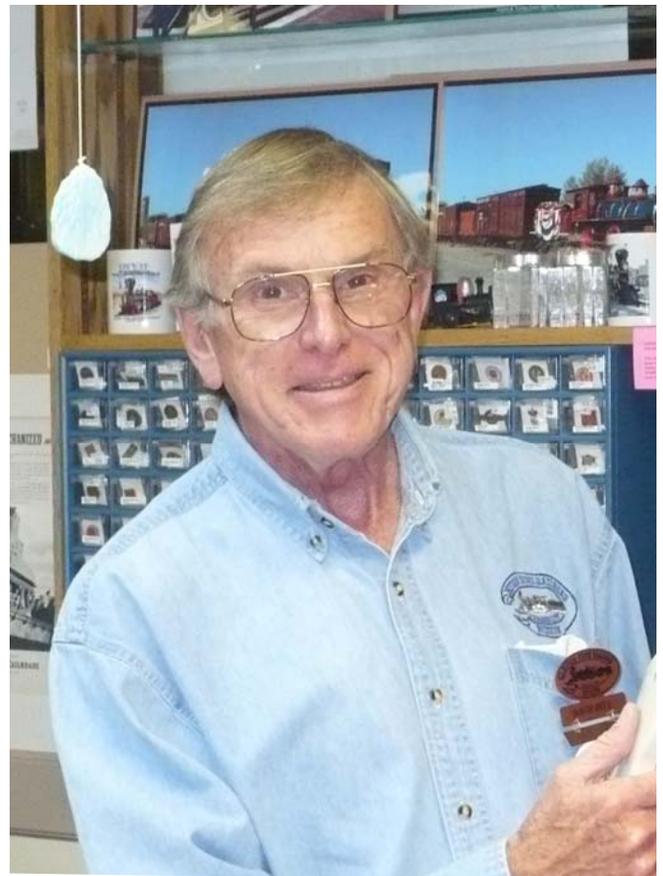
Spotlight on David Bell

David has been a volunteer at NSRM for about eight years. Although he devotes most of his volunteer hours to working in the museum store, he is qualified for both steam train and motor car operations. David was raised in Southern California where his love of trains began. As a child in Indio, California, he remembers listening to the trains at night arriving and departing at that Southern Pacific division point.

After graduating from the University of Southern California with a Master of Science degree in geology, David taught geology for twenty years at Shasta Community College in Redding, California. He moved to Reno from the Bay area in 2001, and works during the summer on the Virginia & Truckee Railroad.

David has traveled all over the world to ride steam trains. He has been to South Africa twice, Bolivia, Ecuador, Columbia, Brazil, Prague, and Canada. He has also traveled extensively to ride trains throughout the United States. As a college student he visited Colorado to ride and photograph narrow-gauge trains on the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad in what were then expected to be their final days. The experience provided the content for the illustrated talk that David will present at the museum on May 10.

—Lara Mather



THE LAST AMERICAN: A Personal Odyssey *Daniel Markoff*

THE PARADOX

I am a dreamer. I dream of things in the future, especially flight and exploring far off planets. I dream of things in the past, frontiersmen, the Old West, railroads. But I am stuck in the present. I feel like I straddle two worlds in my mind, with the reality of the present holding me fast in its grip. In a way the present is like a prison, keeping me from enjoying those worlds of which I think. Or so it seems....

When I look around the world of the present I am really not satisfied. Everything is just too easy. Travel in the old days was a true adventure and test of being. Travel to the planets will be the same. Travel to New York from LA today is boring. You sit in a tube shooting through the sky at 500 mph, and the most exciting thing that happens is anticipating what you might get to eat, or what movie is playing. The only person who even remotely enjoys himself is the pilot. Everyone else just sits there. There is no work, no navigation, no shoveling coal, no setting sails, no enjoying the countryside over which you streak. Travel has become, for the most part, boring, routine drudgery.

There was a time however, when travel, even for a passenger was an adventure. Where anything could happen and usually did. Where storms, Indian attacks, breakdowns, accidents, haunted every movement. When steam enabled the railroads to flourish, it certainly beat walking, but was filled with perils that equaled the early pioneers. There were washouts, snakeheads, rough track, explosions, robberies, Indian attacks, derailments, and any number of other dangers that were lurking with every turn of the wheel. Nothing could or would be taken for granted. The variables were too great.

In spite of these hazards, the 19th century steam locomotives were things of beauty. The crews took enormous pride in their equipment. They took pride in themselves. The engineer was the Lord of the Realm. He was admired, looked up to as the ruler of his kingdom from the cab, capable of taming the smoking steaming Iron Horse. He dressed for his high position with adornments of a bandana wrapped around his neck, crisp hat, vest, watch, and a pair of enormous gauntlet gloves that made him appear he would tame the beast with his hands. His fireman was his able companion, charged with feeding and watering the monster for

his master. They had to not only run the locomotive, but also keep a sharp eye out for danger. Their image is in the pantheon of American icons from the frontier. It must have been glorious to be so admired.

Today, engineers are sort of taken for granted. It just is not what it used to be. But, since I have taken *Eureka* out I have noticed that people are still fascinated by the classic Iron Horse of the West. There is mystique in the gold and brass, the enormous stack, the walnut cab, the pin stripped wheels, and the panting of the locomotive as if a racehorse waiting to leap out the starting gate. Just sitting there *Eureka* draws countless photographers and admirers all eager to take a trip with her.

In June of 1997 we decided to do something a little different with *Eureka*: we would run the Cumbres & Toltec narrow gauge railroad out of Colorado and New Mexico.

Earl Knoob, who was the Superintendent of the railroad, and I had been talking for some time about running that road; and 1997 would be the year it would happen. Unlike the Durango & Silverton we would have no passenger cars to pull. Instead it would be a freight consist with a caboos. The train would be such that passengers would have nothing luxurious or comfortable during their trip. This was going to be a lot different.

We put a lot of preparations into the event. First, we had to transport the locomotive to Antonito, Colorado. Arrangements for some 40 cords of wood had to be made then stationed at various points along the 64 miles of railroad. Antonito had very modest living accommodations, and three of us would make the caboos our home for about two weeks. Others would have to fend for themselves. We had to inspect the locomotive, get familiar with the rules and schedule planned for us, and then hope all went well. We were going to head into the wilderness with a locomotive then about 125 years old, and had to trust the workmanship of people gone for over a century. Before going out on our first run, we all knew instinctively that we were putting a lot of faith into the old locomotive to get us through.

Our first trip was chartered by a bunch of people from Great Britain. We would run out of Antonito to Osier, Colorado (which is about half way to Chama, New Mexico) and return to Antonito. The morning of our departure, everything was ready. The tender was full of wood, along with water. The engine was well oiled and inspected. In the cab was Barry Simcoe as fireman, Earl Knoob as pilot, Ron

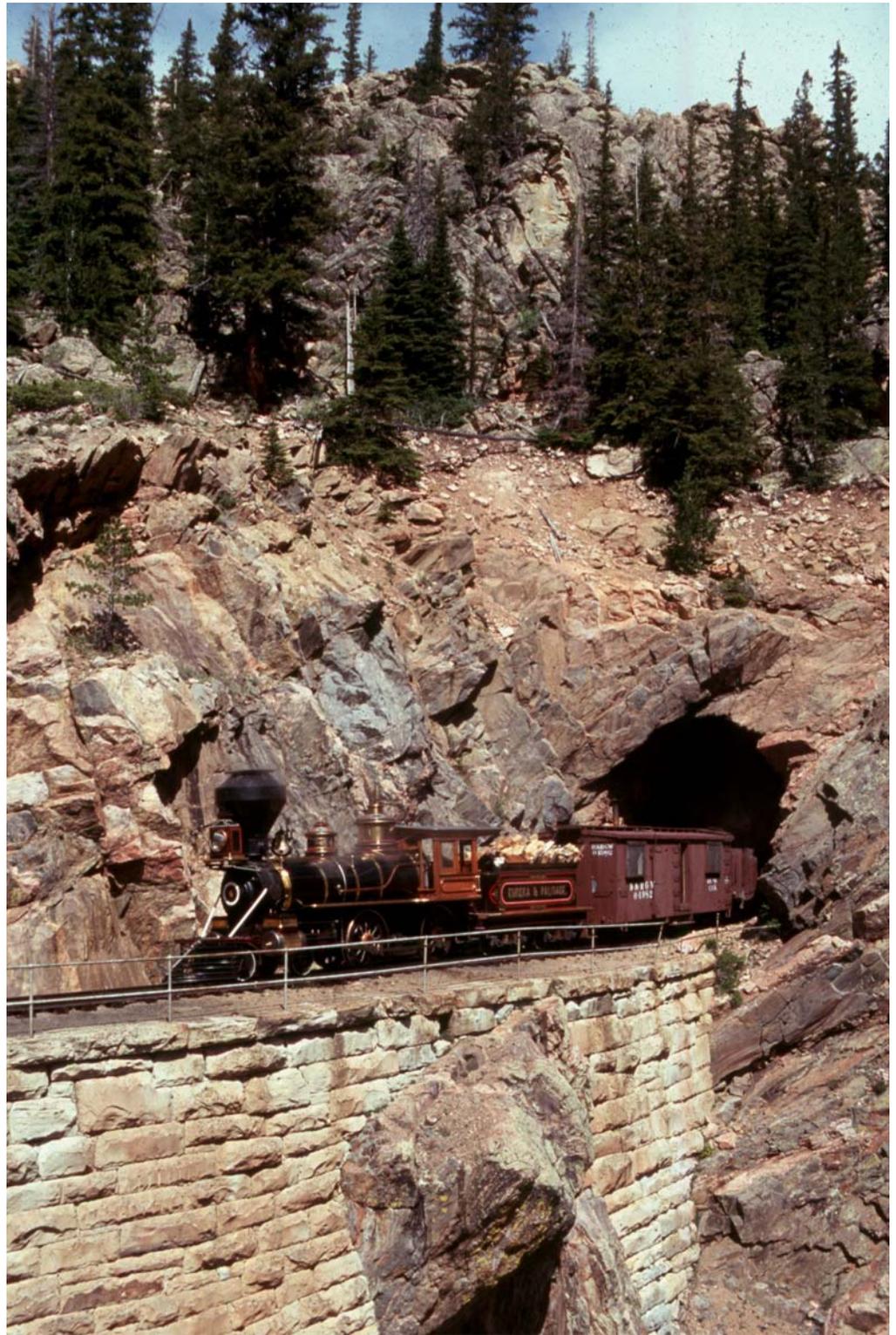
Bunker, and myself at the throttle. After loading the passengers into the rickety freight cars the conductor gave us a highball, and we were off in a cloud of steam and smoke.

Out of Antonito for about 20 miles the grade of the road is fairly flat. We fairly sailed along through the sagebrush country, thinking how much the region looked like central Nevada which was *Eureka's* original home. This was the kind of terrain she was meant to run through with long tangents, gentle grades, and sagebrush. *Eureka* was initially putting the miles behind us and ticking along like a finely tuned watch.

At one point though, I looked over at Barry who had a rather perplexed look on his face. We were about ten miles out of Antonito when he said, "I can't make steam for this thing!" I looked up at the boiler gauge and sure enough the pressure started to drop. Immediately I looked around the firebox door and saw the fire was not white hot, as it is supposed to be when under way, but rather a blackish orange color. The fire was choking down!

I checked the dampers. They were wide open. The blower was open all the way, and still the pressure slowly but steadily dropped. Barry was getting frantic. He had good fireman skills, but nothing was working. Earl Knobb was double checking everything, and then our wood passer brought forward to the firebox evidence of the problem: the wood we had been given was still green and full of moisture. Indeed, one log still had green branches hanging on it.

I grabbed that piece of wood and stuck it on the floorboards in front of me in the cab. Earl asked



Eureka exiting Rock Tunnel on the Cumbres & Toltec with a freight consist.
Author's Collection.

why I did that and I said that I was going to club the wood dealer who sold us 40 cords of this crap with that very piece. I was really, well, let's just say not happy. We had a tender full of the dreaded Death Wood.

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Dismantling of the mill of the Pittsburg Silver Peak Gold Mining Co. at Blair began late in 1916 and railroad operations ended in 1918. The Red River Lumber Co. at Westwood, California, bought the Silver Peak McKeen car. Red River Lumber presumably transported loggers to remote locations on the car, but without much success. Apparently the car was soon retired. Its only known images on the Red River are out-of-service photographs. After sitting unused for many years at Westwood the car was cut up in the early 1940s when wartime scrap prices were high.

A. Meister Sons Company

Meister produced the largest number of motor cars built for Nevada short lines: six cars that operated on the narrow-gauge Nevada Central, Eureka-Nevada, and Nevada-California-Oregon railroads. Meister had one of its factories in Sacramento and, from 1870 through 1923, built horse streetcars and gasoline motor-cars. In 1921 Meister built one electric street car, for the Municipal Railway of San Francisco.

Nevada Central Railroad

The 93-mile-long Nevada Central connected mines at Austin with the Central Pacific Railroad at Battle Mountain. Freight and passenger operations began in 1880. Thrice-weekly motor-car service was introduced July 1, 1909, increasing later to five and even six days a week. Trucks and buses of Nevada Central Motor Lines replaced the motor cars after the railroad was abandoned on February 1, 1938.

In September 1905 the *Reese River Reveille* reported a Battle Mountain – Austin trip of the first railway motor-car in Nevada: the Nevada Central's 17-horsepower Oldsmobile *Wagonette* No. 101. The passenger-baggage car had capacity for eight to ten people. It was handling passenger and sacked-mail service regularly in 1908-09 when NC steam trains were reduced to three round trips a week.

Nelson E. Bartoo built three distinctive motor cars in his dual capacities of NC Master Mechanic and proprietor of the Bartoo Machine Shop: NC No. 103, rebuilt NC No. 102, and Nevada Short Line's "The Jitney." Historian Greg Maxwell likes to call Bartoo's cars, with their distinctive prow-fronts, the "Battle Mountain McKeen cars."

Through his Battle Mountain business, Bartoo served as an agent for Fairbanks, Morse; and NC car No. 102 (*right*) resembled an F-M/Sheffield Model 19 motor car in narrow gauge. It made the 93-mile Battle Mountain – Austin trip in 3½ hours.

The car received a 40-horsepower Ford Model-T engine when NC's Battle Mountain shops rebuilt it in 1914. A December 1928 accident with a gravel truck demolished it.

NC's Battle Mountain shops built 4-wheel, chain-drive Car No. 103 in 1914. Its suspension and other parts resembled components found in F-M catalogs of the day. The passenger, baggage, and sacked-mail car had a maroon exterior and dark-green interior. Nicknamed "Bull of the Woods" for its hard starting, No. 103 remained in service through the end of operations.

Car No. 104 was built in 1917 by the Vulcan Iron Works of Denver, Colorado, as Argentine & Gray's Peak Railroad No. 9. Purchased secondhand in 1920, the car emerged from rebuilding in the NC shops with a motorman and passenger-smoking compartment, 16-seat passenger section, and baggage compartment. With its 6-cylinder, 100-horsepower Wisconsin gas engine, No. 104 was the largest and heaviest NC motor car. It had a maroon exterior and light-green interior. Soon supplanted by newer cars from the A. Meister Sons Co., the car was retired in 1934 and stored at Battle Mountain.

NC Nos. 105 and 106 were among the last products of the Meister iron works in Sacramento. Six-wheel, 34-ton No. 105 arrived in December 1925 with a 4-cylinder Ford engine. NC traded it to the Eureka-Nevada Railway for two gondola cars in 1931. No. 106 arrived in the spring of 1926. Three feet longer than No.105, it had eight wheels and a 6-cylinder Buda engine. No. 106 was retired by 1931 and the carbody stored at Battle Mountain.



NC also owned a 4-cylinder 1928 Ford Model-AA 1½-ton truck that was never intended for rail service. After the wreck of No. 102, the NC shops rebuilt the truck in mid-1929 for rail passenger, baggage, and sacked-mail service as No. 107, NC's last motor car. It and No. 103 remained in service until NC's abandonment. Most of the railroad's assets were sold to the Hyman-Michaels Co. for scrap.

Nevada Short Line Railway

Using Nevada-California-Oregon Railway's Reno shops, the Bartoo Machine Shop built Bartoo's third prow-front gasoline motor-car, for the Nevada Short Line. The 12-mile NSL was one of Nevada's shortest and shortest-lived – railways. Built in 1913 to serve the Rochester Mining District in Pershing County, it was the last independent short line built in the State. Floods, lack of equipment, inadequate freight and insufficient funds doomed the railway. It was scrapped in 1920.



Above: NSL's motor car at Upper Rochester, fall of 1915. Third from left is Arthur A. Codd, NSL President and a Regent of the University of Nevada.

Left: Nevada Central No. 102 at Battle Mountain, 1910. Note NC Silver State coach at rear.

Collection of Mrs. E. Lemere,
Both photos: courtesy of Gregory J. Maxwell.

The 20-passenger, 60-horsepower car may have been powered by a Winton automobile engine. The car made its test run on the N-C-O between Reno and Doyle, and first ran on the NSL on January 22, 1915. The car, called "The Jitney," apparently never had a roster number. "The Jitney" was wrecked in a rollover accident on March 22, 1915, repaired, and returned to service. Three years later a report by the NSL

receiver lists the car as junk. Its fate is unknown but there are postcard images of a shed at Oreana that may be the de-trucked body of "The Jitney."

Eureka-Nevada Railway

In May 1912, the Eureka-Nevada became the corporate successor of the Eureka & Palisade Railroad. Beginning in 1873 the E&P had built a 90-mile line south from Palisade on the Central Pacific to smelters and mines at Eureka. Like the majority of Nevada short lines, E-N turned to motor cars for economy during its last 25 years of service. The E-N operated up to three passenger motor cars before its abandonment on September 21, 1938. Most remaining equipment was scrapped.

The railway's first motor car was built circa 1907-09 by the Stover Motor Car Co. In March 1913 the E-N acquired it secondhand from the Diamond & Caldor Railway in California for \$427. Still bearing D&C

No. 5, the car made its first trip from Palisade to Eureka on April 13. Its ten horsepower proved insufficient for regular service over Garden Pass to Eureka: it took the diminutive car 7½ hours to make the 84-mile trip!

The car entered passenger-and-mail service on the relatively flat run between Palisade and Blackburn – jumping-off point for the Buckhorn mining district. Gold mining at Buckhorn ceased in 1916 and likely ended the E-N career of the Stover car, which at some point went to the Lake Tahoe Railway & Transportation Company. Southern Pacific acquired the Lake Tahoe Railway in 1926 and converted it to standard gauge. A decade later the *Tahoe Daily Messenger* reported the car as derelict at Truckee.

E-N No. 21 was an approximately 30-foot motor car assembled by the A. Meister Sons Co. It consisted of a \$1,750 Meister carbody mounted on an Italia automobile frame. The auto's 40-horsepower engine, transmission and differential were retained. The Main Street Iron Works of San Francisco

fabricated the car's power truck. Car No. 21 made its maiden voyage on the Eureka-Nevada on October 6, 1918. In 1921 the E-N added a baggage section at the rear. The car was out of service by 1930.

Fifteen-foot, 64-passenger No. 22 (see photos, next page) entered service in June 1927. It was a Northwestern Motor Co. Casey Jones Model No. 555D with a 4-cylinder Ford engine.

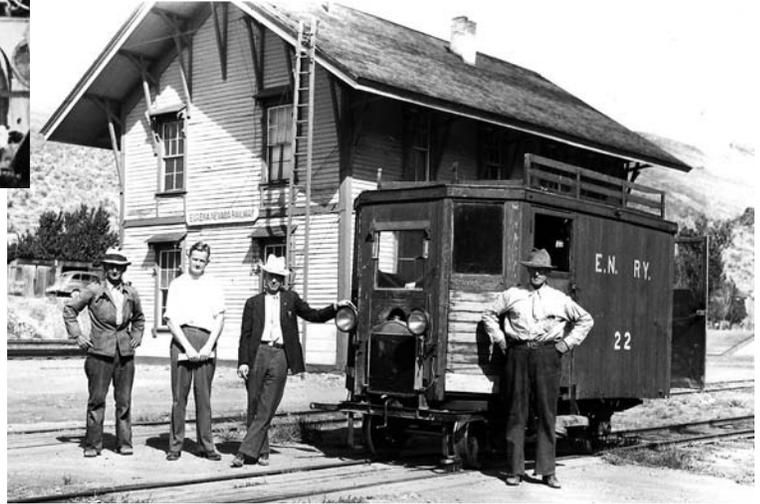


Left: *Eureka-Nevada car No. 22 being unloaded at the Southern Pacific station in Palisade, June 1927.*

Photo acquired by Dale Darney from the son of Charles Sexton.

Below: *Car No. 22 in front of the E-N General Office in Palisade, most likely in the 1930s. The car was scrapped in 1938.*

Both photos: courtesy of Gregory J. Maxwell.



Later rebuilt by the Eureka-Nevada, Car No. 22 was scrapped in 1938.

Car No. 23 was acquired secondhand in 1931 from the neighboring Nevada Central. E-N traded side-dump gondola cars Nos. 301 and 302 for NC motor car No. 105. The Eureka-Nevada rebuilt the car without an engine compartment and with 4-wheel trucks. It remained in service until the Eureka-Nevada was abandoned, whereupon it was scrapped.

Nevada-California-Oregon Railway

The N-C-O was incorporated in 1888. On January 1, 1893, it assumed operating responsibility for two narrow-gauge predecessors: the Nevada & Oregon and Nevada & California. When it reached Lakeview, Oregon, in 1912 the main line of the railway extended 236 miles through northeastern California from Reno. Unlike most Nevada short lines, which relied on mineral products for their primary freight, the N-C-O served livestock, lumber, and agricultural interests. About thirty miles of the railway were in Nevada.

N-C-O passenger motor-car operations in Nevada were very short-lived. According to ICC valuation records, 11-passenger N-C-O No. 15, the *Helen*, was purchased secondhand in August 1916. No. 16, the *Martha*, was purchased secondhand in February 1917. A stretch, open-touring-car design gave it a capacity of nineteen passengers. Both cars were equipped with 6-cylinder engines.

In June 1917, for \$700,000, the Western Pacific bought – and promptly standard-gauged – 64 miles of the N-C-O including the Nevada portion. The last

narrow-gauge N-C-O train departed Reno January 30, 1918.

A pair of A. Meister Sons Company 22-passenger motor cars – Nos. 101 and 102 – made trial trips on the remainder of the N-C-O in May 1921 but were deemed unsatisfactory and returned to the builder. The cars had four-cylinder, rear-mounted White engines. Meister later sold one of them, most likely No. 102, to the Hetch Hetchy Railroad.

Southern Pacific acquired control of what remained of the N-C-O in October 1926 and standard-gauged the line between July 1927 and May 1928. The narrow-gauge equipment was scrapped or sold. Standard-gauge passenger service on the line lasted until 1937.

This article is adapted from the author's presentation of October 17, 2009, at the 38th Annual Nevada Railroad History Symposium in Carson City. Part I of this article appeared in the Winter 2010 *Sagebrush Headlight*. It concludes with Part III, which describes cars of the Death Valley, Southern Pacific, Tonopah & Goldfield, Tonopah & Tidewater and Western Pacific railroads, in the next issue.

In the preparation of this article the author acknowledges the generous assistance of Gregory J. Maxwell, Kyle K. Wyatt, and Cara Randall and Kathryn Santos of the California State Railroad Museum Library.

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Eventually, the pressure drifted down to 50 psi and slowly we came to a dead stop.

We were some 10 or 12 miles from Antonito stuck out in the sagebrush country with no possible way of getting back, except by walking. We had our emergency chain saw, but it was useless out where we were. I was very embarrassed and not a happy camper.

Barry did his best to make steam, but it was futile. He was crestfallen, thinking somehow he did something wrong. I reassured him that no one could make steam with death wood. Yet we still had to figure out something to do.

Ron Bunker, who hauls *Eureka* for me took a look around and said that there was plenty of sagebrush there, why don't we pull it up and use that? It was a great idea but sagebrush would be like throwing hay into the boiler. But it was all there was. We jumped out to the ground and started pulling up as much as we could. Not only did we fill the tender, but also the gondola car which was behind the tender. Barry shoved the stuff into the firebox, and my God, it was like throwing gasoline into it. The fire was so hot that the boiler gauge rose the fastest I had ever seen it come up.

While we were pulling up sagebrush some of the passengers got off the train and were wondering what we were doing. Ashamed as I was, I could not bring myself to tell this gent the truth. So, I did the next best thing, I lied and said that we were performing an Old West tradition of burning sagebrush. In his best British accent he said, "I say, is that so?" With that he called to his fellow passengers who all jumped off the train and started pulling up the sage.

Eventually, we got as much as we could on board. By that time I confessed that we had to get back to Antonito. I'm sure they figured it out, but my conscience was killing me. We all got on, I gave three blasts on the whistle, and we backed the ten miles to Antonito.

This trip was not off to a good start.

Back at Antonito, we off-loaded the entire tender of death wood. However, we still had to find some fuel somewhere. It so happened that Jeff Stebbens, one of the C&TS engineers said he had a bunch of dry wood at his home.....in Taos! Some 20 or 30 miles away. Good grief. Well, there was no choice. The crew piled into trucks and cars and sped off to Taos to get the wood. In due time, they returned. We

loaded the tender again and we were once again off, but hours behind time.

We charged off into the wilderness again making the best time possible and doing a couple run bys for the passengers. We were able to make it to a siding at a place called Big Horn where we earlier placed a box car with wood. That wood was alright, but not great. Nevertheless, we were able to charge on to our next stop at Sublette, and take on water.

Although the wood was a little better than the garbage from Antonito, we were only able to make 75 psi. It was enough to keep going but the steam was definitely saturated. At one point, just as we passed through Rock Tunnel on a curve, Barry said to me that his injector would not pick up. I thought that odd and figured we should have plenty of water in the tender. I tried the engineer injector and it picked up just fine. But, just to be safe, I thought I should stop and check the water level in the tender.

To my absolute astonishment the tender was bone dry, except for the little that was on the lower side of the tender caused by the curve we were on. I could not believe it. We were six miles from Osier and no water! Fortunately, Barry had been carrying the water level rather high in the boiler so at least we had that. We decided that Earl would take the throttle and I would fire, giving Barry a break.

As we ran that last six miles to Osier the boiler water level steadily went down. At last Osier came into sight with its magnificent water tower. Earl eased *Eureka* to the tank with the water level now at the bottom of the glass. I timed it so the fire was dead out in case we lost sight of the water in the glass. As it turned out, we had perfect timing. We made the tank, the fire was out, the water at the bottom of the glass, and we all heaved a very deep sigh of relief.

We figured we ran out of water in the tender because with the bad wood, we were unable to make enough steam pressure to be efficient. In short, we were pumping a lot more wet steam through the engine than we normally would. From that point on, if we had to use that wood, we would have to keep a closer eye on consumption. As it turned out, we managed to find alternative sources rather than the death wood.

After getting *Eureka* serviced and refueled, we turned the train. We grabbed something to eat at the restaurant at Osier, but had to quickly get out of there because darkness was approaching. All our passengers re-boarded and we headed back. As we passed through Rock Tunnel, up on the eastern

portal we spotted some guy there with a camera. We called out and asked if he needed a ride. He replied that he did not and would catch the next train. We told him that we knew of no other train, but he insisted it was alright, that one was coming for him. Well, at least we knew it would not coming out from Antonito. We bid him goodbye and went on our way. As it turned out that poor fellow got to spend the night alone in the forest. There was no other train.

Darkness began closing in on us, and it came time to light *Eureka's* oil headlamp. As the lamp warmed up and the flame was adjusted to the proper brightness, we went on. I had used the lamp before, but not in such isolated and dark places as those through which we were travelling in these mountains. It is almost impossible to describe the magnificent illumination given off by an oil headlamp. As the locomotive approaches trees in the forest the focused beam turns everything the most mellow golden glow. I am totally enthralled at the effects of the lamp, and night running holds a special place in my memory.

It took several hours to wind our way out of the mountains and it was getting late. When we got to the area below Big Horn everyone was getting very tired. All the passengers were asleep. Earl, who had been riding back with them came forward at one stop for water and said to me "I can't take it any more. Don't hit anything. I've got to get some sleep." I was dead tired myself. George Sapp and I had been trading off and on running the locomotive and firing. It was now my turn again at the throttle and George fired.

Somewhere around 11 or 12 at night we were clipping once again out in the sage country. It was level again and we were making good time. The headlamp's yellow beam lit the way for us, orange sparks like thousands of fireflies lifted out of the stack in a steady stream, flashes from the firebox threw blooms of light to the side of the engine.

I kept my head out the window of the cab keeping a close watch out for cattle in this open range. At some point I began to smell something burning but it was different than the fire from the locomotive. I asked George if he could see anything in the fuel bunker on fire, but he did not find anything. Yet, the peculiar smell persisted.

As we rolled through darkness, *Eureka* continued her steady reassuring rhythmic sound. She was working as she should, steadily taking us home. Both George and I were dead tired. Although looking out for danger ahead, we settled into as comfortable positions as we could in the cab.

I sat there watching the track as we passed through the darkness, and happened to catch a glimpse of something large and orange out of the corner of my eye. At the same time I noticed that the peculiar smell from before was very intense. It instantly dawned on me that this was a smoldering fire along the track.

I began setting up brakes and brought the train to a stop. I then backed to the orange glow and was amazed to find that it was a huge area where the cows gather and there was probably 100 years worth of dried cow pies on fire! Apparently, one of the earlier trains had thrown some flaming coal cinders into this mess and it was just cooking away.

Well, we could not let a huge pile of cow pies burn away and cause a range fire. So, we grabbed whatever containers we could, got water out of the tender and the cattle water tank and spent some time putting out the embers. All the passengers awakened and joined in the stomping of burning cow muffins. When at last it was all out everyone got back on board and we headed once again through the black to Antonito.

About 1 or 1:30 AM we pulled into the terminal. I cannot begin to describe how worn out we were. The British passengers who had chartered this trip got up and sleepily walked toward the locomotive. I told them I was terribly sorry that so many things had happened on this trip. When I said this, they all looked at me sort of surprised. Their spokesman said in a most emphatic voice words that I will never forget, "We have chartered trains all over the world, and this trip was by far the best adventure we have ever had!" I was thunderstruck. With all the things that happened, this was their best trip? And, then I got to thinking about it.

Eureka performed perfectly, but there were so many variables that it was not the destination that was important, but rather the trip itself. It was the adventure, full of unknown surprises. It was where everyone pitched in and made the trip a success. I finally felt that tinge of pride that the early engineers must have felt when they successfully came through adversity. I found that the paradox was that an uneventful trip is not always the best trip. Events make it memorable.

I think I might just go and get myself a pair of new gauntlets.

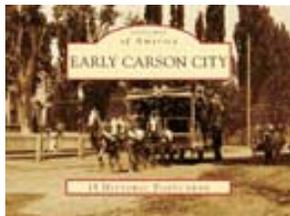
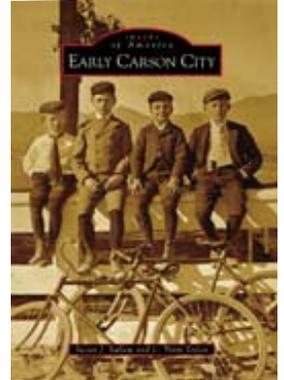
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Next time: High Mountain Railroading on the C&TS.

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Located at the base of the Sierra Nevada in the high desert of northeastern Nevada, a trading post known as Eagle Station formed the early settlement of Carson City. In 1858, Abraham Curry purchased the property named for frontiersman and scout Christopher "Kit" Carson and set aside 10 acres for the predicted future territorial capitol, which flourished after discovery of the Comstock Lode at nearby Virginia City. Carson City's complicated history was celebrated during the city's 150th birthday in 2008. Never-before-seen photographs came to light then and are shared in this new soft-cover book.



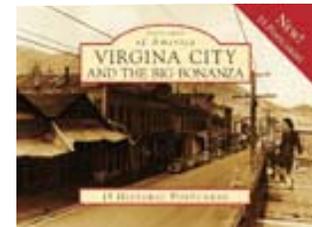
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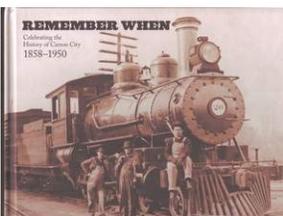
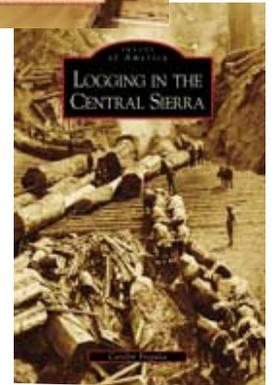
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Remember When: Celebrating the History of Carson City 1858-1950.

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**Save the Date: *Sunday, May 9* the Nevada State Railroad Museum
rededicates V&T McKeen Car No. 22! **Details inside!****

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday Evening Programs

- April 12 *An Early 1960s encounter with the Rio Grande Narrow Gauge*
—David Bell
- May 10 *The Western Pacific Centennial, Part III*
—Bob Larson
- May 31 *Railroads in the African American Experience*
—Prof. Theodore Kornweibel
San Diego State University

Evening programs are held at the Museum's Interpretive Center on the second Monday of each month except as noted. Programs begin at 7:00 PM (or as noted). Regular Museum admission charges apply.

Attend the 7th Annual *Become a Motorman Class*: April 16 -18, 2010.