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seum.org



**FALL 2017**  
133rd Edition

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**THE NEVADA STATE  
RAILROAD MUSEUM**  
An Agency of the Nevada  
Department of Tourism  
and Cultural Affairs



# SAGEBRUSH HEADLIGHT

**NEWSLETTER OF THE NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM**

## Railroad Merit Badge Day Comes to NSRM

*By Adam Michalski*

One of the major opportunities to advance in the Boy Scouts of America is to earn a merit badge. Merit badges give Boy Scouts the flexibility to learn about a wide variety of activities. Boy Scouts may choose from 137 different merit badges. One of these options is the Railroad Merit Badge. There are several requirements to earn a Railroad Merit Badge. Among them include: identifying ten types of modern railroad cars; plan a trip on Amtrak; discuss opportunities in railroading that



*Railroad Merit Badge participants board the McKeen Motor Car to learn more about passenger trains and the development of Amtrak.*

interest you; explain the purpose of Operation Lifesaver; explain the appearance of grade crossing warning devices; visit a railroad museum; and ride a train. The Railroad Museum is an obvious choice to learn about and experience these

*(Continued on page 6)*

## NSRM Receives Donation of Frank Green Photo Collection

*By Wendell Huffman*

Longtime Friend of the museum David Garcia recently donated to the museum his collection of material relating to the Tonopah & Tidewater (T&T), and other related southern Nevada and California railroads. The collection includes over 300 photographs taken by T&T engineer Frank E. Green



*(Continued on page 4)*

*Bullfrog Goldfield No. 12 prepares to depart from Rhyolite in 1908. Trains of the Bullfrog Goldfield turned on a wye to back into the depot.—Frank Green photo*

## VISIT THE MUSEUM

Open 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Thursday through Monday  
(closed Tuesday & Wednesday)

Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day

### Museum Admission:

Adults 18 & Over - \$6.00  
Children (Under 18) - FREE  
Museum Members - FREE

## STEAM TRAIN & MOTORCAR RIDES

Rides run every weekend May through September with select dates in October, November, and December.

The complete 2017 operating schedule is available at:  
[carsonrailroadmuseum.org](http://carsonrailroadmuseum.org)

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**Adam Michalski**, Curator of Education: Editor  
**Lara Brown**, Museum Store Manager: Designer

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Address correspondence for the *Friends* to:  
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**NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM**  
2180 South Carson Street  
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775.687.6953

## Message from the President of the Friends of the NSRM, Barry Simcoe

It has been another great year at the Nevada State Railroad Museum. All our events were very successful.

Peter Van Bommel completed his second tunnel car rebuild this year. We now, for the first time in several years, can run two tunnel cars in the summer. The public loves it. Whistlin' Billy with the help of Complete Millwork Services, Inc., the shop crew, and especially Loren Jahn is back in its original place in the Interpretive Center. These two projects highlight just what the Friends can do when given the opportunity.

Another Santa Train season is upon us. As I write this we have just completed our first weekend which was very successful. Rebecca Bevans, the chair of our events committee, has been working her fingers to the bone getting the depot ready, getting raffle gifts and vendor tables, and with Loren's help decorating the Depot. This should be another great event for the Museum.

We are always looking for additional help during these events. This is a good time for the volunteers that are not involved in operations to get involved. The Museum can use your help and I think you will have a good time.

The Board of Trustees has two new members, Amanda Thompson and Michael McClain. Let's all welcome them to the Board.

Remember the events committee meets every other week during the year to plan future events. I would encourage any of you to attend and help plan our future.

Thanks for all the effort you all put into supporting our museum during the year.

Have a wonderful Christmas Season.

Email: [barrysimcoe@sbcglobal.net](mailto:barrysimcoe@sbcglobal.net)  
Phone: (775) 379-1353

*Thanks,  
Barry*

## Tunnel Car No. 57 Rebuilt *By Chris De Witt*

The volunteers at NSRM have recently completed the rebuilding of the V&T Tunnel Car No. 57 under the leadership of Peter Van Bommel. Peter led the project and did an outstanding job of organizing, recruiting, and completing the project. The wooden car was last re-built by the V&T prior to the demise of the railroad and although it had seen periodic maintenance at NSRM it was worn out. The last maintenance was by Shortline Enterprises who replaced parts of the superstructure and seating in 1986. Peter, who served as lead on the re-building of Tunnel Car 53 last year, also a tunnel car, generously agreed to take on No. 57. Working in the shop with the shop staff, he recruited other volunteers to assist.

The plan was to reuse as much as was possible without creating a safety issue or making work for someone in 5 or 10 years. The car was documented and samples of significance were saved. The roof was removed and examined. Some material was saved, some was declared beyond saving. The seating was



NSRM Volunteers Edward Donofrio (left) and Peter Van Bommel work on Tunnel Car No. 57 during August 2017.

removed and set aside as were the doors and sundry.

With the aid of the shop staff and forklift the wall sections were lifted off the car as intact units and set aside. The floor was taken up exposing the sills and bolsters.

The frame was known to be in poor condition and is what precipitated the project. Most all of the frame required replacement. The side sills and intermediate sills were replaced with glue lams, an engineered wood product, cho-

sen for its cost saving price, availability, and dimensional stability. Although they are not true to the original fabric they are readily identified for what they are and can be replaced in the future if desired. As the car was disassembled the iron was sorted out. All the iron was cleaned, inspected, some iron was repaired, and the rest replaced. Many threads were chased.

The trucks were cleaned and inspected. The journals were

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Longtime Volunteer Jerry Hoover Passes Away

The museum recently learned about the passing of longtime Friends member Jerry Hoover. Jerry passed away just after Thanksgiving this year.

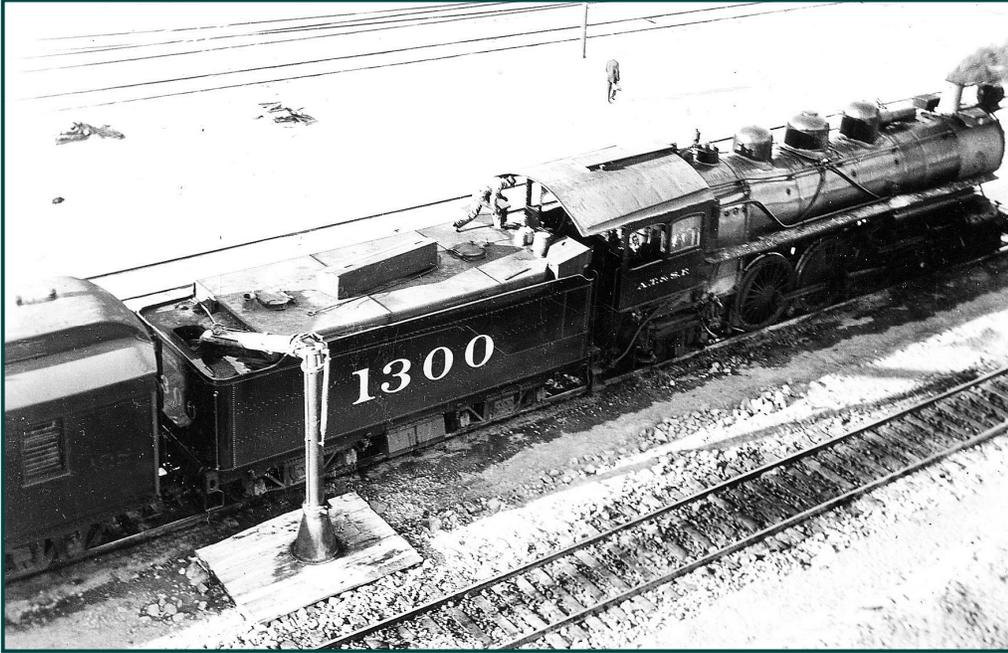
Jerry was a longtime volunteer on the train crew at the Nevada State Railroad Museum and worked for several

years on the Virginia & Truckee Railroad in Virginia City. He was very well liked and respected by the volunteers and staff. Jerry will be remembered by many of us as a great guy and a great friend.

Rest in peace Jerry. 🕯️



## Frank Green (continued from page 1)



(Above) An Atchison, Topeka, & Santa Fe (AT&SF) locomotive takes water at Ludlow, California, circa 1908. Ludlow is on the former AT&SF (now Burlington Northern Santa Fe) mainline from Los Angeles to Chicago. (Below) Photographer Frank Green at work on the Tonopah & Tidewater.

during the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The following account of Green's life is written by Phil Serpico, and taken from recent *T&T RR - The Nevada Short Line* with his permission.

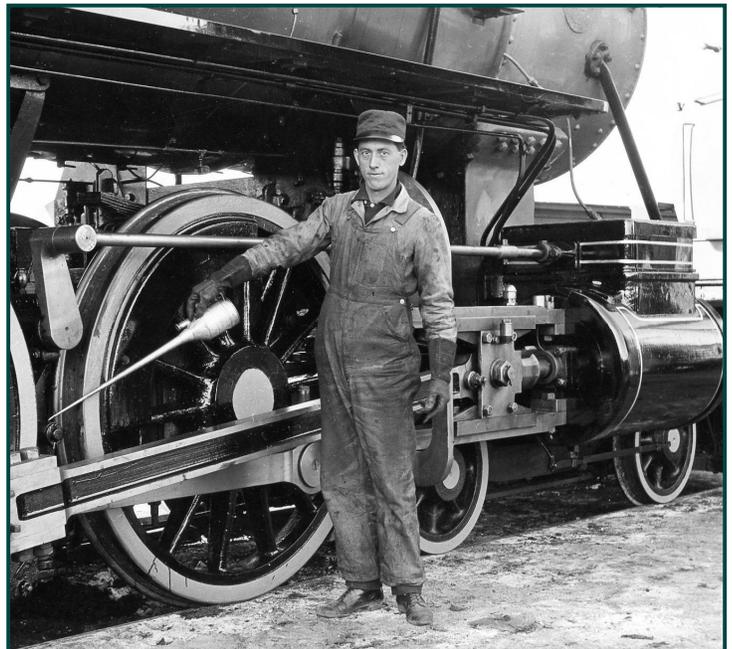
*It is believed that Frank E. Green (1879-1962) . . . arrived in the west from New York at the age of 27; ending up in the Mojave Desert, an environment so stark in contrast to his distant home. It is believed that he hired on as a locomotive fireman with the T&T at Ludlow and worked with the Bullfrog Goldfield as well, always in engine service. . . He was as-*

*signed a rundown shack which he refurbished and made additions to.*

*Frank Green was considerably more refined than the typical desert rat, having been raised in upstate New York. He took numerous photos of BG locomotive 12 suggesting it was his primary assignment. Fortunately, he was not on duty when her boiler exploded in December 1910. Green's railroad career ended in January 1921 following a horrendous wreck, when*

*his work train collided with a scheduled train killing three Mexican workers on the former. He was given the op-*

*portunity to resign. He sold the house he owned at 33 Main Street, Ludlow and departed for Central California ending up in San Luis Obispo where he found employment on a ranch. Green also did work for a local winery as a caretaker and fire watch. The late Willis C. "Dutch" Hendrick, a longtime member and director of the Railroad [sic] & Locomotive Historical Society, was tipped off to his whereabouts by Vernie Sherraden, then Ludlow postmaster and wife of Jack Sherraden who was the T&T dispatcher at Ludlow on that fateful morning; following a discussion about the T&T and former em-*





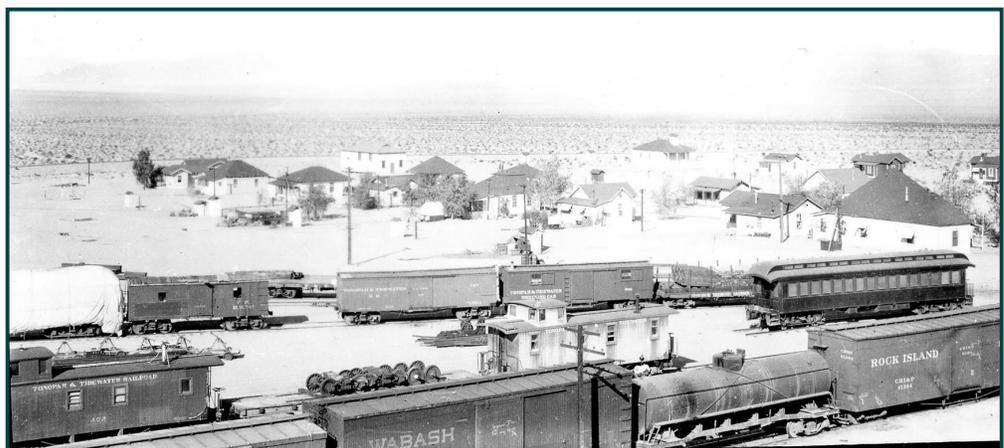
(Above) An Atchison, Topeka, & Santa Fe eastbound passenger train arrives at Ludlow, California, circa 1908. The T&T mainline to Beatty is visible just above the AT&SF train. (Below) Photo of the T&T yard at Ludlow, circa 1908. The T&T Caboose, No. 402, in the lower left corner was built in 1908 by the Seattle Car Manufacturing Company. Today it is part of the collection at the Nevada State Railroad Museum.—Both photos Frank Green.

ployee Green's love of photography—the subject matter of interest. Dutch found Green at his house around 1959. . . and it is recalled that we was met with a not so warm greeting, but he pushed on with his introduction and purpose though at first told that he was too late. Green then pointed over to some remaining photo boxes destined for the dump and the rest is history. Dutch made at least three visits with Green and conversation evolved from a state of bitterness to interest when Dutch suggested that a renowned railroad history author

named David Myrick was interested in using Green's work in an upcoming book. Unfortunately Green would never live to see his labor of love printed in publication form. Frank Green died on January 10, 1962.

These photographs eventually passed from Hendrick to Dave Garcia, and are now at the Nevada State Railroad Museum. Not only were Green's photos featured in Myrick's *Railroads of Nevada and Eastern*

*California*, but they form the core of Phil Serpico's book on the Tonopah & Tidewater. Many of David Garcia's other photos also appear in Serpico's *The Las Vegas & Tonopah Railroad*. 🚂



## Railroad Merit Badge *(continued from Page 1)*



Nevada State Railroad Museum Volunteer Matt Digangi discusses the importance of railroad signaling with participants during the Railroad Merit Badge Day on September 9, 2017. The Railroad Merit Badge Day brought together 60 Boy Scouts and their families for a full day of learning about railroading.

requirements.

On September 9<sup>th</sup> the museum hosted a Railroad Merit Badge Day for the Boy Scouts of America. The program was coordinated with the Nevada Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America. Sixty Boy Scouts and their parents attended the program. This was the first time the museum coordinated a Railroad Merit Badge Day with such a large group.

The program started in the depot at 9:00am with registration and a brief overview of the day's events. The Boy Scouts were divided into two groups for the first half of the day. One group learned about grade crossing safety and the Operation Life-saver Program at one station. Meanwhile the other group ventured out to the depot platform to learn about railroad signaling at another station. After about

30 minutes the groups rotated between the stations. After completing the first two stations the Boy Scouts took a train ride behind historic V&T locomotive No. 25. During the train ride the Boy Scouts had an opportunity to observe what it is like to work on the railroad.

Lunch was served after the train ride. Pizza, cookies, and beverages were provided for the Boy Scouts. It was a great opportunity to eat and compare notes with fellow Boy Scouts about their Railroad Merit Badge Experience.

At 12:30pm the Railroad Merit Badge Program continued, this time breaking up into three groups to finish the last three stations. At the last three stations groups rotated between the development of Amtrak; an introduction to modern railroad cars and trains; and an

opportunity to talk with railroaders to learn about railroading. Each group spent approximately 30 minutes at each station.

At the end of the day at 2:00pm, the Boy Scouts reconvened in the depot where Merit Badge Counselors signed blue cards. All sixty participants received their Railroad Merit Badge. A fun-filled day of learning about railroads came to an end.

The staff and volunteers from the Nevada Area Council and the Nevada State Railroad Museum found the event to be a great success. Participants really seemed to enjoy the day at NSRM exploring the world of railroading. Another Railroad Merit Badge Program is scheduled for September 8, 2018. If you would like to participate please contact the museum at (775) 687-6953 x224 or [amichalski@nevadaculture.org](mailto:amichalski@nevadaculture.org) for more information. 🚂

## Tunnel Car 57 (continued from page 2)



Volunteer Peter Van Bommel with the completed Tunnel Car 57 in October 2017.

repacked and the center plate lubed. The air brake system was cleaned, oiled, tested, and stenciled.

Reassembly of the car was a rapid process because of the preparation and diligence in

planning. The car was completed in the fall of 2017 and returned to service during Harvest Train. Having the second tunnel car available was beneficial, as it allowed the museum to operate four-car trains to handle the large crowds during the busy Harvest Train celebration.

Peter arrived everyday and worked for eight hours a day. On occasion he worked more hours in a day. He amassed more than 1,200 hours of volunteer time on the project. He also volunteered on steam weekends. His dedication to completing the job was outstanding. He enlisted Tom Tabacco, Jack Rodkey, Ed Donofrio, John McCall, and Peter Mires to assist with the wood, iron, and paint work. Carson Paint Mart donated the paint and lettering was provided by Loren Jahn. 🚂

## Eagle Scout Builds Crossing Shanty for the Museum

By Adam Michalski

There is a new addition to the property. Eagle Scout Tyler Smith built a crossing shanty for the museum.

Crossing shanties were once used by railroad employees who protected motorists and pedestrians at grade crossings. With the development of automatic warning lights and signals, crossing shanties became a thing of the past.

On December 2 Tyler and his family delivered the crossing shanty to the museum. The shanty was constructed to match the historic Southern

Pacific Wabuska, Nevada, Depot, which is located nearby. The crossing shanty is functional and was particularly useful during Santa Train to keep our flaggers out of the elements. In addition, it is designed to be portable to other locations of the museum property.

The crossing shanty is a welcome addition to the museum. The museum would like to thank Tyler Smith, his family, and the Friends of the Nevada State Railroad Museum for their support to complete this project. 🚂



The crossing shanty completed recently by Eagle Scout Tyler Smith sits near the grade crossing by the Wabuska Depot.

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The museum is very grateful for the all of the donations we receive. Many of these donations are books from railroad fans' collections. After due process, we are able to offer these books for sale in the museum store.

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Proceeds from Donations and Museum Store sales are used to fund museum projects and programs.  
Thank you for supporting the Nevada State Railroad Museum!

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