

# SAGEBRUSH HEADLIGHT

VOL. 22, NO. 1, 80th Edit.

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

WINTER 2001



Virginia & Truckee locomotives No. 22, Inyo, and No. 25, among friends during Transportation Fair 2000 over the Fourth of July weekend.

## THE YEAR 2000 IN REVIEW

### Transportation Fair 2000

The Nevada State Railroad Museum kicked off its 20th Anniversary summer season with an Open House on May 31, exactly 20 years after opening to the public. Over 170 friends stopped in to share in the celebration. A full schedule of events were planned throughout the year.

Under the blazing Nevada sun, NSRM held Transportation Fair 2000. This year's event was larger than any previous Transportation Fair, featuring operating machinery from all over the western United States. In addition to operating equipment, many opportunities were provided for family fun. Local radio

stations provided a musical atmosphere for the visiting public. The *Friends of the Nevada State Railroad Museum* again provided the muscle and spirit to make the Fair a success.

The four-day event was held at the museum over the Saturday-Tuesday

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*Sagebrush Headlight* newsletter is published by the Nevada State Railroad Museum and the Friends of the Nevada State Railroad Museum and distributed to the membership as part of their annual dues.

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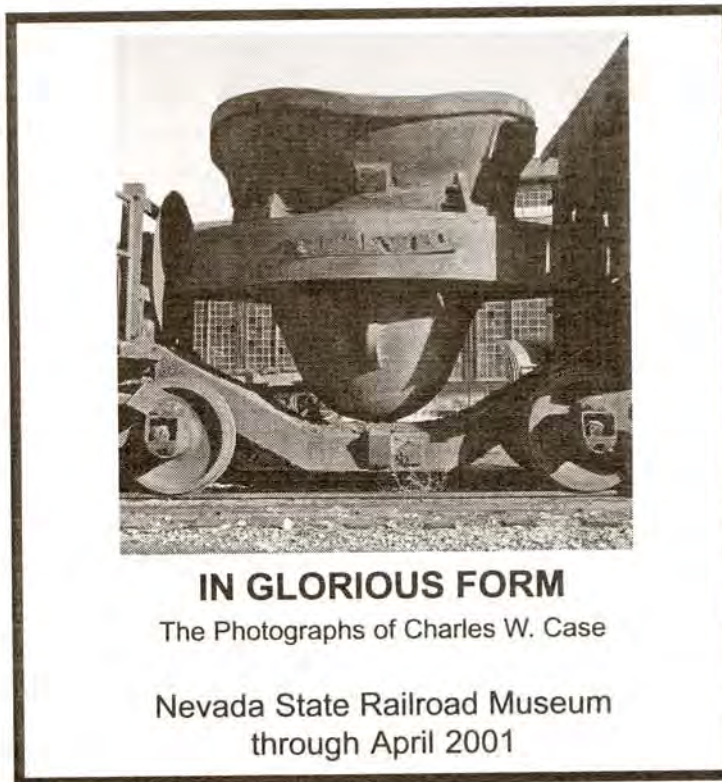
Correspondence to the FRIENDS may be sent to:  
Friends of NSRM  
P.O. Box 1330  
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**NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM**  
2180 South Carson St.  
Carson City, NV 89701  
(775) 687-6953

<http://www.nsrsm-friends.org>

Open Wednesday - Sunday 8:30 to 4:30  
Admission \$2  
Children under 18 FREE

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Carson City, Nevada



**IN GLORIOUS FORM**

The Photographs of Charles W. Case

Nevada State Railroad Museum  
through April 2001

**NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM  
2001 OPERATING SCHEDULE**

**STEAM UPS**

May 19 (Saturday) ..... Armed Forces Day  
May 26 - 28 (Saturday - Monday) ..... Memorial Day Weekend  
June 16 & 17 (Saturday & Sunday) ..... Father's Day Weekend  
July 4 (Wednesday) ..... Fourth of July  
August 5 & 6 (Saturday & Sunday) .....  
September 1 - 3 (Saturday - Monday) ..... Labor Day Weekend  
October 20 & 21 (Saturday & Sunday) ..... Symposium  
October 27 (Saturday) ..... Nevada Day Parade  
December 8 & 9 (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**

**MOTOR CAR**

**May:** Saturday & Sunday Noon - 4:00  
**Memorial Day - Labor Day:** Saturday & Sunday 10:00 - 4:00  
(except during steam ups)  
**September:** Saturday & Sunday Noon - 4:00  
Fares: Adults, \$1.00, Children 6-11, .50, 5 and under FREE

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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Dear Friends-

Winter is passing and spring is right around the corner. It is almost time to operate trains again. All volunteers who want to participate in the operations of the motorcar or steam train must attend one of the safety training sessions on April 14<sup>th</sup> or April 28<sup>th</sup>. To make the operations a great success, we need everyone to participate.

The Annex will be opening with the upcoming warm weather, and tour guides are needed. We want to make the museum a "Learning Experience" for the public. Therefore, the museum staff wants to have training sessions for all tour guides. Staff will be announcing the dates for that training. Call María Sánchez at the museum for further information.

The museum is on its winter schedule but will be resuming seven-day a week operation on Memorial Day weekend. We need all current and past volunteers to sign up for the summer. It's never too late to move up on the train for other positions. Remember, it takes everyone to make this museum the very best that it can be.

During the recent Volunteer Appreciation Reception, it was gratifying to see how many people are active in the program, and the number of hours that have been volunteered. Every member should feel proud, as this museum is unique within the museum system. We have a very large and enthusiastic membership. Let's keep up the good work.

If you know someone who would like to volunteer, bring them down and sign them up so that they may also feel proud to be a member of this elite group of people.

I look forward to seeing each and every one of you working for the betterment of NSRM during the coming season.

- Ron Allen, President.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**April 14 & 28, 2001**

**Safety Class**

Mandatory for all train crew volunteers

**May 9, 2001**

**Wednesday Evening Program**

7:00 PM

FREE

**May 19, 2001**

**STEAM UP**

**Armed Forces Day**

Military Displays

10:00 - 4:00

**May 26 - 28, 2001**

**STEAM UP**

**Memorial Day Weekend**

**October 19-21, 2001**

**V&T Railroad History**

**Symposium**

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### María E. Sánchez Curator of Education

Although many describe her as being from Texas, María was born and raised in Pueblo, Colorado. She received her B.A. in Anthropology from the University of New Mexico, in Albuquerque. While in Albuquerque, María participated in archaeological fieldwork, cataloged artifacts for the Chaco Center and directed an after school program for hearing impaired children. María also

did work for the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center, in Pueblo, Colorado, and The Modoc National Forest in Adin, California. Ms. Sánchez spent two years in the Museum Studies graduate program at Texas Tech University, in Lubbock, where she gained a variety of museology and museum education experience. María's most memorable experiences in Texas include interpreting prehistoric life ways at the Lubbock Lake Landmark,

and being a research assistant for an Eisenhower grant funded environmental science education program. María is very excited to fill the role of Educator with the Nevada State Railroad Museum and is looking forward to the many challenges and opportunities that the museum presents.

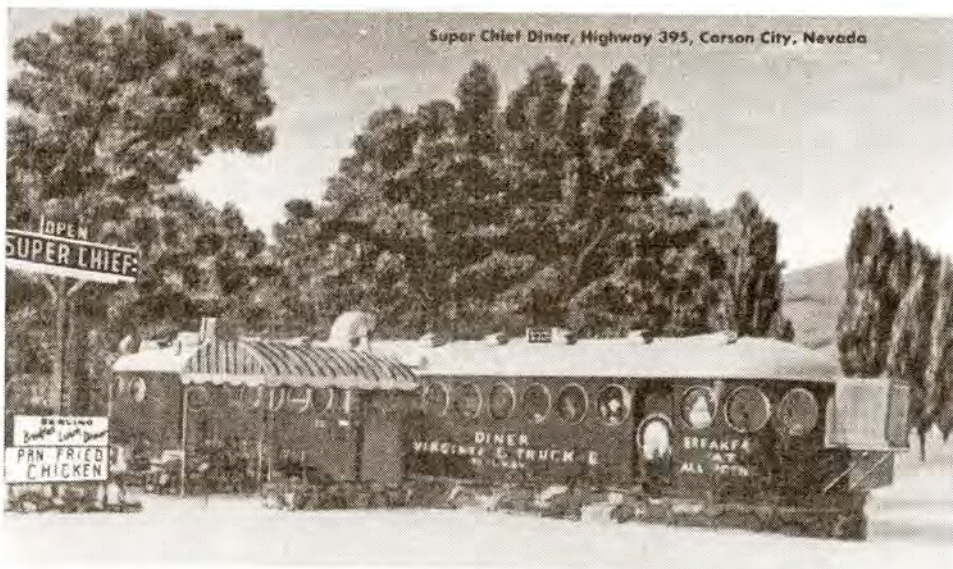
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Independence Day holiday weekend. V&T 25 and the *Inyo* operated throughout the weekend. Nearly 10,000 people attended the event.

Visiting locomotives included the *Falk* from Fort Humboldt State Historic Park in Eureka, California. The *Gwen*, a diminutive narrow gauge Hunslet Engine Company steam locomotive owned by Richard and Patty Farmer of Northridge, California, provided a decidedly English flavor to the Independence Day celebration. George Thagard, of Coto de Caza, California, brought his beautifully restored engine *Deanna*. Thagard then spent 4 days polishing the artifact until the restoration staff begged him to quit before he rubbed it away. Dr Richard May brought his Baldwin-built narrow gauge sugar cane locomotive, Hawaii Railway #5. And finally, Dan Markoff's *Eureka*, always a showstopper, again graced the rails at the museum.

In addition to the rolling stock, Bill Miles of Dayton, Nevada, exhibited his Case traction engine. The engine toured the property to the delight of young and old alike. The Northern Nevada Live Steamers operated on a scale track in Gibson Park. The right of way included a trestle that put the meticulously constructed models at eye level for the children who visited and rode the display.

Each day began with Speeders parading the loop. Various activities were presented in the park and around the property throughout the day. KOZZ-FM and KRNV-FM each had a broadcast day at the museum with the result of bringing *Transportation Fair 2000* to the widest possible community audience.



Early hand-colored post card of V&T McKeen as the Super Chief diner. Courtesy Bernie Allen Collection.

### McKeen Restoration Update

In the last installment we chronicled the layout of the sill in the front end of the car. The sill was fitted and the skin completed to the nose.

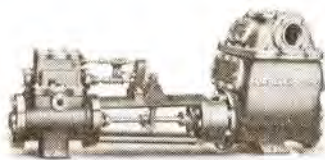
The vestibules, which required some structural repairs, new steps, risers, and partition panels, have been finished. The current focus is directed towards finishing the rear section. We anticipate using as much original fabric as possible in the rear section. Any reproductions and new material will be applied to the forward section.

The floor has been installed. The original construction had nailing strips and sound deadening between the sub floor and the finish floor. A fibrous insulation of low quality and cost was used as per original construction. The nailing strips were installed as per original. The finish floor was 3-1/2" T&G maple painted red. After a search, maple flooring was purchased and installed. From the front bulkhead to the curve of the rear section, the clear maple stretched out in a beautiful blonde ribbon. It looked like a portable bowling alley. Then, to the horror of many people, we painted it.

The window frames were cleaned, repaired and re-installed, completing the rear section. Two window assemblies were moved to the rear to replace the windows lost to the REA conversion doors. Throughout the car, five windows are missing and need to be replaced.

The original window assemblies are brass plated cast aluminum. The plating was in poor condition and the decision was made to find someone to re-plate the windows. Several plating companies were contacted and none would undertake the job. Reasons ranged from not having sufficiently large tanks, to being unwilling to plate old cast aluminum due to possible contamination. Interestingly, those persons who would estimate the approximate cost of the job agreed that the cost should be \$350-\$400 per ring. The car has 33 window assemblies with two rings per window, and a myriad of small parts requiring plating. Even if NSRM could have found a suitable plating company willing to take on the job, the cost would have been prohibitive.

As it was, a visitor who works for a



powder coating company indicated that they apply a mock plating to aluminum on a regular basis. We inspected their work, and based on that, we sent out a window ring for a trial sample. The finished product was acceptable and only cost 10% of the original plating bid.

Restoration Specialist Lee Hobold has stained and installed over ½ mile of mahogany wainscoting. The V&T's McKeen purchase specifications called for Cuban mahogany. This is no longer available to the US market and a suitable substitute has been installed.

The ceiling panels were examined. They are a laminated material ¼ inch thick, 11 ft long and vary in width up to 5'8". Plywood of this size just does not exist anymore. Some panels are in poor condition and some are in fairly good condition. Fortunately the panel in the rear of the car is in good condition and can be re-installed. It is domed to fit the curve of the roof as well as the round end of the car. Even if it were in poor condition, a means of restoration would have been found to re-use this piece. Replacement of some ceiling panels was considered. A firm in the bay area was found that could make off-size plywood. The only problem was that the firm could make it as long as wanted or as wide as wanted, but not both as long and wide as wanted.

In order to make a more educated evaluation of the condition and disposition of the panels, they were stripped of paint. It was presumed that they might be mahogany or other natural finish wood. Much to our surprise, when the panels were stripped they were orange with a maroon pin striping. Under the orange is a filler/primer coat. The wood is a poor grade soft wood of unknown origin. In examining photographs of the interiors of McKeen cars several examples of pin-striping matching ours was noted. As the surfaces of the panels

are painted, all repairs will be hidden.

Note: The interior color scheme is now a red floor, dark green seats, mahogany walls and orange ceiling. This combination is accented with brass window frames and trim. This will induce motion sickness in the passengers therefore masking any notice of the other shortcomings of the car.

A pilot has been fabricated using the old McKeen factory drawings and photographs. Changes from the drawings have been made to more closely match the photographs. It is standard railroad practice for the lowest part of the pilot to be 3"-6" above the rail. Visitors to the shop have commented that the pilot is very close to the rail and that this cannot be correct. The car is sitting lower than the factory designed height for the shop's convenience and the pilot will meet specifications when the car is finished. Bear this in mind if you visit the shop.

Fabrication of the rear truck has started and will continue as progress elsewhere

is slowed or halted. The design is from McKeen drawings and photos. The wheel sets, boxes and brasses are from the car acquired from Wisconsin. The boxes have been modified to work with the McKeen design. Why McKeen chose to design his own truck instead of using a truck available on the market at that time is unknown.

In working with the McKeen drawings we believe that several factors came into play. The McKeen Design and Drafting Department probably never allowed the shop workers more than a peek at the drawings. If this theory is incorrect, it is probable that the shop staff had neither the capacity to read, nor measuring tools available to them. In addition, the drawings have too much detail. Perhaps McKeen paid draftsmen by the quantity of dimensions on the drawing, regardless of significance. Such is the genius of McKeen. It has helped the shop staff immensely that the old drawings are copies from microfilms, that were taken from drawings reduced in scale to fit paper size formats. These copies were then xeroxed for clarity.



V&T McKeen Car No. 22 at Carson City, November 1940. Ted Wurm photograph, Nevada State Railroad Museum collection.

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NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

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(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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- Conductor's Roster - \$1,000

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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.