

# SAGEBRUSH HEADLIGHT

VOL. 26, NO. 2, 92nd Edit.

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

SUMMER 2005

## ***NSRM's 25th Anniversary Special***

**Nevada State Railroad Museum's First Twenty-five Years** by Chris DeWitt, Restoration Supervisor

In the 1970s, the Department of Parks in Nevada had in their possession a collection of historic railroad rolling stock, which was transferred to the newly formed Department of Museums and History by legislative action in 1979. Commensurate with this action was the awarding of a grant to the Department of Museums and History for \$1,600,000 from the Fleischmann Foundation. From these series of events began the development of what would ultimately become the Nevada State Railroad Museum.

### **1979 to 1984: The formative years**

There was no future for the restoration staff at California State Railroad Museum (CSRM) in 1981 when the restoration department rolled out the final piece and the museum opened. Bill Oden was the supervisor of restoration at CSRM and the president of Shortline Enterprises, a commercial organization that held a collection of 1800s rolling stock, some of it V&T pieces. He had been courting the Nevada State Museum (NSM) for work on Nevada's collection of rolling stock. NSM had possession of the historic railroad rolling stock, which they received from State

Parks in 1979, and no definitive plan of what to do with it. There had been several attempts at preservation of the collection while under the control State Parks, but they weren't well organized and plans died of ennui. Shortline Enterprises convinced the state of the value of preservation and wholesale restoration of the collection.

Believing that the proposed action had merit, state officials began constructive thought regarding the future of the rolling stock collection. A collection of this magnitude and condition was difficult to address for the recently formed Department of Museums

and History. The initial organization of the railroad collection was as an adjunct of the Nevada State Museum. It wasn't until 1985 that NSRM, as an autonomous agency of the Department of Museums and History, was born. The director of the NSM at that time was Scott Miller. He was a champion of the collection and interpretive program development. It was through his efforts both in the legislature and in the department that the collection and programs grew. Scott served as a

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Opening Day May 31, 1980.

Daun Bohall photo

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The museum is an agency of the  
**State of Nevada**

*Kenny C. Guinn, Governor*

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Open Daily 8:30 to 4:30

Admission:

Adults \$4, Senior \$5

Children under 18 FREE

## Symposium 2005 Milestones on the Railroad: Dates in Railroad History

The Nevada State Railroad Museum and the Friends of the Nevada State Railroad Museum invite you to attend the 34th Annual Virginia and Truckee Railroad Symposium held October 20-23, 2005, at the Plaza Hotel and Conference Center, Carson City. The 2005 Symposium will continue a year-long theme celebrating many anniversaries and milestones including the 25th anniversary of the Nevada State Railroad Museum, the 100th birthday of V&T locomotive No. 25, and the 130th birthday of V&T locomotive, *Inyo*.

WATCH THIS SPACE FOR FURTHER DETAILS AND:

*Plan to attend Symposium 2005!*

### NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM STEAM UPS

Saturday, Sunday, Monday, July 2-4	July 4th Weekend
Saturday and Sunday: July 16 & 17	Weekend
Saturday and Sunday: July 30 & 31	Weekend
Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 13&14	Weekend
Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 27& 28	Weekend
Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Sept. 3-5	Labor Day Weekend

Ten trains depart daily from the historic Wabuska Depot, 10:00 am-4:00 pm

Steam Train Fares, as of January 1, 2005:  
Adults-\$5.00, Seniors (65 and above)-\$4.00,  
Children 6-11-\$3.00, 5 and under FREE

SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Thanks to all of you who donated periodicals and books the Friends of the Nevada State Railroad Museum had a very successful fundraiser during the 2004 V&T Symposium. The Friends are continuing to collect books and periodicals (if they are 1950 and older). If you would like to donate books and older periodicals to the Friends, please contact Ann or John North at 775/786-4303 or [jnorth@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jnorth@sbcglobal.net). You will be provided a receipt for tax purposes. If it is found that a donated book or magazine is needed for the museum's reference library, that item will be donated to the museum.

## On Track with the Department of Cultural Affairs

By Scott K. Sisco,  
Interim Department Director

Walking through the *Shadows of the V & T* exhibit recently provided me with some unexpected perspective about the many activities currently underway at the Department of Cultural Affairs. Like the exhibit, our mission is to help today's generation connect with people, places and events that are now little more than shadows from the past.

We do this in many ways. Museums bring the past to life by collecting, maintaining and displaying artifacts that played a role in our state's story. Libraries remain one of the best sources of information and the State Archives preserves documents dating back to Nevada's territorial days. The State Historic Preservation Office diligently works to protect significant historic sites and buildings, while the Nevada Arts Council preserves traditional arts and lifestyles through its Folklife program.

I hope you will take advantage of the many offerings available from the Department during the summer months. If you have not already done so, I encourage you to visit the Sarah Winnemucca statue in the State Capitol. While you're in the neighborhood, stop by the State Archives research room for a look at the Nevada's new Tartan Stones. The stones were created by California artist Frank Maurer and feature Nevada State symbols carved in the style of the ancient Celts.

The *Wally's World* exhibit at the Nevada Historical Society is a must-see for art lovers. About 60 pieces of art about

Nevada by Nevada artists, borrowed from the extraordinary collection of Eureka Opera House Director Wally Cuchine, are featured in this unique exhibit. Thanks to Wally's incredible eye for art, this exhibit is a rare opportunity to see some of the best works of our state's foremost artists.

There's plenty happening this summer at the Nevada State Museum in Carson City as well. The *Sagebrush Ocean* exhibit features photographs of the Great Basin by renowned Utah naturalist Stephen Trimble. While you're there, make sure you pick up a program schedule so you don't miss any of the special events planned for the coming months, including a free summer celebration, booksigning and nature program hosted by the museum store on Saturday, June 25 from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

The next time you visit Lake Tahoe, take a moment to enjoy *Tahoe: These Are Your Neighbors* at the Tallac Historic Site. Produced by the Nevada Arts Council, this exhibit features photographs illustrating the traditional arts of Tahoe, including Washoe basket designs, Ukrainian egg decorations, Austrian and Hungarian decorative arts, brilliantly colored quilts, and Cuban flamenco dancers. The exhibit will be on display through September 12. Some of the featured traditional artists will demonstrate their art during a public open house from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 26.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Wed. Evening Program (7:00 p.m.)

July 13

*The Wild, Wild West* movie  
Introduced by Bob Kredal

September 14  
TBA

#### Kids' Days

July 9

*R Is for the Railroad Museum*

August 6

*Whistlin' Billy in a Great  
Storytime Adventure*

#### A Disney Weekend

August 12 and 13

Lecture by Disney historian Michael Broggie  
Disney cartoon and movie and much more!

#### Friends' Board Meeting

August 4

6:00 p.m. at the Museum

#### Museum Fundraiser

September 24

*A Virginia & Truckee Melodrama*

#### Symposium

October 20-23

For information, please call 687-6953.

Details on these and many other cultural activities may be found on the Department of Cultural Affairs' website: [NevadaCulture.org](http://NevadaCulture.org). Whether online or in person, I hope you will visit us again soon.



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leader in the Department of Museums and History for 20 years before his retirement.

Richard Datin was hired in 1979 to be the first curator of the collection. Richard Datin has a reputation of being a well-versed historian on the Carson & Colorado Railroad as well as Nevada history. He also has had a creative and varied career in model making and the film industry. He led the museum for the first ten years of growth after which time he retired.



Dick Datin in 1980. Daun Bohall photo

The initial complex at 2180 South Carson Street was the four-stall large artifact storage building known commonly as the annex. Originally it was assigned to State Parks but with the creation of the Department of Museums and History it was given to them along with the collection. Incorporated into the building was a walk through display area of a few hundred square feet, including a station agent's office and miscellaneous artifacts. There was a small gift counter and the curator's office. The four tracks housed what was deemed the more significant pieces of rolling stock and the balance of the collection was outside.

Shortline Enterprises began restoration work on the V&T #25 in 1980. They were essentially cleaning up after Doug

did not see it through to fruition. The grand opening of the museum was celebrated on May 31, 1980, with the #25 steamed up.



New insulation for #25. Daun Bohall photo

The restoration shop was finished in August 1981, as an addition to the annex. Shortline took up residence there with a crew from CSRM.



1981 addition. Daun Bohall photo

In 1981, Shortline Enterprises brought to Nevada three individuals from CSRM. They were Bob Hart, supervisor of woodworking, Kim Horn who was second wood worker, and Chris De Witt from the metals department. Along with Bob Verkuyl, a principle in Shortline, they started into wholesale contract restoration. Embracing the methodology developed at CSRM, feasibility studies were written for the pieces under consideration for restoration. Documentation was made during the restoration process and the work was faithful to the highest museum standards

Rapid work was made of the restoration of locomotives #18, #22, flatcar #162, boxcars #1013 and #1005, coach #9 and the rebuild of the tunnel cars. The rapidity was due in part to the non-existent infrastructure at the museum, which today requires substantial investment of labor to maintain, coupled with the single-minded purpose of a private contractor. As at CSRM, the work consisted of disassembly and replacement of most, if not all, of the wood components. It wasn't until later that an effort to preserve original fabric took a more important role in restoration.

Growth of the program demanded track and supporting appurtenances as an important addition to interpretation. The installation of a turntable was decided upon as the first logical step in the development of the track. Not only did a turntable allow for the shuffling of rolling stock for display and restoration but it also addressed the shortcomings of the location of the annex and shop on the museum site. The initial effort to install a turntable was the acquisition of the Amador Central turntable from Martel, California. Great discussion ensued when the engineers were asked to assist in the planning and design of



Turntable in 1983. Daun Bohall photo

## FRIENDS OF NSRM OBSERVE 20 YEARS

By Ronald J. Allen, President/Charter Member

The *Friends* are observing their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and it promises to be a great year. In 1985 when we were first formed, a small group of 25 individuals had foresight and imagination and the outcome is evident today. The actual Articles of Incorporation were filed on January 4, 1985, but the *Friends* have always acknowledged May 31, 1985 as the anniversary date. The reason for this acknowledgement was to align the anniversary to that of the Nevada State Railroad Museum and to align it with the anniversary of the abandonment of the V&T RR on May 31, 1950. The organization was formed as a 501 (c) 3 Non Profit Corporation, as provided by the United States Internal Revenue Service and the laws of the State of Nevada. This was done so that donations could be made and tax credits given to individuals and corporations throughout the country. The museum has benefited greatly over the years because of this status.

The first trustees were Bryce Wilson, John Gibson, James Clark, Robert Verkuyl, Thomas Davis, Andrew Grose, Robert Crowell, Shelly Turner, and Benjamin Steele. It is interesting to note that the only member of the original Board of Trustees still active with the *Friends* is John (Jack) Gibson. However, there are a few of us Charter members that are still active and volunteer.

These individuals, along with the other charter members, wrote the mission statement. It reads as follows: "To support the organization and growth of the Nevada State Railroad Museum; to encourage the preservation of railroad history, artifacts and property, particularly those germane to the State of Nevada; and to heighten public awareness of Nevada's railroad history." This mission statement remains the operating principle of the *Friends* organization today.

During the first five years, the *Friends* organization was quite busy getting established and outlining its role in the operation of the museum. Some of these duties included the organization of train crew volunteers and staffing the museum with volunteers. During this period of time a working agreement between the museum and the *Friends* was established, which is still in effect today. A cooperative effort to establish a rule book and a test for train operators was completed along with the avenue for its implementation. This working agreement is still in place and has proven to be very successful for all parties concerned. The volunteers work well with the museum staff and compliment their efforts to a high degree.

Steam Expo 86 in Vancouver, British Columbia, was one of the first and largest projects involving the *Friends*. The *Inyo* and Caboose-Coach No. 9 attended and were well received, as they stole the show. Some of the *Friends* members volunteered and accompanied the train. In addition, the funds necessary to publish a brochure (20,000 of them) describing the museum and the State of Nevada were supplied by the *Friends* for that event.

Another major project, which involved volunteers, was the completion of the track work around the property for train operations. This was completed and dedicated during the annual V & T History Symposium on October 31, 1986. Many fond memories of that construction effort still linger in the minds of some still involved with operations and volunteering. Sometimes working in a snow blizzard comes to mind.

The Nelson house was acquired and moved to the museum by the state. The *Friends* then took it over as a project, completing the exterior repairs and refurbishment. These repairs included a new roof (funding supplied by then member Lee Hobold) and the replacement of the exterior wood siding. At a later date, numerous members contributed labor to restore the kitchen and office area of the interior with the *Friends* purchasing the materials. The steam train crew has affectionately known the house as the "embassy."

During 1989 the construction of the Interpretive Center was taking place with the involvement by the *Friends* acting as finance construction managers. This facilitated private funds (from the Jacobsen family) disbursement and allowed the construction to be completed in a timely manner. This was possible because of the 501 (c) 3 non-profit status.

During the past twenty years there have been many changes in the museum and in the *Friends*, but one thing has not changed and that is the dedication and enthusiasm by the members who volunteer on a regular basis. During the past ten years the

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## Spotlight on Volunteer Linna Huttman

By John Frink

Linna Huttman, our former Friday morning store volunteer, is “retiring” from volunteering. Retired from her actual job in 1995, she started volunteering that April and leaves after ten years of holding down the fort on Friday mornings. As part of the infamous “Friday Morning Mafia,” along with former volunteers Betty Dahle and Tommie Powell, she was noted, for among other things, decorating our Christmas tree every holiday season. She could be found at various pot lucks, museum yard sales and other activities – always willing to lend a hand.

Linna is from a real railroader’s family. At about the age of three, she and her family lived in a boxcar for a few months while her father was on the “extra board” of the railroad known as the “Wobbly” near Westwood, California.

Thank you Linna for everything, and don’t forget to stop in now and then.



## McKeen Motor Car Update

By Chris Dewitt, Restoration Supervisor

During the past year the McKeen car has seen strong progress. The final molding required for the interior of the car represented a significant expenditure. Without the assistance of our benefactor Al Bernhard, we would not have been able to afford to install it. Through his efforts, we secured a contribution of 50% of the cost. He arranged for Artefice by Dianda to custom mill the molding. The molding cost \$30 per foot for 100 feet. It is a mahogany molding which covers the roller blinds.

A considerable expense was incurred in casting the seat frames, which are in process of clean up and preparation for installation. Window sashes were machined from castings made from our pattern. The rear bench seat has been built to the original drawings. The bench is spectacular. A hand-crafted reproduction headlight was completed and applied in February.



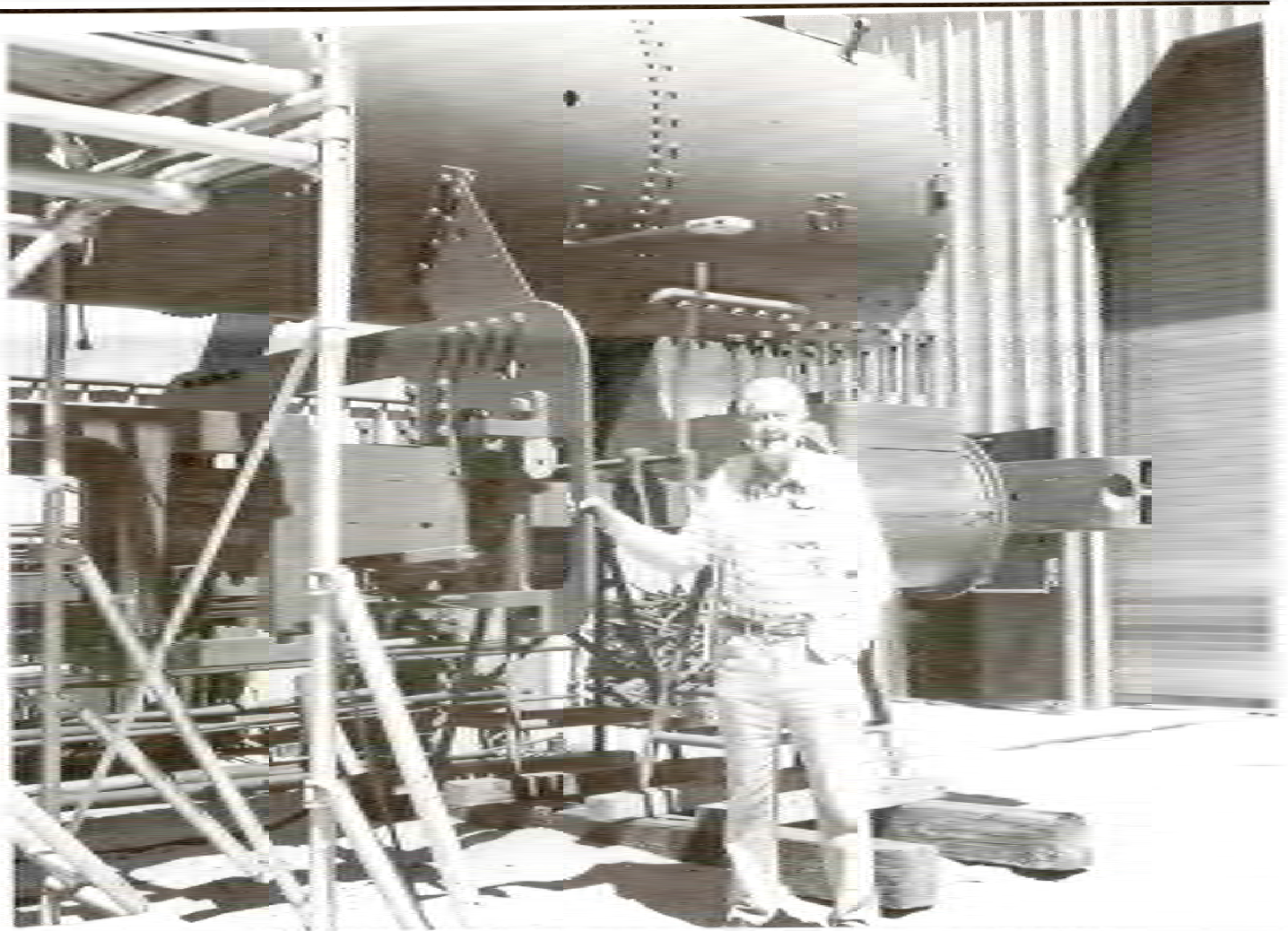
McKeen motorcar photographed May 26, 2005. NSRM Photo

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membership has increased significantly from 250 members to over 700 now. That is a very gratifying feeling for all involved, but particularly for the current Board of Directors. It is hoped that during the next ten years the membership will continue to increase as dramatically and provide the necessary support for the endeavors of the museum. The *Friends* current membership and volunteer base exceed those of all other state museums combined. A fact that the Board of Directors is very proud of, as it greatly enhances the overall support to the museum and its functions.

During the past five years the *Friends* have been fortunate to be instrumental in the acquisition of many items of historical significance. Some of these items include the Gordon Sampson collection, an original V & T track inspection car, photo collections, and numerous other artifacts of value to the museum and the State of Nevada. The possibilities abound for the future in continuing this tradition.

Overall, the activities and programs by the *Friends* are considered to greatly contribute to and enhance the visitor experience at the museum. All of this is due to the hard work and involvement of the membership and volunteers. Let's make the next 20 years even better and more productive. Thanks to each and every one of you.



Daun Bohall standing in front of the V&T locomotive #27 while it is undergoing cosmetic restoration in 1994.

Daun Bohall photo

Daun Bohall (1913-1998) faithfully chronicled the development of the Nevada State Railroad Museum from its inception in 1980 until 1994. In addition to photographing museum development and events, Mr. Bohall amassed a large and significant collection of Nevada-related photographs. His collection was purchased for the Nevada museum system via a generous grant in 1995. The collection is a very important resource for museum staff at NSRM and the Nevada State Museum, and for the many researchers who frequently use it.

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the installation. Study led the engineers to conclude that the water table was so close to the surface that the pit, assumed to be a large dish, would float up and out of the ground. The discussion then turned to the construction of a wooden turntable based on a 1900s Southern Pacific design, as it required a shallower pit. The table was finished in 1983. At that time, the timbers to build the table totaled about \$10,000 and change. A partial replacement of some timbers today is quoted at \$30,000. The architect that designed the pit for the table also designed the head blocks where the rails approached. His design called for 80 yards of concrete. Eighty yards of concrete equals about 16 trucks. During the pour, the architect approached the pit and staring down into the torrent of concrete was heard to say, "Did I design this? This is ridiculous," whereupon he turned and walked away.

The Wabuska depot was acquired from the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1983. Wabuska was a station on the branch line from Hazen to Thorne, Nevada, much of it on the old Carson & Colorado Railroad narrow gauge line. The depot was moved to the museum in 1983. The depot had the roof and rafters removed and looked very much like a large box on wheels coming down the road. Its placement on the property was determined by the layout of the track already on the drafting table. The depot was rebuilt to the original S.P. specs,



Wabuska Depot on campus, 1983.  
Daun Bohall photo

removing the modifications that occurred over the ensuing years. At that time, S.P. was removing superfluous structures from its property that included not only the Wabuska depot but also the Thorne depot. Museum staff visited the Thorne depot to record it and remove such things as were available. The semaphore from Thorne was taken down and brought to NSRM with the intention of erecting it at the Wabuska Depot.

Shortly after that, the Nelson house was moved on site. It had been located on the current site of the Ormsby Casino parking garage. Louis Nelson had purchased the house in the 1920s as a young man and lived in it until he died in the 1980s. The house had been purchased as a kit, some say, from Sears and Roebuck & Company.



The arrival of the Nelson House.  
Daun Bohall photo

In 1983, Bill Oden died at the age of 47. He suffered a heart attack at the shop and died in the hospital shortly thereafter. Bill was an interesting person who put together a good program and a strong base on which the restoration program could build. With Bill's demise Bob Verkuyl assumed the role of shop supervisor.

The museum was developing museum-like tendencies by 1984, and as an outreach program, the recently restored locomotive #22 was sent to

Las Vegas where it was displayed at the newly opened Palace Casino. Although there was only enough track for the locomotive to sit on but not move, it was well received.

### 1985 to 1992: NSRM stretches its wings and learns to fly

The year 1985 saw several significant actions that strongly influenced the future of NSRM. Perhaps the most significant occurrence was the incorporation of the volunteer group, known today as the Friends of the Nevada State Railroad Museum. The group was founded to support the museum financially, as well as staff the operations. Today the organization is the envy of other institutions in its strength and hours contributed.

Also in 1985, the Nevada State Railroad Museum was established as an independent agency of the Department of Museums and History. With this reorganization came its own budget and management structure.

The motorcar, The Washoe Zephyr, was acquired from Shortline enterprises. During the summer a future employee, then a volunteer (who shall remain nameless), asked permission to operate the motorcar on the short track beside the annex. Permission was granted with the caveat not to deplete the air in the brakes. He, of course, ran out of air and sailed off the end of the track. He battled with his conscience as to whether he should confess his crime or run away, never to return. He hung his head in shame, as he threw himself on the mercy of the shop crew. This is a good thing as today he plays a very important role in museum programs.

During 1985, the restoration of V&T coach #4 was finished. From the perspective of heroic restoration this coach is at the pinnacle, evidencing years of skill development. Coach #4 is a spectacular

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piece for the museum. Prior to its being ensconced in the Interpretive Center it saw limited operation. Running at night, with lamps lit, behind a steam locomotive, it evoked an air of mystique and an appreciation of things gone by.



Car #4, first time out of the shop, 1984.  
Daun Bohall photo

During 1985, plans and arrangements were made to attend Steam Expo 86 in Vancouver, British Columbia. The preparation to attend an out of country event of this magnitude was immense. Fortunately, the administration of the Department of Museums and History was completely behind the effort. The museum continued to interact with the Nevada public by showing locomotives at the State Fair in Reno and a locomotive and cars in Boulder City. The year 1985 was the beginning of several years of unparalleled growth, public interaction, and fulfillment of the mission of the institution, which has not been equaled since.

It was in 1986 that the Nevada State Railroad Museum represented the State of Nevada at the international venue, Expo 86. The *Inyo* and coach #9 were sent to Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, with the museum staff and Shortline Enterprises operating crew. It is estimated that hundreds of thousands of people viewed the locomotive during regular fair hours as well as at the parade of locomotives. The presentation from Nevada was voted the Best of Show at the railroad venue.

Following the success at Expo 86, the museum awarded the contract for the construction of the tracks at NSRM. Union Pacific donated all of the necessary rail and much of the required hardware. Grading and track laying proceeded through the fall and winter.



Laying track. Daun Bohall photo

Ballasting was handled with V&T #25 and a ballast car donated by the Nevada Northern Railroad in Ely. Ballasting took place in a snowstorm in March 1987, affording those who watched spectacular images of steam, snow, and sweat.

During 1986, the Jacobsen Interpretive Center was started and train operations began in earnest. Shortline Enterprises left the museum and divested themselves of their collection.

In 1987, a replica of a water tower was built. It was patterned after a V&T water tower; however, it not an exact replica of a specific tower. The architect who drew the plans also designed the foundation. The tower foundation starts twelve feet below the surface of the ground. A hole twelve feet deep was excavated and then back filled with special material and compacted for the first four feet. A footing was formed and concrete was poured in. Lots of concrete, enough concrete to make a foundation of a medium size house. The explanation for this was that in an

earthquake the tank, holding almost 5000 gallons of water so high off the ground,



Water tower under construction.  
Daun Bohall photo

could topple the tower. Interestingly the tank sits on 4" x 12" beams on edge (like dominos) and the beams are not bolted or attached to the structure. It is believed that in an earthquake the tower would survive except for the wall through which the tank would come shooting through. The architect was the same one that designed the turntable pit.



Interpretive Center, November 1987.  
Daun Bohall photo

The year 1988 saw the purchase and moving of a portion of the Shortline collection to Nevada. It included nine cars (several V&T), locomotive #8, and associated equipment. Locomotive #8 was offered to NSRM, however, it was

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not in service. The terms of purchase agreement required Shortline to make repairs and put the engine in service.



Work on locomotive # 8.  
Daun Bohall photo

These were heavy repairs involving replacement of firebox sheets and other mechanical work. Following the repairs the #8 was shipped to Boulder City with three cars to operate for the pleasure of the public. Steam operations ran for a week.



The museum gets a new sign, 1988.  
Daun Bohall photo

Restoration continued in 1988 through contracts let to deWitt-Franklin Engineering. The Nevada Copper Belt caboose was restored. This was the first piece restored at NSRM where the primary focus was to preserve a maximum amount of original fabric. The replacement of the siding was inevitable, as it had been damaged in previous

restoration attempts. However, all else was saved.

December 1988, saw the running of the first Santa Train for the public. The Santa Train has been a staple of the Christmas season in Carson City ever since.

In 1989, the legislature approved the creation of three full time positions in the restoration shop negating the need for a restoration contractor.

That same year the Chamber of Commerce built their visitors center across the road from the depot. Richard Datin retired after ten years of excellent service to the museum system.

A ten-year celebration was observed in 1989, with NSRM hosting a rail fair, which included two visiting steam locomotives, live steamers, displays and a party like atmosphere. The museum presence at 2180 South Carson Street had grown considerably from one sheet metal building in 1980 to seven substantial structures, from four 100-foot tracks leading from the original building to almost a mile of track, from one full time curator and a seasonal part-time employee to a staff of six, from the occasional curious visitor to 30,000 visitors per year. The second decade heralded NSRM's entry as a mainstream museum.

John Ballweber assumed the mantle of leadership at NSRM in April 1990. In November, Kyle Wyatt was hired to the position of Curator of History.

1990 saw the opening of the Interpretive Center on a five-day-a-week schedule. Rich Riettenaur was hired to operate the museum store, a significant source of revenue.



Interpretive Center nears completion,  
January 1990. Daun Bohall photo

Following our fine example, CSRM held it's own ten-year anniversary in Sacramento in 1991. V&T #22 traveled out of state again to represent Nevada in a large international event. Nevada's presence showcased the gains that were made in the first ten years at NSRM.

NSRM was able to adopt a seven-day-a-week schedule in 1991 and expand programming to include the ubiquitous Wednesday evening program



Santa Train crew, 1991. Daun Bohall photo

In February 1992 Locomotives #8 and #25 were trucked to Wabuska, Nevada, where a television commercial was filmed. The scene was the driving of the golden spike, yet again. Southern Pacific

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leased the railroad to the production company for the day. After filming, the crews from NSRM were able to run the locomotives at a fair clip, something impossible to do at NSRM.



Locomotives in action at Wabuska.  
Scott Leasey photo

Although a profit was realized from the commercial, it was not sufficient to offset the massive cuts in the state budget that occurred in 1992. As an example, the \$20,000 annual restoration budget was cut to \$600. This was necessary to prevent the loss of a staff position. This event was not without warning and accordingly the restoration staff had begun stockpiling materials the previous year. During 1992, plans were made to develop the Boulder City site. It was anticipated that a museum was to be built and train operations were to ensue.



Symposium banquet, 1992.  
Daun Bohall photo

### 1993 to 2000: Maturation does an institution good

By 1993, Las Vegas politicians had taken note of the success and popularity of NSRM in the northern part of the state. They wanted a railroad museum of their own and had the political power to force the relocation of the Carson City facility to Las Vegas. Several years earlier, Union Pacific had donated the Boulder Dam railroad, from Lake Mead Avenue in Henderson to Boulder City, to the state. The obvious solution to the situation was to develop the Boulder City rail yards into a Southern Nevada Railroad Museum. A bond issue was presented and it funded the purchase of the Heber collection. The Heber collection was in Utah on the Heber Creeper Railroad. It consisted of 40 pieces of rolling stock (cars and locomotives). The shop staff spent three months during the late summer of 1993 moving the collection to Boulder City. Other pieces were acquired including an operating Fairbanks-Morse locomotive obtained from federal surplus at the Sierra Army Depot, Herlong, California. It was the first operating locomotive in the Boulder City collection. Today Boulder City boasts the first diesel locomotive of the U.P., the U.P. diesel 844, as well as a restored train set.

In the fall of the same year, an agreement was reached between the state and Storey County regarding the disposition of Locomotive #27. NSRM removed the locomotive from Gold Hill depot with the understanding that it would be restored and returned to Storey County in a new display building they were to build. Today the state is constructing a building suitable for display of a locomotive thereby alleviating Storey County the responsibility of fulfilling its agreement. When the engine and tender reached NSRM the tender was found to be full of bunker "C" fuel left over from the

operation of the V&T. It was transferred to #25 and burnt as fuel. This could well be the last vestige of operations of the V&T.

Further development of the NSRM grounds was realized in the building of Gibson Park funded by the Gibson family in 1994. It is the location of many activities through out the year.



The arrival of locomotive *Joe. Douglass*.  
Daun Bohall photo

NSRM acquired the *Joe. Douglass* locomotive with a generous donation from Meadowood Mall. The locomotive was purchased from an individual in the Bay area, Robert Walton, who had rescued the locomotive from a roadside attraction in southern California. The locomotive was to see four years of display each Christmas season at Meadowood Mall in Reno.

Another transportation fair celebrating 10 years of the Friends of the Nevada State Railroad Museum was held in 1995. The museum also hosted the 25<sup>th</sup> year of the Symposium which had its humble beginnings in Stephen Drew's living room in Sacramento and grew to a weekend-long event drawing as many as many as 200 participants.

The transportation fair in 1995 was so well received that another was organized for the summer of 1996. It featured five steam locomotives and numerous other

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displays.

The museum received the gift of the V&T McKeen Car and the Nevada Copper Belt Hall-Scott from Al Bernhard of Carson City.



McKeen motor car upon arrival at NSRM. It is housed in the upper compound awaiting its turn in the restoration shop. NSRM photo

The extensive photo collection of Daun Bohall was acquired with a grant. Summer movies in the park were begun and drew good attendance.

There is a railroad on the Nevada Test Site accessible through Mercury, Nevada. Titled the Jackass Flats and Western, it was constructed to support the MERNERVA project of the late 1950s. There are five locomotives on the railroad. Two Alcos with sequential serial numbers and virtually no hours are housed there. The third is a G.E. 80-ton center cab with a positive pressure cab (so the radiation won't leak in and get you) and an auxiliary power unit in case both prime movers go dead. There is also a small 25-ton diesel electric locomotive, which we had been assured was decontaminated when first visited. On the second visit to the site, it was taped off as being radioactively dirty. The fifth and most impressive locomotive is a one-off radiation proof G.E. locomotive. It contains a 32-inch-thick radiation proof windshield and a 600-pound labyrinth-seal cab door. Finally, a steel panel can drop down over the windshield in case of emergency so you can't see what ultimately gets you.

These are available to the Nevada State Railroad Museum-Boulder City museum and wait moving.

In 1997 the museum completed an addition to the annex of 19,000 square foot, affording covered storage over much of the collection that had been outside since the inception of the museum.

The motorcar was re-powered with new components for which parts were readily available.

January 1998, saw the hiring of the museum's first education curator. The position was filled by Dan Thielen.

Restoration was completed on the V&T 27. It was not returned to Virginia City at that time, as the display building was not completed. The McKeen car came into the shop for restoration.



Filming #22 for *A House Divided*, 1998. NSRM photo

Nevada was again represented in an international venue at CSRM with the motorcar at the California's Sesquicentennial Celebration.

The V&T #18 participated in the Nevada Day parade in a spectacular presentation carrying the Grand Marshal. The locomotive was fitted with smoke to add to the show.

Kyle Wyatt left NSRM to join the California State Railroad Museum as

Curator of Operations leaving a vacancy in the Curator of History position which was filled by Dan Thielen.

## 2000 to the present

The new millennium saw a slowing in the frenetic pace of the 1990s. It has been a time of adjustment for all the museums in Nevada.

NSRM, having had great success with previous rail fairs, organized yet another in 2000. This rail fair boasted seven steam locomotives from around the West.

If one were to examine the history already presented, they would note that our first decade was celebrated in 1989. The discrepancy lies in the perceived starting date of the museum. The thirtieth anniversary will be celebrated in 2011, the thirtieth year Chris De Witt will have been on the property!

In order for museums to be accredited, and accordingly recognized as being of the highest merit, it is advantageous for them to engage in a museum assessment program administered by the American Association of Museums. NSRM entered into this program in 2001. The assessment entails a great deal of work, but is very worthwhile in identifying ways in which a museum can improve their programs.

The steam operation program was thrown into a state of confusion in the spring of 2002, following a catastrophic boiler failure (a locomotive-type boiler on a steam tractor blew up killing two people and injuring several others) in Ohio. Insurance carriers were suddenly awakened to the potential liability that old boilers represent. NSRM had regular boiler inspections performed by Travelers Insurance Company prior to the incident in Ohio. Included with the in-

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spection was an insurance policy, which covered the event of a boiler failure. Travelers dropped NSRM immediately after the Ohio incident. The State of Nevada Risk Management division was contacted and resolution was sought. Inspections were required if the steam program was to continue. Examination of the coverage revealed that the policy would cover the replacement cost of the boiler but nothing else. It did not cover property damage nor personal liability. NSRM and Risk Management concluded that replacing the boiler was the least of the states worries if there were an incident. The state has a boiler inspection agency and although they inspect, they do not insure which was deemed acceptable. The situation resolved gracefully with inspections being assumed by the state.

The year 2002 also saw the museum building on recommendations of the recent museum assessment. The PastPerfect computerized collections management system was implemented to gain better control of collections.

The French box car, the 40 et 8, was restored to its 1947 appearance when it arrived in the United States. Plans for a pavilion are presently in process and that will be the focal point of Gibson Park.



The 40 et 8 box car after restoration.  
Bryan Berry photo

NSRM opened two new exhibits in 2003. The first *Tireless and Unremitting: The Chinese and Nevada's Railroads* chronicled the contribution of Chinese immigrant laborers in building Nevada's railroads. The second, *Locomotive Stories of the V&T* incorporates the stunning half-inch scale models of George L. Richardson in an exhibit that examines the history and many colorful anecdotes of the V&TRR's locomotives.

A Nevada Department of Transportation enhancement grant of \$550,000 was awarded to NSRM to improve the museum's interpretation of railroading history.

With a vacancy in the museum director position in the summer of 2003, Jeff Kintop of the Nevada State Library and Archives (NSLA) assumed the acting directorship. When he returned to his position at NSLA in November Dan Thielen took over the position as acting director.

Dan was called to active duty with the Nevada National Guard in March 2004, leaving the helm in the capable[ed. comment], if sometimes reluctant, hands of Chris DeWitt.

The Friends of the Nevada State Railroad Museum instituted the first annual *Become a Motorman Class* in late April. Over the course of three days participants earn their accreditation to be full-fledged motormen.



First *Become a Motorman* class, 2004.

NSRM saw two other significant events in 2004: NSRM's first grade crossing accident and the hiring of Peter D.Barton as museum director in August. They are not necessarily related events; however, no one has demonstrated that they aren't.



Thanksgiving run in the snow, 2004.

The 25th Anniversary of the museum finds the staff moving forward on new permanent exhibit planning and educational programming. They are all looking forward to the next 25 years!

Notes from the restoration department: There have been many people who, over the years, have had a large influence at NSRM. Four who made important contributions to operations and restoration and have since died are Lou Boller, Bob Prentice, Gary DeLapp, and Al Walker. Each, in his own way, made the museum a better place. Each was a delight to work with and honorable men. They are sorely missed.

Contributions from the private sector are a staple of the NSRM. Of the many contributions given, those made by Shaw Construction were the most generous to restoration and operations. Shaw donated labor and materials continually for twenty-five years until a terrible accident forced the demise of the company. NSRM owes a great part of its progress to Shaw Construction.

Many of the operational volunteers have been serving at NSRM for over twenty years. NSRM extends a gracious thank you to all of the veterans, as well as the more recent members.

## MUSEUM STORE

We invite you to visit the store while at the museum or visiting Carson City. If you don't have the opportunity to visit us in Carson City, we offer a few of our interesting selections on this page. Telephone call inquiries about railroad merchandise are always invited, and may be directed to Museum Store Manager Rich Reitnauer (775) 687-8292.

With annual summer purchasing now underway, watch for many new or returning items at the Museum Store during your next visit to the museum. And as a reminder, all store purchases made by members and volunteers of **Friends of Nevada State Railroad Museum** are entitled to a 15% discount off all store merchandise. Membership benefits also entitle you to a 50% discount off train and motorcar rides during our regular operating season, as well as free admissions and store discounts at the Nevada Division of Museums and History's six other institutions statewide (Nevada State Museum/Carson City, Nevada Historical Society/Reno, Lost City Museum/Overton, Nevada State Railroad Museum-Ely, Nevada State Railroad Museum-Boulder City, and Nevada State Museum & Historical Society/Las Vegas).

**G-SCALE V&T INYO LOCOMOTIVE:** A Hollywood Star and NSRM's pride and joy, the Virginia & Truckee 4-4-0 locomotive INYO can now be yours, for your G-scale garden or indoor model railroad. Hartland Locomotive Works, of La Porte, Indiana, has added the INYO to their fine line of American-built large scale products. This smooth running, affordable engine features an industrial grade motor, highly wear resistant materials, brass hardware, working lights, and is suitable for indoor or outdoor use. Price: \$399.00.

Hartland also produces a quick and easy **CLICK & GO G-SCALE TRACK SET**, with **DELUXE POWER PACK**, consisting of 8 curved and 4 straight pieces of brass track, which forms a basic small oval layout. Price: \$99.95.

Additionally, compatible Virginia & Truckee cars are now available for a limited time. Call for availability of cars currently in stock

To help celebrate our museum's Silver Anniversary, a special commemorative logo has been developed, pictured below.



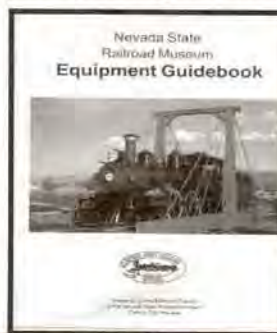
**CLOISSONÉ COLLECTOR PINS** with this design are now available for \$5.00 each.

**BALL CAPS** sporting this logo are available for \$10.95 each, and are available in assorted colors.

One item only available in the store, as we cannot ship them, are our special **SILVER-FOILED MILK CHOCOLATE COMMEMORATIVE COINS**, actually minted here at Nevada State Railroad Museum, on a coin press built by our own Restoration Shop crew. Coins are sold individually for 25¢ each, in six-packs for \$1.50 and 12-packs for \$2.95. Indulge yourself next time you visit the Store.

### *NSRM EQUIPMENT GUIDEBOOK*

Planning an upcoming visit to Carson City and the Railroad Museum? Before you come, have us mail you a copy of the **NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM EQUIPMENT GUIDEBOOK**, for only \$4.95. That way, you'll be able to study up on the history of all the pieces in our renowned rolling stock collection. An accurate, informative history of each of our locomotives and freight and passenger cars is presented, along with numerous historic and contemporary photographs. Written by the staff of NSRM, 54 pages.



TO ORDER BY TELEPHONE

Phone orders to: 775-687-6953 (9:00am-4:00pm daily)

We will need your name, FedEx shipping address and telephone number. Please indicate if you are a member of the *FRIENDS*.

Please add \$3.50 to your order to cover shipping costs.

If paying by Visa or Master Card, we will need your credit card number and expiration date.



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## Short Lines

### The Museum's Silver Anniversary Celebration Continues with Many Special Events

The museum's special Silver Anniversary events debuted with a Family Fun Day on Smithsonian Museum Day, April 30th. Children and adults alike enjoyed the educational program *Railroading and Mining on the Comstock*. Memorial Day weekend featured the reading of the 25th Anniversary proclamation by Interim Departmental Director Scott Sisco and a lecture by Fred Horlacher on the history of Nevada's settlement. In addition, James Saylor portrayed the V&TRR's Superintendent Henry Yerington.



The summer season is filled with fun and educational activities beginning with the events planned for the July 4th weekend. In addition to the traditional locomotive steam up of NSRM No. 8, V&TRR's 25 and the *Inyo* on July 2-4, the museum will exhibit toy and model train displays, live steam models, and ironwork demonstrations. And the entire collections storage area will be open for public viewing.

Kid's Days on July 9th includes storytime, a scavenger hunt, and then making a *R Is for the Railroad Museum* booklet. The August 6th Kid's Day focuses on the first ever *Whistlin' Billy* adventure.

On July 13th the movie *The Wild, Wild West* will be shown under the stars. It will be introduced by Bob Kredal, the train technical advisor for the film.

NSRM and the Disney Corporation celebrate silver and gold anniversaries, respectively, in 2005. To commemorate these events a week-end of activities is planned for August 12 and 13. August 12th kicks off with a lecture by Disney historian Michael Broggie. Activities on August 13 include live steam demonstrations, 4-H guide dog training, g-scale and live steam model demonstrations, a lecture by original Disneyland publicist Janice Ayers, and a Disney cartoon and movie under the stars. Steam train operations will extend into the evening hours. Visitors are encouraged to bring a picnic and spend the day at the museum's beautiful Gibson Park.

The museum's first ever melodrama will be held on September 24th. *A Virginia and Truckee Melodrama* will be staged on a flat-car at Gibson Park. This family-fun melodrama and BBQ dinner are being held as the museum's major fundraiser for the season.

### Education Curator Dan Thielen Resigns

Museum staff and volunteers held a "Good Luck" party for Dan Thielen on May 4, 2005. Dan accepted a full-time position with the General Services Administration in Carson City.

Dan joined the staff at the Nevada State Railroad Museum in January 1998, as the museum's first educator. During his tenure with the museum he also served as History Curator from 2000-2002.

We all wish Dan the best of luck in his new job and hope we see him around the museum often!

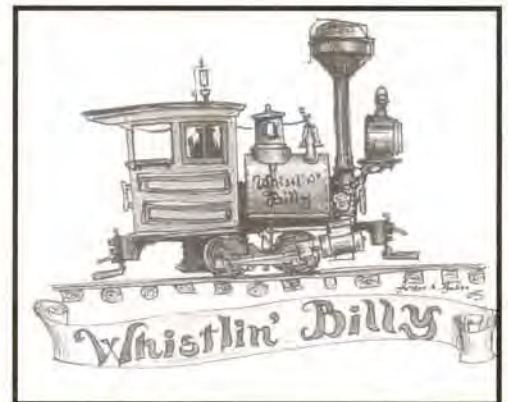


### NSRM Welcomes the One, the Only: Whistlin' Billy

The animated locomotive *Whistlin' Billy* is a delight! The little locomotive was designed and built especially for children to play in and around. It has most of the "gadgets" found in a real locomotive: valves whose handles turn, a firebox door that opens, a Johnson bar, a bell, knobs, and handles.

The *Whistlin' Billy* character will also be at the center of several original storytime adventures for children. Stories include *The Legend of Whistlin' Billy*, *Ghost Lights*, *The Big Snow*, *Fish Tale*, and *Dog Days of Summer*. The stories are an excellent source for children to learn more about Nevada history, culture, and geography.

*Whistlin' Billy* was designed by Reno artist Loren Jahn and was built and generously donated to the museum by Custom Millwork of Mound House, Nevada.



### 2nd Annual Become a Motorman Class

On the weekend of April 29 through May 1, eight students and three instructors met at NSRM for the second annual *Become a Motorman* training program. By Sunday the class offered rides to all comers, several people came by to experience a ride with their own family member at the controls. What fun! The consensus was that the Friends will have to offer the class again next year and so they will.

# NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

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Sagebrush HEADLIGHT

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Please select desired membership category (membership is renewable annually)

Certificate, membership card, voting privileges, SAGEBRUSH HEADLIGHT newsletter, *Railroad History* (for all memberships over \$35), free Museum admission, 15% discount in Museum Store.

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 Contributing.....\$250

### CORPORATE

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