

Southern Oregon chapter National Railway Historical Society
P.O. Box 622 Medford, Oregon 97501
Newsletter for Aug 2011

Remember to Thank our Veterans



Eisenhower with U.S. paratroopers of the 502d Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division on June 5, 1944

“The problem in defense is how far you can go without destroying from within what you are trying to defend from without.”

“Politics ought to be the part-time profession of every citizen who would protect the rights and privileges of free people and who would preserve what is good and fruitful in our national heritage.”

Dwight D. Eisenhower

Greetings from the Plush NRHS Editorial Offices- Bringing the chapter news to the railroading faithful Ric Walch Editor, Home 772-6255 or cell 840-4380 engmgr@medfab.com.

Contributing This Issue Victor Seeberger
..... John Powell

Flash news.....Medco #4

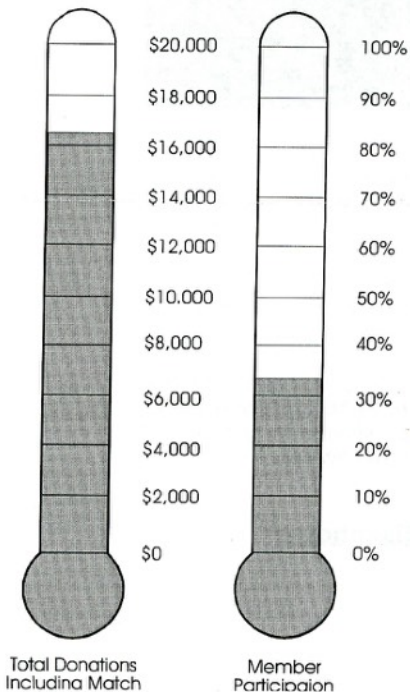


We 'have made great progress in our #4 fund' drive and we are approaching our goal. We have had good response from our membership, donors and some very favorable response from some of our outstanding grant requests. It is not too late to donate if you have not already; large or small we need them all.

We also have another challenge from one of our chapter members; If 25 members that have not yet participated this year send in \$20.00 this member will donate \$5,000 to the Medco #4 project. We would like to have 100% member participation. This offer expires 1 October 2011.

Medco No. 4 Fund Drive Update

It has been four months since our fund drive was initiated. We are now at about 82% of our goal with about 33% of our members responding. Donations to-date, not including matching funds, total \$8,410. Chapter member donations total \$5,233 and varied from \$10 to \$1,000. Donations from non-members totaled \$3,025 and varied from \$25 to \$1,500. An additional \$152 was collected in donation jars at events like the National Train Day in Ashland and the Railroad Park run days.



We have made impressive progress, raising almost \$17,000 in four months. The matching funds offer has expired but the fund drive is not over and there is still a ways to go. Member participation is still lagging. Thank you if you have already donated. If you have not donated yet, please help. We need everyone to support the Medco No. 4 project. We can meet our goals if every one chips in.

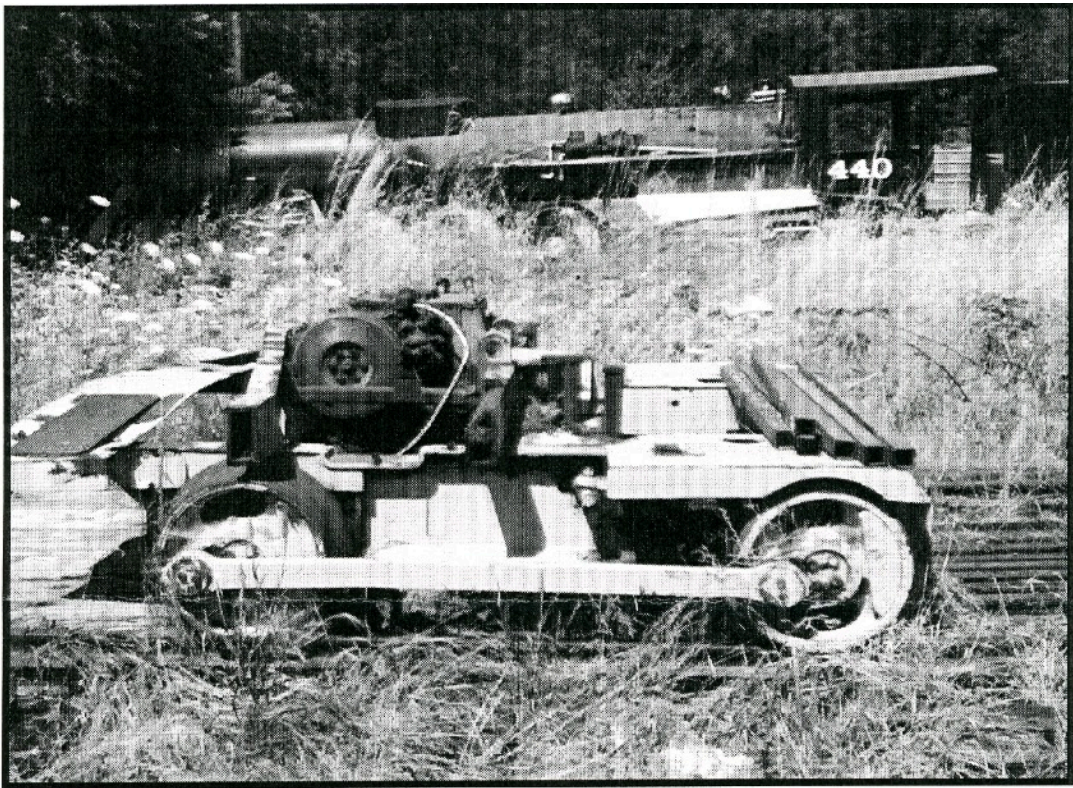
Grant from Oregon Cultural Trust

We are so pleased and honored to announce that Southern Oregon Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society has been awarded a grant of \$18,000 from the Oregon Cultural Trust for Medco No. 4 Boiler Repair! The Oregon Cultural Trust is Oregonians sustaining, developing and participating in our arts, heritage and

The Trust has invested over \$11 million in Oregon's culture since 2003. Projects funded by the Cultural Trust have significant impact in communities across Oregon. We are excited to be among the 60 competitive grant awards given this year. As you experience our programs and hear people talk about the Cultural Trust, we hope you'll take pride in knowing that as a cultural donor who matches your donations with a gift to the Cultural Trust you have a direct hand in making projects like ours possible for thousands of your fellow Oregonians.

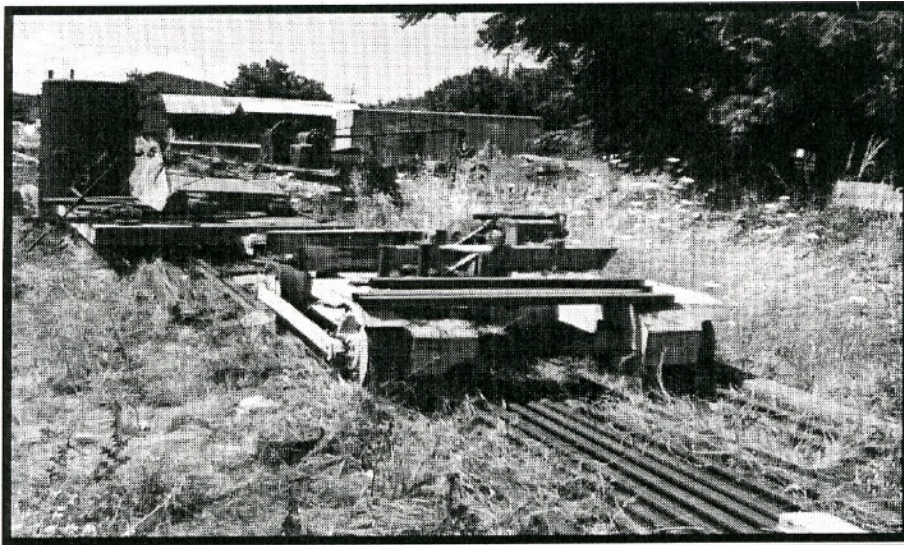
Rotary Presentation

On the 17th of August Tony Johnson and your editor did a presentation and a grant request for Medco #4 at the monthly meeting of the Central Point Rotary. We also did a presentation on behalf of the entire Railroad Park. Everyone at the luncheon was very interested in the #4 project and our collective efforts at the Railroad Park. We ran well past our time and no one complained and I didn't see anyone leave, after the meeting was closed we answered questions for at least an additional 20 minutes, it was obvious that we have gained a new friend and supporting group. This is usually the case when we take the time to bring our cause to the community they respond with overwhelming support. Let's keep this momentum going and move on to bigger and better things.



Can you identify this? By |John Powell

I recently stumbled onto an OLD piece of clapped out m.o.w. equipment. It looks to have been a small crane of some kind. Most everything has been stripped off except the "possible" hydraulic pump and chain, or gear drive in the casement on the side of the machine. In between the front wheels down low there appears to have been an attaching point, and hydraulic pipes for a boom cylinder. It probably at one time had a 4 cyl diesel engine that directly drove the pump, and, or hydro stat transmission. It has a 4 belt heavy duty " looks like fly Wheel / pulley combo" it looks to have about 4 inch axles, and probably weighs about 3,000 lbs any way It is interesting to look at, and sure fires the imagination...



The Day the Train Stopped in Kirven

By Victor Seeberger

The year was 1930, I think, and I was about 8 years old. My maternal Grandmother, Mama Cora Layton, who raised me, decided we should go and see my Uncle Victor Layton in Kirven, Texas, about 200 miles south of us. We had been there before, but we always passed through Kirven and got off in Fairfield, Texas, a few miles from Kirven. Uncle Vick would have to drive over and pick us up at the depot in Fairfield. Kirven was a very small town, population just about a hundred people, or so. It had no depot, just a post office and a service station, with attached grocery store, and a few scattered houses.

This time would be a different story, however. Mama had purchased out train tickets at the Waurika, Oklahoma depot. There must have been a relief agent there at the time she bought the tickets, because she told him to list our destination as "Kirven, Texas", and he did.

We caught the steam-powered passenger train in Waurika and rode to Fort Worth, Texas. We changed trains there and soon, after we pulled out of Fort Worth, the Conductor came by to punch our tickets. This guy was nearly 6 feet tall and must have weighed over 200 pounds. He looked like a giant to me. My Mama was just under five feet tall and weighed about 90 pounds soaking wet. This big guy noticed our destination as Kirven and immediately told us we would have to continue on to Fairfield before getting off the train. Mama heard him out, and then she told him that we would be getting off the train at Kirven. She said that she had two brothers who worked for the railroad, a Conductor and an Engineer, and that she knew a little about railroad law. She said, by railroad law, they had to let you off the train at the destination written on the ticket.

This rotund, gray haired Conductor looked at her and when she finished, he laughed and told her that he had been on this same run for 20-odd years and the train had never stopped in Kirven, Texas and furthermore, it would never stop in Kirven, Texas as long as he was the Conductor. Mama told him we either got off the train in Kirven, or she would see him in court.

I was trying to find a place to hide as an apoplectic Conductor departed down the aisle. He probably went up and talked to the Engineer (2nd in command). Soon he returned and tried his best to convince Mama to get off in Fairfield. But Mama stood her ground.

The train stopped in Kirven that day, briefly, just long enough for a red faced Conductor to place a small step stool on the ground and assist us down out of the train. He waved a hurried signal to the Engineer and the train high-balled it out of town.

I imagine they are still talking about, and I will never forget,

THE DAY THE TRAIN STOPPED IN KIRVEN TEXAS...

Sally Campbell recalls troop trains on the way to Camp White in Medford, Oregon:

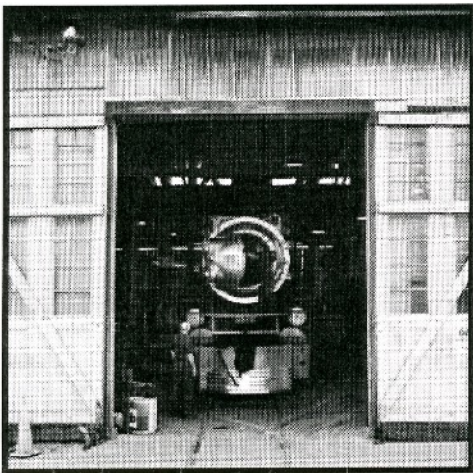
I was maybe 10 yrs old when the troop trains went through our very small town of Hornbrook, California at the foot of the Siskiyou Mountains. We kids would stand alongside the tracks and wave to the soldiers as the train passed through town on the way to Camp White in Medford, Oregon. Many of the men would write their names and addresses on paper, roll them tight, kind of like a cigarette, and toss them out to us. No

doubt they were hoping to get some mature young girl who would write to them. Well, we thought we were just that. We would scurry to collect the rolled up papers then meet at home and very meticulously write a grown up letter hoping these guys might think we were older. One of the younger girls by the name of Elva Skimp received a response and as I recall the soldier who wrote had to think he was writing to someone older or he was just leading us along. I doubt that our handwriting resembled anything but that of a 10-year old. He did say he wanted to come visit which frightened Elva to death. Since I was older, I took it upon myself to write back for Elva. For the life of me I can't remember what I said but it was the last time she heard from the guy. We really thought that we were contributing to the war effort and were so excited to be a small part. Wouldn't it be interesting to know if any of these soldiers who are still around remember their train going through this little town with a very small group of children waving them on and them throwing out their names and addresses?

Three Historic Engines Could Get a New Home Next To The OMSI site

By Jim Redden

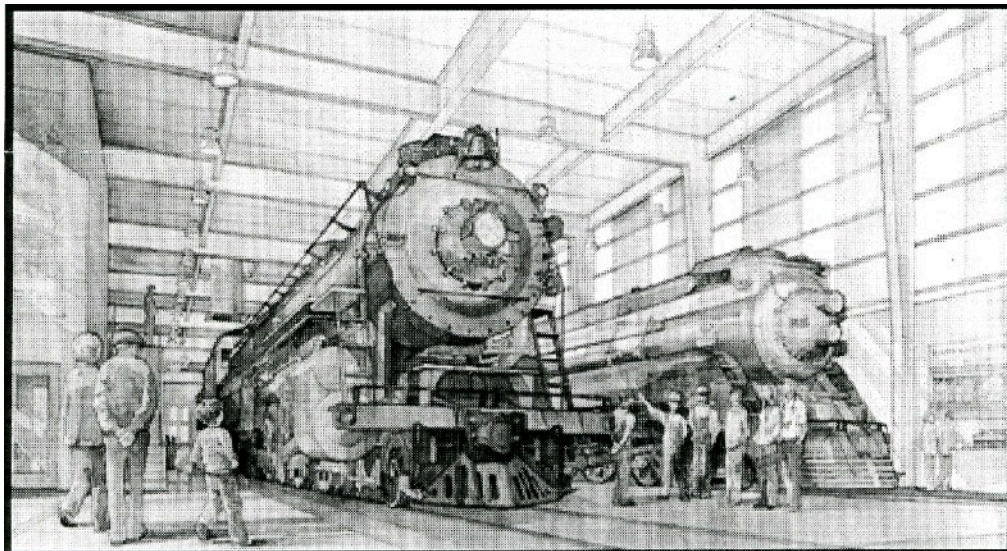
Courtesy Portland Tribune, Jul 28, 2011, Updated Jul 28, 2011



CHRISTOPHER ONSTOTT / TRIBUNE PHOTO

Portland's three historic steam locomotives are currently hidden away from the public in a Southeast Portland rail yard — but not for long. They will be on display in the museum being planned near OMSI. For many years, the city has treated its three historic steam locomotives with benign neglect. All that is about to change, however, finally giving the public a chance to fully experience some of Portland's best-kept secrets. The city obtained the locomotives in 1958 through a series of gifts. Built in 1905, 1938 and 1941, they are living reminders of the Golden Age of the nation's railroads, when massive steam-powered engines hauled passengers and freight across country. Although the locomotives are owned by Portland Parks & Recreation, the city has hardly put any money into them during the past 35 years. Instead, they have been stored in a large sheet metal-clad building in Union Pacific's southeast Portland rail yard known as the Brooklyn Roundhouse. There, dedicated volunteers have restored two of the locomotives, which are occasionally brought out for holiday excursions and special events. The 1905 locomotive is being restored. The arrangement has allowed two locomotives to remain in

operation, but has given Portlanders only limited opportunities to see and enjoy them. On Wednesday, the City Council unanimously adopted a plan to build a new, permanent maintenance and display facility just east of the Oregon Museum of Science & Industry. The first phase of the Enginehouse & Rail Heritage Center could be completed within a year. "We're very excited to be moving into our new home where Portlanders can see the locomotives that have been hidden away for all these years," says Doyle McCormick, who has worked on them for more than 30 years. Remarkably, the city is still not being required to invest much money in the operation. The council merely needs to extend the terms of an existing \$978,598 loan to the Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation, a nonprofit organization that raises funds to help maintain the locomotives. The loan allows the foundation to buy the site adjacent to OMSI for the new facilities between Southwest Water Avenue and the newly rebuilt Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard Viaduct.



Courtesy of City of Portland - The city's three historic steam locomotives will be on full display in a museum being planned near OMSI, shown in this rendering.

The museum will be between the Portland-to-Milwaukie light-rail line and the eastside Portland Streetcar extension, offering visitors a chance to contrast the past, present and future of popular rail travel in this country. The foundation is also raising funds for the construction of the facilities. It has already collected more than \$2.8 million in pledges and payments. Ground is scheduled to be broken on the project this fall, with the opening set for next May. The total cost is estimated to be more than \$5 million. "The support has been tremendous, both on the City Council and in the community. The romance of rail is still alive in Portland," says Bill Failing, former owner of the KISN radio station, who serves on the fundraising committee. The relocation is necessary because Union Pacific is planning to renovate its rail yards and needs the current storage building. But getting to this point has not been easy. Much of the land behind OMSI is owned by the city, TriMet and the state. The foundation had originally purchased a different site nearby. TriMet needed it for the Milwaukie MAX line, however. The new site was assembled from city and state transportation rights of way. "These historic locomotives were almost ready for the scrap yard when the city took ownership of them back in 1958. Thanks to the dedication of volunteers they will soon be showcased in a new rail museum," says Parks Commissioner Nick Fish, who sponsored one of the measures related to the project considered by the council. Mayor Sam Adams sponsored the other two.

Auction of rail cars draws few bidders



By STEVE HART
THE PRESS DEMOCRAT

Historic rail cars on the Northwestern Pacific Railroad are still looking for a home, after an auction last month drew only one bid. The sole bidder wanted the railroad to pay him \$7,500 to take the eight cars away, saying they'll cost more to remove than they're worth. The cars' owner, North Coast Railroad Authority, rejected the bid last week. But authority directors said they still want to talk with interested parties. "We've got to get rid of this stuff," said director Allan Hemphill. The abandoned cars are stranded on the railroad between Healdsburg and Eureka. That part of the line was shut down by federal transportation regulators in the late 1990s because of heavy storm damage. Most of the cars are vintage passenger coaches used for tourist excursions between Healdsburg and Mendocino County. Several were veterans of Southern Pacific's Coast Daylight, which ran between San Francisco and Los Angeles, and Shasta Daylight, which traveled from Oakland to Portland. The 60-year-old coaches carry California place names, including "Sonoma," "Mendocino," "Tuolumne" and "Humboldt." Most of them have suffered vandalism and neglect, and they'd be costly to restore, Hemphill said. The authority has no plans to resume passenger service, so the rolling stock has become a liability. They can't be moved by rail, and the new owner would be responsible for toxic issues including fuel and asbestos. That's why they'd cost more to remove than they're worth, said Les Giacomini of Ukiah, the lone bidder. "You've got too much hazardous material there," he told the authority last week. The cars could have value for restoration, parts or scrap metal, said Giacomini, president of L.D. Giacomini Enterprises, a Ukiah company that does heavy construction and hazardous waste removal. One of the orphan coaches sits on a sidetrack at Asti, just north of historic Italian Swiss Colony winery. A second rail car at Asti isn't for sale, because it doesn't belong to the authority. Other cars are in Willits and Scotia, a lumber town south of Eureka. Hemphill said he expected more bidders at the auction. They may have been scared off by a requirement that the successful bidder take the entire group, regardless of condition. "We didn't want to be cherry-picked," he said. "We didn't package it the right way." The authority will continue discussions with Giacomini and other interested groups.