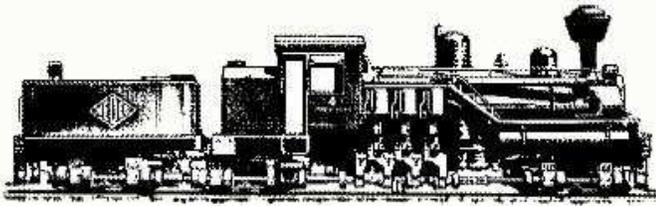


The Manifest



August, 2013

Official Publication of the Southern Oregon
Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society

P.O. Box 622
Medford, Oregon 97501
soc-nrhs.org

The Giant Swing By: Vic Seeberger

I often wonder if anyone remembers the remarkable swing down by the Rock Island (RI) Railroad pump station. It was built by Deward Brown and Quentin Hurt in the 1930s. Deward was an employee of the RI Railroad and manager of the pumping station about a mile south of Waurika. He supervised the pumping of Beaver Creek water into a huge metal tank and added chemicals to it to purify it enough for use in the Rock Island steam engines of that era.

It was great fun to visit the pump station. There was a one-cylinder diesel engine that pumped the creek water into the huge tank, and, after treating it, pumped it through a pipe-line to another huge storage tank about a mile north. There was a filling station nearby, beside the railroad, where the steam engines could stop by and fill their tanks with water for making steam.

That one cylinder diesel did not need a spark plug, and getting it started was a wonder to behold. It would really be "show time!" Deward would place the flame of a blow torch on the head of that engine and heat it for 15 minutes or so, until the iron glowed with a dull red color. Then he would climb up on the spokes of the eight-foot metal flywheel of that engine and jump up and down with his entire body weight on one of the metal spokes of that wheel, until it started to go around. Then he would step off onto the floor. The moving flywheel would move the piston up in the chamber and the high compression and the red-hot metal would cause it to fire. The exhaust pipe was about a foot in diameter, and when the engine fired, it made a loud, explosive noise that could be heard from quite a distance away, CHUNG! and a big smoke ring was blown straight up about 50 feet into the air above, to drift off in the wind. Meanwhile, the engine would be making noises like a bunch of horses hooves walking on cement, chuck-alucka,-chuck-alucka, chukka-lucka until it went through its entire firing sequence, then CHUNG. It would fire again and repeat the whole process until it got to running smoothly. It was really a treat to watch and listen when Deward fired up that "one-lunger" diesel! There were two of the engines, a regular and a back up. I never got tired of watching the show when he started an engine. That show made the 2 mile walk worth the effort.

Also fascinating was the methods Deward used to test the water. He would take samples of the water from the tank every so often and add a few drops of some chemical to it. When one of the tests showed a certain color, it was ready to be pumped to the other storage tank a mile away, and was safe to put into the steam engines.

There were no bridges across Beaver Creek down there, but there were a couple of short swings hanging from tree branches over the creek. If you wanted to cross the creek, you could find a dead tree limb and reach out and pull in the swing. Then you could hold on to the rope, back off a few feet, and run towards the creek and swing to the other side.

Beaver Creek made a sweeping left turn and ran from West to East for a short distance just a few thousand feet west of the pump station. Where the creek made that left turn, during the high water seasons, it had washed out a lot of soil and practically all of the vegetation in a clearing on the south side of the creek that was quite expansive.

Deward Brown apparently wanted to build a larger swing in that area, and he chose a huge cottonwood tree on the south side of the creek, near that clearing, and decided to build a swing there. That tree grew very tall, probably because its roots were near the water. The tree was bare of limbs for a long way up, and there was one large limb that extended out over the creek. That tree was probably a hundred feet tall, or more, and that limb looked like it was about a foot in diameter. I don't know the exact height of the limb, but probably 75 feet or so.

On day I tagged along with Quentin Hurt down to the Pump station. Deward Brown and Quentin Hurt were related to each other, by marriage, I think. Anyhow, Deward had been busy bringing the tools and necessary equipment and materials to build that swing. He had a pile of about 40 "one-by-fours", three feet, or more, long. They were to become a ladder up that tree. We spent a couple of days there. Quentin and Deward started nailing those boards up the side of that tree and it was a dangerous and difficult job. Both of them were very busy, carrying and nailing one board at a time. I got to help, and carried a few of the boards, one at a time, up to Quentin, and he passed them on up to Deward. The two of them got that ladder built all the way up to that limb in a couple of days. I didn't go back for a few days, and when I did show up, they were installing the cable. I didn't participate in that. I just watched, in awe. Deward had found a three-foot piece of a huge square link chain from somewhere. They hauled that up and put it around the limb. Then they lifted the end of a steel cable up there and somehow looped it through that chain. The cable then hung down to within about 10 feet of the water, almost exactly in the center of the creek. They fastened a six-foot piece of rope, about one inch in diameter, on the bottom of that cable. Then they tied it around a wooden stick about three feet long, horizontally, on the bottom of the rope. The stick was just a few feet off the water. I have never seen a swing of this size, before, or since. We all tried it out, and it worked beautifully.

Later on, they found an Elm (I think) tree a short distance up the north bank. They built a platform in the tree, about 20 feet in the air, at the exact spot they needed. Then they fashioned a pole, with a wire hook on the end of it. You could hook that swing from the bank and climb and pull the swing up the bank to a spot underneath that platform and someone on the platform could grab the rope of the swing. He would carefully put his legs over the stick and then shove himself off the platform, and get the ride of his life! What a thrill! Down to and over the creek and then sail a long, long way up into that clearing before stopping in midair and returning back across the creek. The exhilaration you felt is impossible to describe.

I, and others, went down to ride on that swing as often as we could. The swing was there for years, and a lot of people enjoyed it. I only remember hearing of one person that ever got injured on the swing. I think alcohol was involved.

Quentin Hurt was a starting center for the WHS football team for a few years. He joined the U.S. Navy during WW2 and became a deep-sea diver. I'm sure he helped us win the war. After the war, he did carpentry work and finally started building homes.

I left Waurika in 1940, and went back for visits after WW2 many times. But I don't remember when the swing ceased to be. But one year, when I was there, I went down to see the swing and it was sad sight. Even that giant cottonwood was gone. Probably washed away in one of the spring floods.

But those great memories of the thrills of riding that swing will live with me forever. And, Deward Brown and Quentin Hurt will always be my Heroes.

Medco #4 Donation Campaign Update

\$20,000. – GOALS – 50 Donors
By: November 1, 2013

As of: July 29, 2013

Special Offer

Jerry Hellinga, Project Manager of the Medco No. 4 Restoration Project, is offering special gifts to all donors of \$500 or more. The gifts are blue denim shirts embroidered with the Willamette logo and "Medco No. 4". For donations of \$1000 or more the shirt will be personalized and the Patron label added in gold embroidery.

33 Donors

\$8896.

**EVERY DOLLAR
DONATED WILL
RESULT IN 2
DOLLARS TO THE
PROJECT**



We are almost half way, please keep those donations rolling in!!! Thanks to those who have already donated.

Butte Falls Tourist Railroad Project Update

Ric Walch, Allen Dobney

On the 4th of July John Powell, Don Pettit, Jerry Hellinga, Allen Dobney, Ric Walch & Ken Hill manned a table at the Butte Falls 4th of July festivities. At the table we set up "Name the Railroad Contest" and gathered signatures for the Heritage district ballot measure.



Ric is showing off his strength that will be needed to build a tourist railroad to Ken & Allen.

Butte Falls mayor Fred Phillips dropped by our booth and told us about a recent conference he attended. At the conference Fred signed up for 3 projects with the Army

Corps of Engineers; 1 – Renovate the Butte Falls Town Hall, 2 – Renovate the Butte Falls Fire Station and 3 – Build a tourist railroad. The Army Corps of Engineers were very excited to have the opportunity to build a tourist railroad.

Motorcar Track Extension Project Update

Ken Hill, Richard Houston, Allen Dobney

In late June Ken & Richard organized a 2 day clean up of the area behind the engine house where the motorcar track extension will go. Helping Ken & Richard were: Jerry Hellinga, Rick Aubin Landon Humphery, & Syd Stoner. The clearing allowed for the surveying of the extension. Below are several pictures of the cleanup activities.



Heritage District Ballot Measure Update

Allen Dobney

We are making slow progress on collecting signatures to get the Heritage District Ballot measure on the May, 2014 ballot. Time is running out. If you received a package for collecting signatures and have not collected any yet, please do so. We need a total of about 22,000 signatures of registered voters in Jackson County to be successful. We are currently a little less than 2,000 collected. So **PLEASE HELP**. If you have any questions or need extra petition forms please contact me, (Allen Dobney). And a **BIG THANKS** to those members that have been out collecting signatures.

**Southern Oregon Chapter – National Railway Historical Society
Board of Directors
Regular Meeting**

Minutes of July 10, 2013

1. Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 7:32 PM by President Allen Dobney
2. Roll Call: Allen Dobney, John Powell, Jerry Hellinga, & Ric Walch were present. Larry Tuttle was absent. 6 other members were present.
3. Consent of Agenda: The Agenda was accepted by consensus.
4. Approval of the June 11, 2013 Board minutes: Jerry Hellinga moved to accept the minutes of the June 11, 2013 meeting of the Board of Directors as amended. John Powell seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
5. Treasurer's Report – Jerry Hellinga: Jerry presented the end of the fiscal year report. John Powell moved to accept the Treasurer's report as presented. Ric Walch seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
6. Standing Committees & Projects:
 - a. Medco 4 Restoration – Jerry Hellinga
 - Received a grant from National for \$2,500.
 - Also received a donation of \$1,000. from the Mary Louise Charitable Trust.
 - b. Concession Stand – Ric Walch / Allen Dobney
 - Rick & Nancy have done a great job cleaning up and fixing up the concession stand including; extending the deck area, planting flowers, installing drip irrigation, & cleaning and organizing the stand area and the storage area.
 - c. Newsletter – Allen Dobney
 - Need articles for the October issue and beyond.
 - d. Web Site Updates – Larry Tuttle
 -
 - e. Butte Falls Tourist RR Opportunity – Ric Walch / Allen Dobney
 - Attended the July 4th festivities in Butte Falls to keep awareness up on the project.
 - Easement request letters to the 3 forest landowners were sent.
 - f. Fence move & Track extension Project – Ken Hill / Richard Houston
 - Project plan was approved.

- 2 day cleanup project was a success.
- g. Sale of surplus / Duplicate Material – Allen Dobney
 - More magazines are now up for auction on Ebay, 6 sold.
- 6. Old Business:
 - Taking credit cards at the concession stand – Larry Tuttle / Allen Dobney – No update.
 - Emergency protocol – Dan Wilkinson, Larry Tuttle – No update.
- 7. New Business:
 - a. FY2013/2014 Budget – Jerry Hellinga presented the proposed budget for the 2013/2014 year. John Powell made a motion to approve the budget as presented, Ric Walch seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
- 9. Good of the Order
 - The Parking for next run day – Dan Wilkinson. Dan covered that our chapter is in charge of leading the coordination of the parking lot activities for this coming Sunday. Dan and E. Don will coordinate.
 - Coverage for the next run day – Dan Wilkinson. Dan reported that we will be short handed this coming run day. Allen offered to send out an email this week to all of the local members to encourage more members to help out.
 - The Yreka Western – Dan Wilkinson. Dan reported that the Yreka Western may be considered an abandoned railroad. Jerry also reported that there is a move afoot to have a police sale of steam engine #19.
 - Jerry Hellinga reported that he was contacted about a fundraising program involving selling food. It was decided not to pursue this program.
 - Ric Walch reported that the road crossing on the speeder track was damaged by the large equipment from the cell tower owners crossing the tracks. Ric will contact the owners to obtain financial restitution.
 - Ric Walch brought up a discussion of the roof trusses stored near the cell tower. It was agreed that we no longer needed them for the park. Ric will remove and use them.
- 10. Adjournment: John Powell moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:14PM. Ric Walch seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Dan Wilkinson, Acting Secretary

Next Membership / Board meeting: August 13, 2013, 7:00PM

MEMBERSHIP MEETING ENTERTAINMENT

If you have railroad slides or videos that you would like to present, please email me at (adobney@gmail.com) or call me at 541-582-0605 with the details and I will put you on the schedule.

ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

As always we need articles for the newsletter. If you have something you would like to see included in an upcoming newsletter, please send your submission to; adobney@gmail.com or call 541-582-0605. Thanks.....Allen

CHAPTER OFFICERS

President	Allen Dobney	adobney@gmail.com	541-582-0605
Vice President	Ric Walch	engmgr@medfab.com	541-772-6255
Treasurer	Jerry Hellinga	ghelling@jeffnet.org	541-944-2230
Secretary	Larry Tuttle	larry@alpharail.net	541-660-0989
National Advisor	John Powell	rebel_780@hotmail.com	541-601-9256

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Chief Mechanical Officer	Jerry Hellinga	ghelling@jeffnet.org	541-944-2230
Concession Stand	Ric Walch	ric.walch@medfab.com	541-770-1154
Newsletter & Entertainment	Allen Dobney	adobney@gmail.com	541-582-0605
Webmaster	Larry Tuttle	larry@alpharail.net	541-660-0989

UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

August 11, 2013, 11:00AM to 3:00PM @ Railroad Park: Railroad Park open house / Run Day. Please come over and help support our activities. If you would like more information contact Dan Wilkinson 541-479-1210 or whetstone@budget.net.

August 13, 2013, 7:00PM @ Model Railroad Clubhouse: NRHS membership / board meeting. Jerry Hellinga will be presenting a video titled "High Country Rails" - Emmy Award-winning program from Colorado featuring the Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad roundhouse, Galloping Goose #5 on the Cumbries and Toltec, the 2' gauge Cripple Creek Railroad, the Manitou and Pikes Peak Cog Railway, and others.

August 25, 2013, 11:00AM to 3:00PM @ Railroad Park: Railroad Park open house / Run Day. Please come over and help support our activities. If you would like more information contact Dan Wilkinson 541-479-1210 or whetstone@budget.net.

September 8, 2013, 11:00AM to 3:00PM @ Railroad Park: Railroad Park open house / Run Day. Please come over and help support our activities. If you would like more information contact Dan Wilkinson 541-479-1210 or whetstone@budget.net.

September 10, 2013, 7:00PM @ Model Railroad Clubhouse: NRHS membership / board meeting. Allen Dobney will be presenting "The Magic Spark", The story of the relationship between the telegraph, railroads and colorful glass insulators.

September 22, 2013, 11:00AM to 3:00PM @ Railroad Park: Railroad Park open house / Run Day. Please come over and help support our activities. If you would like more information contact Dan Wilkinson 541-479-1210 or whetstone@budget.net.

If you know of any other events that should be added to our newsletter, please email, adobney@gmail.com, or call, (541-582-0605), with the details.
