

SAGEBRUSH

HEADLIGHT

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

2015 TIMETABLE RELEASED

COMMENCING ON MAY 1, 2015



The 2015 operations Timetable for the Nevada State Railroad Museum in Carson City has been approved and released.

The new Timetable reflects an expanded Steam and Motorcar operations schedule that includes more days when both Steam and McKeen Motorcar will run simultaneously.

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THE SAGEBRUSH HEADLIGHT NEW LOOK • MORE RELEVANT CONTENT

By Adam Michalski

Since taking over as editor of the *Sagebrush Headlight* a year ago, I have heard many of our volunteers asking for some changes to their newsletter.

I have listened to and noted all of your suggestions and have been working with John Hoepfer, a Friends member and volunteer, who has extensive experience as a graphic artist and designer.



Together, John and I have worked diligently to give the *Sagebrush Headlight* a new look and improved content.

What you now hold in your hands is not a final product, but rather a work in progress.

We hope you like what you see, and the progress we have made. We welcome your comments and further suggestions as we continue improving YOUR *Sagebrush Headlight*.

Please continue with your comments and ideas.

NEVADA A WORLD WITHIN.
A STATE APART.

WINTER 2015

124th Edition



**NEVADA STATE
RAILROAD
MUSEUM**

www.FRIENDS-NSRM.org



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Honoring one of our
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Over 3,000 rides with
Santa Claus.

**THE NEVADA STATE
RAILROAD MUSEUM**

An Agency of the Nevada
Department of Tourism and
Cultural Affairs

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**NEVADA STATE
RAILROAD MUSEUM**
2180 South Carson Street
Carson City, Nevada 89701
775.687.6953

VISIT THE MUSEUM

Open 9:00 am to 4:30 pm
Thursday through Monday

Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years Days

Museum members.....	FREE
Children (17 & under).....	FREE
Adults.....	\$6.00

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Brian Sandoval, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Claudia Vecchio, Director

DIVISION OF MUSEUMS AND HISTORY

Peter D. Barton, Administrator

NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM CARSON CITY

Greg Corbin, Director

SAGEBRUSH HEADLIGHT NEWSLETTER

Adam Michalski, Curator of Education, Editor

John D. Hoepfer, Design, Graphic Artist, Volunteer



**Friends of the
Nevada State Railroad
Museum**
P.O. Box 1330
Carson City, Nevada 89702
www.FRIENDS-NSRM.org

The **NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM** publishes the **SAGEBRUSH HEADLIGHT** quarterly as a membership benefit of the Friends of the NSRM.

The **SAGEBRUSH HEADLIGHT** is also available on-line at
www.FRIENDS-NSRM.org

NEW TIMETABLE

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The 2015 Timetable also includes the expansion of our popular *Santa Train* from 4 days to 6 days.

As in previous Timetables, all steam-up, Edwards and McKeen motorcar operations are color coded for easy identification.

The Timetable also includes all admission and ride fare information.

The biggest change to our Timetable is that we will no longer be printing and

folding thousands of brochures.

Our new Timetable is designed to be viewed on-line and if needed, printed by visitors on their personal printers.

This allows the museum to update the operations schedule as needed without any wasted resources.

A pdf version of the Timetable is available at:

www.FRIENDS-NSRM.org

FRIENDS OF THE NSRM

2014 Officer Election Results

President

Barry Simcoe - barrysimcoe@sbcglobal.net

Vice President

Matt DiGangi - trainman0127@yahoo.com

Treasurer

Larry Knack - knackworst@charter.net

Secretary

Bill Kohler - kolrxing@clearwire.net

WANTED

- GIFTS IN KIND -



DIGITAL CAMERA

For use by museum staff
for Facebook & newsletter pics



6 STORAGE BINS

Good quality bins to store
our Christmas decorations

JACK R. GIBSON HONORING ONE OF OUR BEST

By Greg Corbin and John Ballweber

On November 7, 2014, the Nevada State Railroad Museum lost one of its most influential volunteer members with the passing of Jack R. Gibson.

He never grew tired of sharing his knowledge

During the early developmental years at the museum, Jack and his wife Marge had a huge presence at the museum, always eager to help wherever they could.



Jack and Marge Gibson, 4th and 5th from left.

Jack and Marge were also huge contributors to the museum, always reaching deep into their own pock-

ets to help us achieve the highest level of success. One of their most lasting accomplishments was the

funding of the Ted "Slim" Gibson Park, dedicated to Jack's father, Ted Gibson.

Greg Corbin

Jack was one of the first people I met when I came to Nevada, and he was always eager to share his knowledge and passion for railroading.

I remember sitting in the museum office 30 years ago as Jack told story after story of railfan excursions that I had only read about -

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EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY TUNNEL NO. 8

By Christopher M. MacMahon

It is often said that every picture tells a story. In history, an image can bring together various source material and combine it all in one clear image. The photograph for this article is from the Alfred A. Hart stenograph collection revealing a scene from the construction of the Central Pacific Railroad through the Sierra Nevada. The photograph depicts an unknown Chinese worker carrying two barrels suspended from a pole upon the worker's shoulders.



Heading (top cut) of East Portal, Tunnel No. 8

The worker is standing in front of a tunnel portal, which Hart identifies as tunnel number eight, near the railroad's summit at

Donner Lake, California.

This photograph is helpful in answering three questions regarding the

construction of the Central Pacific Railroad: Who were the men who built the road, what tasks were the laborers performing, and what was their lifestyle during construction?

The Chinese population of California in 1865 is estimated at (the U.S. Census did not begin collecting country of origin for Asian immigrants until 1870) close to fifty thousand, of which approximately 90

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RESTORING THE

By Chris DeWitt

GL



THE FIRST FIRE IN 89 YEARS

In our last installment it was September, 2014 and we were anticipating the boiler inspectors advent momentarily.

rectly. He wasn't responsible for the accuracy of the values for material thickness and strengths.

In late October he communicated with this office through the inspector's

ways to look at this calculation. He was adhering to the NBIC calculation, whereas I was using a formula from another source. Although he understood my argument he wasn't going to accept it because he wanted to hold to the NBIC code. The seam was proven amply safe under both calculations. After the engineer looked everything over he returned a verdict of satisfactory to the inspectors.

Wendell, being slight, was able to enter the firebox

We received a call from the inspector from the south end of the state, Steve-Lemme, to set up a date for him and the inspector from the north end of the state, Tom Danielson, to visit the museum to perform an inspection of the *Glenbrook*. We agreed that the inspection would be conducted over three days with one extra day for contingencies.

spectors would witness the testing of gauges, witness the hydro, and test rivets under hydro. We would then drain the boiler, pull the plugs and remove the dome lid. The second day they would inspect the interior visually and with a borescope, test the thickness of critical components with an ultrasonic thickness tester, verify that the measurements collected by the shop staff and submitted to the engineer were accurate. Then, record with photographs, and if needed inspect the integrity of the material with dye penetrant. The shop would then button up the boiler, put up the safety valves, and fill it with water for the steam test on the third day.

The roar of the crowd was deafening

The first two days came off with nary a hitch. It seems that the firebox door is smaller than most other locomotives and none of the shop staff nor either inspector could enter the



During October the professional engineer was reviewing the boiler calculations and description that I had sent to the inspectors. The engineer was charged with validating the chosen formulas and determining if they were applied cor-

office to say that there was a topographical (sic) error in one of the formulas (which he corrected) and to argue about the determination of the strength of the girth seams.

There are several different

Starting Monday, the in-

GLENBROOK.



firebox. We called in Wendell Huffman who graciously came in on his day off. Wendell, being slight, was able to enter the firebox and under direction of the inspectors reported the necessary information to them.



Early Wednesday morning, November 19th, 2014,

Nothing went wrong... nothing broke

the locomotive was drug outside. The tender wasn't included and the whistle wasn't put up.

A truckload of firewood was backed up to the locomotive, the firebox filled, and in the dark of the morning a match was struck that lit off the first fire in the *Glenbrook* in 89

years. Oh, the roar of the crowd was deafening. Actually the only people around were the shop staff.

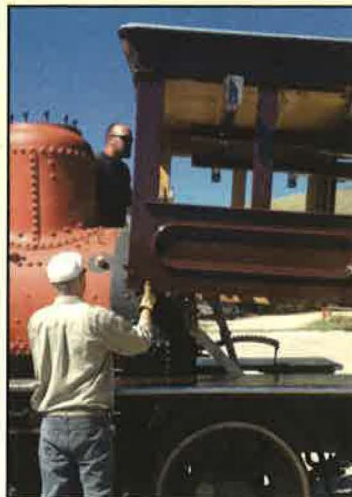
The inspectors showed up at about eight. Others drifted in to watch.

At about 9:00 am the safety's lifted just as they were supposed to. The inspectors hand stamped the official tag, and then left. The shop crew went back to work.

In retrospect it was a little anticlimactic. Noth-

ing went wrong, nothing broke, no discrepancies were discovered, and everything operated as it should. The next thing to do is jacket the boiler and put the machinery back up.

Then we go for a ride.



TUNNEL NO. 8

Continued from Page 3

percent were young men. It was from this source that the Central Pacific drew its labor.

No one would hire an Irishman, German, Englishman, or Italian if he could get a Chinese

J.H. Strobridge, the Central Pacific's chief of construction, remarked that the Chinese were superb laborers, working perfectly in teams while taking few breaks, and were especially proficient at rock work and blasting. A Chinese laborer named Lee Chew later recalled, "No one would hire an Irishman, German, Englishman, or Italian if he could get a Chinese, because our countrymen are so much more honest, industrious, steady, sober and painstaking."

By the end of 1865 the Central Pacific hired approximately 3,000 Chinese, and in April 1867, the *Daily Alta California* informed its readers that, "within the next thirty to forty days, there will be at least 20,000 of these prospective unbleached American citizens scratching gravel on the great national highway." While

the latter figure may be highly exaggerated for public consumption, the photograph clearly depicts a laborer of Asian origins. Furthermore, Strobridge mentioned Chinese proficiency with rock work. Seeing a Chinese laborer, like the individual in the photograph, coming from a tunnel site would be apt.

More than any other task, the challenge that consumed the efforts of the Chinese at the time of the photograph was the boring of tunnels. By the autumn of 1866, John R. Gillis - a civil engineer for the Central Pacific - reported, "the approaches to all the tunnels were covered in men... (who) worked day and night in shifts of eight hours each. The rock was described by tunnel engineer Henry Root as, "so hard it seemed impossible to drill into it to a sufficient depth for blasting purposes." The photograph clearly depicts the solid mass of granite through which the Chinese laborer was required to drill. This rock was so hard that the tunnels progressed an average of just seven inches per day.

Working by candle light, the Chinese chisled away with nothing more than

hand drills. Once a hole was deep enough, black powder was added to blast the facing. When blasting was complete, workers cleared the rock and debris with shovels, and carried out the blasted rock with wheelbarrows or baskets. These tailings can be seen in the photograph leading out from the tunnel entrance and, upon closer examination, a smaller rock pile can be seen just inside the tunnel portal. The photograph also provides evidence of blasting activity as one can see two used black powder kegs suspended from the man's shoulders.

With the black powder kegs, all is not as it appears. The kegs are not carrying powder, but rather liquid for consumption. There is debate over the contents of the kegs, however most historians point to the contents as being hot tea. The Chinese placed tea in used black powder barrels which were suspended from a pole, as evidenced in the photograph, and then brought to the Chinese laborers in the tunnels several times throughout the day. "The Chinese board themselves," wrote the *Daily Alta California*, "One in their number is selected in each gang to

receive all wages and buy all provision." Because the Chinese purchased their own provisions, their menu was much more varied. Shipping receipts included such items as abalone, bamboo sprouts, cuttlefish, dried oysters, dried seaweed, mushrooms, pork, rice, salted cabbage, vegetables, dried fruit, peanut oil, sugar, and, of course tea. In addition to the receipts for food products, there is also evidence that Chinese laborers had opium shipped to their camps at the end of track. The Chinese camped near their work sites, laboring sun up to sun down, and on Sunday, the *Daily Alta California* described the activity of the Chinese as, "washing, mending, gambling, and smoking."

From just one photograph, the story of the Chinese on the Central Pacific Railroad can be brought to life.

Alfred A. Hart's depiction of tunnel No. 8 shows it was indeed the Chinese who were the force behind the road.

Evidence of their lifestyle is offered via the delivery of tea, which was one of the staples of daily life. One simple picture can tell an amazing story.

2014 SANTA TRAIN OVER 3,000 RIDE WITH SANTA

By Adam Michalski

The museum hosted its annual *Santa Train* operations over two weekends: December 13-14, and December 20-21. This year's event was quite successful. Over 3,000 visitors rode the train and met *Santa Claus*.

The museum introduced priority boarding to allow visitors the opportunity to purchase their tickets in advance. This helped cut



2014 Santa Train Crew & Volunteers

down on wait times. Additional activities this year included model railroad exhibits, holiday photos with the *Inyo*, as well as *Warren Engine Company's* famous chili, hot dogs, and hot chocolate. I would like to thank all of the *FNSRM* members who made this year's *Santa Train* so memorable. The event would not have been such a resounding success without your support.

JACK GIBSON

Continued from Page 3

he had actually been there as a participant.

My first experience with the *Inyo* under steam was in 1986. Jack was the hostler for the *Inyo* and would arrive before sunrise to begin the 4-hour process of getting ready for operation. I shadowed Jack on my first steam-up and throughout the morning as he carefully explained what he was doing, and why. As dawn approached, Jack's fussing, tinkering and talking began to take on the sense of a spiritual ritual.

I quickly learned that Jack was that way with everyone who came to the museum. Young or old, train enthusiast or not, Jack

was always there to answer a question, explain how a mechanical bit worked, or put something into historical perspective.

Steadfast support and tireless commitment

He never grew tired of sharing his knowledge with visitors, volunteers and staff.

As the *Nevada State Railroad Museum* property was being developed the master plan included open space north of the *Interpretive Center* for a park. Jack came to my office one day with a proposal: the Gibson Family would donate the funding to construct

the park provided it was named after his father, Ted "Slim" Gibson. What an awesome gift that was.

When the *NSRM* started the *Santa Train* event, Jack was adamant that every child who rode the train receive a free candy cane. So off he went to meet with local grocers to explain what the event was all about and why they should participate. Before long, cases of candy canes were stacking up in the Wabuska depot. For many years, Jack made sure a free candy cane was an integral part of every child's *Santa Train* experience.

These are just a few of the many stories that could

be told. It is impossible to overstate the positive impact Jack and Marge Gibson have had on the state museums. Over the years they have been steadfast in their support, and tireless in their commitment to both the *Nevada State Museum* and the *Nevada State Railroad Museum*.

I am deeply honored to have known and worked with Jack all those years at the *NSRM*.

John Ballweber

John Ballweber began his tenure with the museum in 1986, and served as museum curator/director from 1989 to 2003.

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