



# NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

2180 South Carson St.  
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**NEVADA**  
A WORLD WITHIN.  
A STATE APART.

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**SUMMER 2018**  
136th Edition

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Third Edition of the 6  
Equipment Guidebook  
Available Now

## THE NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

An Agency of the Nevada  
Department of Tourism  
and Cultural Affairs

# SAGEBRUSH HEADLIGHT

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

## Firing No. 25 at the Ironhorse Rail Camp

By Todd Moore

*In August, the Friends of the Nevada State Railroad Museum hosted its first Ironhorse Rail Camp. This four-day camp gave participants a hands-on rail-roading experience using historic Virginia & Truckee Railroad equipment. Friends member and fireman Todd Moore was one of the volunteers who trained the participants during the camp. The following is a recollection of his experiences:*

Actually running a steam locomotive presents many

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Fireman Todd Moore (left) trains Ironhorse Rail Camp participant Eddie Chase in the finer points of firing V&T 4-6-0 No. 25. (photo by C. Digangi)

## Union Pacific Commemorates First Train to Reno

By Adam Michalski

Today, many of us in Nevada take for granted the ease of traveling over the Sierra. One can easily and comfortably travel over Donner Pass to Sacramento by automobile or train within a few hours. Unfortunately, that was not always the case. Until the 1860s the only ways over the Sierra were by foot or by animal power, taking several days under good weather conditions. In 1868, however, workers completed the

(Continued on page 6)



Union Pacific presented the City of Reno with a commemorative Golden Spike on June 19, 1918, at the old Southern Pacific Depot in Reno.

## VISIT THE MUSEUM

**Open 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Thursday through Monday  
(closed Tuesday & Wednesday)**

Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day

### Museum Admission:

Adults 18 & Over - \$6.00  
Children (Under 18) - FREE  
Museum Members - FREE

## STEAM TRAIN & MOTORCAR RIDES

Rides run every weekend May through September with select dates in October, November, and December.

The complete 2018 operating schedule is available at:  
[carsonrailroadmuseum.org](http://carsonrailroadmuseum.org)

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## DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

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**Peter Barton**, Administrator

## NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM, CARSON CITY

**Daniel Thielen**, Director

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**Adam Michalski**, Curator of Education: Editor  
**Lara Brown**, Museum Store Manager: Designer

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Address correspondence for the *Friends* to:  
Friends of NSRM  
PO Box 1330  
Carson City, NV 89702



**NEVADA STATE  
RAILROAD MUSEUM**  
2180 South Carson Street  
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## Message from the President of the Friends of the NSRM, Barry Simcoe

Email: [barrysimcoe@sbcglobal.net](mailto:barrysimcoe@sbcglobal.net)

Phone: (775) 379-1353

We just completed a fantastic summer. Our events were spectacular and were well attended. I thank each and every one of you for your help.

Our fall season got underway with two week-ends of Harvest train in October and will continue with three weekends of Santa Train in December. These are important events for both the Museum and the Friends organization. We will need help both in operations and in many other areas. Please try to attend and help us with these events. I know you will have a great time.

We will resume our events meeting on Fridays to start planning our next season. The time and dates will be included in the *Monday Morning Line*. Please try to participate if you can. We always welcome fresh ideas.

We had five people run for three positions on the Board of Directors this fall. I appreciate the interest and hope members will continue to show interest in the future.

Once again I thank you all for your support of the Friends and the Museum. Please call me if you have any questions or concerns.

Have a Great Fall.

*Thanks,  
Barry*

**Note: Upcoming FNSRM Board Meetings are scheduled for December 3, 2018 & February 4, 2019. All members of the Friends organization are encouraged to attend.**



## In Memory of Howland “Howie” Foster (1941-2018)

*On September 16, museum volunteer Howland “Howie” Foster passed away. Howie was a popular volunteer at NSRM. He was a member of both the motor car and steam crews and helped during many field trips and special events at the museum. In addition, Howie served as Vice President on the board of the Friends of the Nevada State Railroad Museum, played a key role on the Events Committee, and administered the Brick program. Howie’s contributions to the museum will be missed.*

*Recently we asked FNSRM members and volunteers to share their remembrances of Howie. Here are a few of their stories:*

When Howie Foster joined us a few years back he arrived with a huge amount of energy that never stopped. Howie participated in everything. He was on the Steam Crew, the Motor Car crew, the Board of Directors, and was Vice-President of the Friends.

Whatever needed to be done Howie was up for it and would get it done. We were all amazed at how much he was able to do.

Unfortunately, Howie is gone now. The Museum, the Friends, and I personally will miss him. He was a wonderful volunteer and a fine human being.

Thank you,  
Barry Simcoe  
FNSRM President

The period from Howie’s first day at the Nevada State Railroad Museum on September 18<sup>th</sup> 2015 until he left us permanently on September 16<sup>th</sup> 2018 was less than three years. During that time he left an outsized legacy. He started as a student in the “Become a Motorman” class on that September day and went on to involve himself in everything he could manage. He made himself available every time I asked, providing he wasn’t previously committed.

Howie was a great joy to be around, as well. He found great joy in interacting with both the crew and the visiting public. I greatly enjoyed his sense of humor and zest for life. I found it especially entertaining when he dubbed me “DD” after I added “Doodlebug Dude” to my email signature. It made me proud when he counted me amongst his circle of friends. He was truly a very special person and I will miss him greatly. He will leave an outsized hole in my life.

With fond remembrances,  
Dave Squire  
NSRM Doodlebug Dude (Motor Car Crew Chief)

In my time at the museum I have met quite a few folks. I don’t remember exactly the first time I met Howie, but he made an impression on me from the start. Here was somebody who never met a stranger and



*Howie Foster in the cab of the 401, the Edwards Car, during the Become a Motorman Class in 2015. After the 2015 Become a Motorman class Howie became an integral part of the motor car operations at the Nevada State Railroad Museum.*

treated everyone as a friend. He knew a lot, shared what he knew, and was a great mentor and teacher. That smile that never seemed to leave his face made anything seem possible. He had wonderful stories and was great to be around.

I looked forward to being on the motorcar crew with him because I knew we were going to have a great day; no matter what happened we would overcome and persevere. With him there was always something new I could learn from him and be encouraged to continue to improve my skill set as a motor car operator. I already miss his infectious good nature. He was a gift and a blessing and I never will forget him as an entertaining and supportive friend.

John Stettler  
NSRM Volunteer and Motor Car Operator 🚂

## Ironhorse Rail Camp *(continued from page 1)*

challenges, especially for the uninitiated. Though it is just a machine, it requires such constant attention and balancing of competing forces that it can seem like a living, breathing thing. For the participants in the Nevada State Railroad Museum's inaugural Ironhorse Rail Camp, taming Virginia & Truckee locomotive No. 25 was the ultimate challenge of their weeklong rail-roading experience. I had the privilege to teach them about the job of a locomotive fireman.

Our challenge began with bringing the locomotive to life by lighting the fire. This seems like a simple enough matter, but No. 25 is an oil burner. Oil firing re-



The train crew backs No. 25 around the train at Hobo Hollow. (photo by Cristol Digangi)



An Ironhorse Rail Camp engineer looks for signals in Hobo Hollow. (photo by Cristol Digangi)

quires a careful coordination and balancing between the oil valve (which controls the amount of oil delivered to the fire), the draft (which provides oxygen to the fire and vents hot exhaust gases) and the atomizer (which turns the oil into a fine mist suitable for a hot fire). Too much or too little of any can spell trouble. The students experimented with the operation of each component until the fire was just right.

Our attention next turned to wiping and oiling the locomotive as the steam pressure slowly built up. This is a very dirty job because steam locomotives operate in a very dusty and

dirty environment. The oil that lubricates them does a fine job of grabbing dirt and holding it exactly where it is least wanted. The students learned that the path to the fireman or engineer's seat begins at the

end of a wiping rag. Steam locomotives have many external moving parts and all of them require cleaning and lubrication to ward off premature wear and ensure smooth operation.

Ironhorse Rail Camp fireman trainee Bryan Averill rings the bell on V&T No. 25. (photo by Cristol Digangi)







Our attention next turned to maintaining the water level in the boiler. This is the fireman's most important job. If the locomotive firebox is not covered in water, the top of the firebox can become weakened by extreme heat and fail. No. 25 retains a safe water level through the operation of an injector. It imparts the steam energy of the boiler to a stream of water that gains enough force to overcome the pressure of the boiler itself, thereby adding water to the system. The fireman's injector on No. 25 is notoriously finicky. Every student struggled with it. So did their instructor!

Next, we proceeded to running the locomotive on the track. The dif-

ference between a steam locomotive standing still and one running is like the difference between a pony ride at a petting zoo and a bucking bronco competition at a rodeo. The students quickly realized that careful attention and quick reflexes make the best fireman. At times, it seems like students were equal parts thrilled and overwhelmed as we tackled the steep grades of the museum railroad and had to adapt to the actions of newbie engineers.

At the end of the day, it was time to sand the boiler flues clean, wipe off the accumulated dirt of the day, extinguish the fire, and head to beans. 🚂

*(above) Fireman Todd Moore keeps a watchful eye on the No. 25's operations during the Ironhorse Rail Camp. (below) Doug (left) and Bryan Averill, father and son participants, enjoyed their experience at the first Ironhorse Rail Camp. (both photos by Cristol Digangi)*



## First Train (continued from Page 1)



(L to R) Nathan Anderson, Senior Director of Public Affairs for the Union Pacific, City of Reno Councilwoman Jenny Brekhus, and NSRM Curator of History Wendell Huffman pose for a photograph with the commemorative Golden Spike UP presented to the City of Reno. The Golden Spike commemorates the 150th anniversary of the first Central Pacific Railroad passenger train to arrive in Reno from Sacramento on June 18, 1868.

Central Pacific Railroad over Donner Pass connecting Reno and Sacramento by rail.

The first passenger train arrived in Reno on June 18, 1868, from Sacramento on the Central Pacific Railroad. The train departed from Sacramento at 6:30am on Thursday, June 18, 1868. The train made its way out of the valley and reached Junction (present day Roseville) where some passengers disembarked for a train to Marysville. By this time passengers comforted themselves by finding seats in the shaded portions of the cars and snacked on various berries and fruits that were sold onboard. From there the train proceeded east arriving at Colfax

at 9:50am. Delayed for a time waiting for the westbound train from Donner Pass, the train finally continued up the Sierra Nevada towards Reno.

Near the summit the train paused as avalanches from the melting snow covered the tracks. Passengers got off the train and walked through one of the tunnels to the other side as workers shoveled the snow and granite. After three hours of delays the steam whistle blew indicating the train was prepared to continue its journey. At 4:00pm the train continued its journey east, stopping occasionally for workers to clear more snowdrifts. The clearances were so tight that the eaves of the cars scraped against the snowbanks. Eventually, the train made its way down the mountain to Coburn's Station (present day Truckee).

Finally, the train reached Reno at the end of a long day. The June 20, 1868, *Daily Alta California* reported:

*Passing through two more tunnels, and crossing and recrossing the "exulting and abounding river," as it leaps full of fierce, fresh mountain life and energy down towards the desert plains, we emerge at last into the open, treeless country of Nevada, with the snow-clad heights of the Washoe Mountains and the wondrous Silver Land before us. Just as the last faint light of day fades from the summit of the Sierra, the long, shrill, joyous shriek of the locomotive announces our arrival at our journey's end, 19 miles from Virginia, and we find our-*

*selves 154 miles from Sacramento, in Reno, a town of stores, hotels, saloons, gambling houses and stables, which has sprung up like magic within a month. The whole population, men, women and children, rush out to meet and welcome us. Thus ends the story of the trip of the first passenger train over the Sierra Nevada.*

On June 19<sup>th</sup>, the Nevada State Railroad Museum participated in an event at the Reno Amtrak Depot (former Southern Pacific Depot) commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first through passenger train to arrive in Reno. Other groups participating in the event included the Union Pacific Railroad and the City of Reno. Museum staff exhibited a display on the four different Central Pacific/Southern Pacific depots constructed in Reno and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century track laying car believed to have been used on the Central Pacific and/or the Virginia & Truckee Railroad.

The ceremony included remarks from Nathan Anderson, Senior Director of Public Affairs for the Union Pacific, NSRM Curator of History Wendell Huffman, and City of Reno Councilwoman Jenny Brekhus. Then, the Union Pacific presented Councilwoman Brekhus with a commemorative Golden Spike representing the railroad's bond to the communities along the Pacific Railroad route. After the ceremony attendees had an opportunity to view the exhibits on display in the historic depot and NSRM's track laying car from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Thank you to the Union Pacific Railroad and the City of Reno for celebrating this watershed moment in Nevada and transportation history. 🚂



## Message From the Director *By Daniel Thielen*

This Autumn has brought the beautiful change of the seasons, the apples have ripened and the leaves changed. The deer that inhabit the museum are big and strong. As we prepare for the final events of the steaming season, we reflect on what a wonderful year it's been.

However, we also note with deep sadness the passing of two of our dear friends. Cal Tinkham passed away in August and left a legacy of service and thoughtfulness to the museum.

In September, we lost Howie Foster. Howie was a key part of the museum who was a founding member of the Ironhorse Railcamp, the motorcar crew and headed up the memorial brick program. To me, he was a valued mentor, optimistic visionary, and just so



Lt. Governor Mark Hutchison (Left) visits with Museum Director Daniel Thielen to film a Discover Your Nevada video featuring the museum.

much fun to be around. He made you feel like the most important person in his life. His infectious good attitude will be dearly missed.

The museum has received a great boost in recognition from Mark Hutchison, the Lt. Governor of the State of Nevada. The Department of Tourism developed a program to promote the

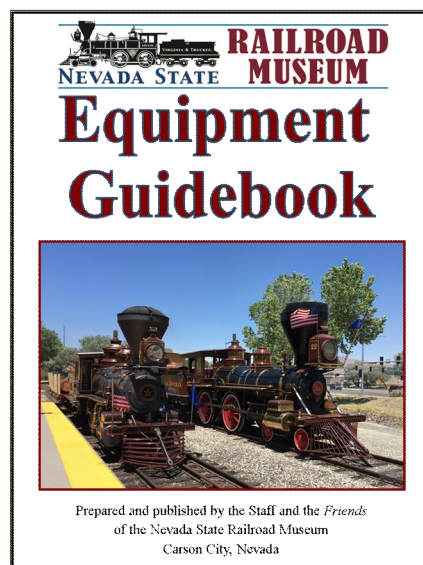
rugged beauty of Nevada to a global audience. As part of the program, Mark spent a day at the museum and created an exceptional video to highlight the museum's exceptional collection. You can find the video on Facebook by searching #discoveryournevadarailroads. 🚂

## Third Edition of the Equipment Guidebook Available Now

The museum recently published the third edition of its popular *Nevada State Railroad Museum Equipment Guidebook*. The latest edition is 53 pages long and includes some new features such as color photographs and a list of abbreviations. The *Equipment Guidebook* features new artifacts, including the Western Pacific caboose No. 657 and the museum's maintenance-of-way equipment. Also, there are updates to the entries concerning the Virginia & Truckee McKeen Motor Car No. 22 and the Carson

& Tahoe Lumber & Fluming Company 2-6-0, the *Glenbrook*, to reflect that these pieces have been restored since the last edition.

The *Equipment Guidebook* is available for purchase in the Museum Store for \$9.95. Friends of the Nevada State Railroad Museum members receive a 15 percent discount on the *Equipment Guidebook*, as well. It's a must have for fans of the Nevada State Railroad Museum and makes a great gift! 🚂



# NEW ITEM IN THE MUSEUM STORE!

## "Victory Train" Limited Edition



Giclee print, Image size 36 x 20 1/2  
Paper size 30 3/4 x 39 3/4  
Limited Edition: 260 signed and numbered.

This commission was originally a fundraiser for the Virginia & Truckee Railroad. V&T rolling stock featured are McKean Motor Car and Locomotive #27.  
The scene in the print depicts the news proclaiming that WWII is over and everyone gathered at the station is caught up in the moment.  
Models include Hal Holbrook, Patricia Hitchcock, Paul Revere, Tony Curtis, Nevada Governor Kenny Quinn, Toni Tenniel and Darrel Dragon, Dean Stockwell, Lacy J. Dalton, Juice Newton, Janie Fricke, and many others.  
The prints include original signatures from many of the people featured.  
Call the Museum Store for more information:  
775/687-6953, ex: 4

***These prints were originally offered from the publisher for \$1,100.00 each. The museum store is selling these for the special price of \$100.00 each!***

Friends of the NSRM Members receive 15% off of every purchase! (Excludes clearance and used items)  
Proceeds from sales at the Museum Store are used to fund museum projects and programs.  
Thank you for supporting the Nevada State Railroad Museum!

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