

Portland's Brooklyn Yard Turntable Nears Completion

By ROGER WOEHL, Oregon Rail Center. Photos by Dale Birkholz.

Located at the Portland crossroads of rail lines old and new, the Oregon Rail Heritage Center is in the process of restoring and reconstructing the best of Oregon's rich, diverse rail history. Visitors from destinations near and far experience the power, magnitude and significance of the world-famous American Freedom Train locomotive SP 4449, the "Lady of the Pacific" SP&S 700 and the 1905 vintage OR&N 197/UP 3203. After decades in an old roundhouse in Southeast Portland's Brooklyn railyard, the City of Portland's three steam locomotives were moved to the Center when it opened in 2012. Along with the locomotives, the organization also rescued the heart of that yard - the historic turntable.

Restoration began in 2019 on the nearly 100-year-old Brooklyn Turntable, led by legendary rail preservationist Doyle McCormack. Built in 1924 by the American Bridge Company, the turntable bridge received new bracing, trucks and motors. It has been sandblasted back to its original luster. The 100-foot-long steel bridge, sunken track and pivot base will span a structurally-reinforced pit in the Center's front yard. The pit has been completed and hundreds of yards of concrete and steel reinforcement has been set in the front yard of ORHC.



FINISHED CONCRETE STRUCTURE – To be used for mounting the turntable bridge.

When complete in spring 2024, the Brooklyn Turntable will be the largest operating turntable available for public viewing and inspection on the West Coast. It will be the focal point of the Center's entrance and the crown jewel of the intersection between the past and the vibrant present at the Center's location—a triangular site bordered by mainline Union Pacific tracks, Portland's MAX light rail and streetcar lines, and a bicycle/pedestrian connection to the city's newest Willamette River bridge, the transit/bike/walking-only Tilikum Crossing. *(Continued on page 5.)*

NRHS NEWS – MARCH 2023

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Upcoming NRHS Conferences, Conventions and RailCamp

May 16 - 21, 2023, NRHS Spring Conference*

Reno (Sparks), Nevada

**Combined Southern Pacific Railroad History Center, Railway and Locomotive Historical Society, National Railway Historical Society Conference*

Register at <https://www.splives.org/sprhc-rlhs-joint-meet-may-2023>

June 18 - 25, 2023, RailCamp Northwest

June 25 - July 1, 2023, RailCamp East

September 1 - 6, 2023, NRHS Annual Convention

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Upcoming Deadlines for Submissions

April 2023

Online issue

March 15, 2023

June 2023

Online issue

May 10, 2023

NRHS 2023 Spring Conference-Reno (Sparks), Nevada

By the SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD HISTORY CENTER.



Joining us in the event is the national membership of both the *Railway and Locomotive Historical Society* and the *National Railway Historical Society*. **This event will serve as the annual meeting of the R&LHS and as a business conference for the NRHS.**

The Southern Pacific Railroad History Center, in partnership with the Pacific Coast Chapter of the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society, is pleased to invite its membership and the public. The conference will be at the Nugget Casino Resort in Sparks, Nevada, May 16 to May 21, 2023.

To access the event schedule and speakers' list, purchase tickets, download paper registration forms, and to review important vendor instructions, click on the following link and then click on the appropriate tabs under the Events tab for each: <https://www.splives.org/sprhc-rlhs-joint-meet-may-2023> *For your convenience, the Registration Form is on the next page.*

The History Center is sponsoring a three day focus of Southern Pacific's last twenty-five years and this overview will be provided by panels and presentations. Confirmed speakers include Rob Krebs, Mike Mohan, Rollin Bredenberg, Mike Ongerth, and Ron Batory. All of the speakers have unique observations that fill in many portions of the story of this era of Southern Pacific that have yet to be told.

In addition, the Pacific Coast Chapter has arranged for an array of outside events and we invite you to purchase your tickets now for the tours to Carson City, Nevada and Portola, Quincy, and Truckee, California as seats are limited. The Southern Pacific Railroad History Center is also hosting two events at the Nugget: the Southern Pacific Employee Reunion and Meet Former Southern Pacific Officers Up Close and Personal, and tickets for the latter event are limited.

On Friday, May 20, 2023 and Saturday, May 21, the History Center will host a vendor room and railroad prototype modeler's meeting.





**Southern Pacific Railroad
History Center
Railway & Locomotive
Historical Society
National Railway Historical Society**

Joint National Conference - Reno/Sparks, Nevada, May 16-21, 2023

Registration Form

(we encourage all to register online at www.splives.org/jointmeetmay2023)

Name: _____ Spouse/Companion First Name (if attending): _____
 Address: _____ Phone: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

Attendee Status (check all that apply):

- SPRHC Member__ R&LHS Member__ NRHS Member__

Attendee Registration Pricing:

- | | <i>Number</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|--|---------------|--------------|
| • Member Registration – mailed on or before March 31, 2023 @ \$99 | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Non-Member or Late Registration – mailed after March 31, 2023 @ \$149 | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Banquet Ticket – Buffet Style (not included in base registration) @ \$75 each | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Sunday, May 21 st NRHS Business Conference Registration @ \$50 each | _____ | \$ _____ |

Special Activities and Tours:

- | | | |
|--|-------|----------|
| • Wednesday, May 17 th Southern Pacific Employee Reunion (extra fare) @ \$15 each | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Thursday, May 18 th Meet Former SP Officials Up Close & Personal @ \$40 each | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Wednesday, May 17 th NSRM Steam & V&T Steam Tour @ \$90 each (limit 55 persons) | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Wednesday, May 17 th CC Mint & NSRM Steam Tour @ \$70 each (limit 55 persons) | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Thursday, May 18 th WPRM Steam & Quincy Lumber Tour @ \$70 each (limit 55 persons) | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Friday, May 19 th National Automobile Museum Tour @ \$15 each (on-your-own) | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Friday, May 19 th Summit Tunnels & Truckee Museum Tour @ \$50 each (limit 55 persons) | _____ | \$ _____ |

Vendor Registration & Pricing: Check if Display Vendor Only (no retail sales)

- | | | |
|--|-------|----------|
| • Commercial vendor registration @ \$50 per table (maximum four 8' x 30" tables) *
(Includes up to two vendor room passes – does not include entry to presentations) | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Commercial vendor registration @ \$75 per 16-foot booth (does not include tables) *
(Includes up to two vendor room passes – does not include entry to presentations) | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Attendee-only half tables @ \$15 per half (maximum eight halves/four tables per registrant) *
(Tables will be assigned by the vendor coordinator based on registration date priority) | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Electricity @ \$50 (flat fee for any number of tables or booths) | _____ | \$ _____ |

* Vendors will be required to submit a copy of a hold harmless agreement upon check-in. Packets will be emailed to registered vendors in April with instructions and a room diagram. For questions, email memberships@splives.org.

Souvenir Items (guaranteed pick-up if ordered by April 3, 2023):

- | | | |
|--|-------|----------|
| • Embroidered Pocket Polo Shirt (stone color w/logo) @ \$40 each | _____ | \$ _____ |
| Quantity of each men's shirt (adult sizes): S ___ M ___ L ___ XL ___ XXL ___ XXXL ___ | | |
| Quantity of each tall men's shirt (adult sizes): L ___ XL ___ XXL ___ XXXL ___ | | |
| Quantity of each women's shirt (adult sizes): S ___ M ___ L ___ XL ___ XXL ___ XXXL ___ | | |
| • Embroidered Event Hat (khaki and forest green w/logo) @ \$20 each | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Embroidered Event Hat MADE IN AMERICA (khaki w/logo) @ \$35 each | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Event mug w/Color Logo @ \$15 each | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • 10.5oz Whiskey Glass w/Color Logo @ \$20 each (total production of 24 pieces) | _____ | \$ _____ |

Non-attendee passes:

- | | | |
|---|-------|----------|
| • Saturday Vendor Room Wrist Band (Friday access for attendees only) @ \$15 each | _____ | \$ _____ |
| • Saturday Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet Wrist Band (Friday access for attendees only) @ \$15 each | _____ | \$ _____ |

(Enclose check payable to SPRHC, or complete credit card information below):

GRAND TOTAL \$ _____

Credit Card:

Visa MC American Express Discover Name on card _____
 Number _____ CVV _____ Exp. Date _____ Signature _____

NO REFUNDS after April 15, 2023. Registration confirmation will be sent by email or phone after receipt of payment. Please make a copy for your records. Please direct any questions to events@splives.org. Mail this form with payment to:

Spirit That Won The West, c/o Registrar Amy Childers, PO Box 103, Rocklin, CA 95677

Staff use only: Registration # _____

Brooklyn Yard Turntable (Continued from page 1.)



FINISHING THE CENTER PIVOT – To be used for the bridge.

Adding to the enjoyment of the turntable, the front yard will have nearly a dozen operable historic railroad crossing signals on display. The turntable and signals will have interpretive panels to help educate visitors about their history, operation, structure and design, and anecdotal information. The restored Brooklyn Turntable will make it easier for volunteer railroaders at ORHC's working museum to move locomotives and rail cars around the property. The bridge and side rails will be a place to exhibit different locomotives and vintage passenger cars. The turntable will also eliminate the need, and considerable cost, of steaming up the engines and running them to North Portland to be turned around.



THE RESTORED BRIDGE – This turns the locomotives.

This vision is near reality. The project is slated for completion in spring 2024. Generous donors have contributed more than \$3.3 million to return the Brooklyn Turntable to its railroading glory days. ORHF is grateful to donors such as the National Railway Historical Society.

NRHS Note: In 2019, the NRHS awarded \$8,000 to the Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation in Portland, Oregon. The project involved the refurbishment and installation at its Rail Heritage Center of a 102' continuous turntable, the last remaining historic element of the former Southern Pacific Brooklyn roundhouse. It will be one of only a handful of powered operating turntables accessible to the public in the West.

Heart of Dixie Railroad Museum – Volunteer Training

By JIMMY SUMMERS, Heart of Dixie Railroad Museum Chapter NRHS. Photos by Alan Dismukes.

The Heart of Dixie Chapter has been busy training for a new operating season at the Heart of Dixie Railroad Museum in Calera, Alabama. Volunteers attended training classes for the roles of Ticket Agent, Car Host, Brakeman, Conductor and Engineer.



THIS YEAR'S VOLUNTEER CLASS – These are the faces of the future Ticket Agents, Car Hosts, Brakemen, Conductors and Engineers.



GETTING A CLOSE LOOK – Checking the road ahead.



A FEW TESTY MOMENTS – Studying the operations manual and rules book are key for volunteer safety.



HANDS-ON LEARNING – Next, the real work starts.

Changes Along the Tracks at New Holland, PA

By MARK HOFFMAN, Harrisburg Chapter NRHS (All article and photo credit.)

The former Pennsylvania/Penn Central Freight Station at 217 South Railroad Avenue in New Holland was located among the disconnected wye, a team track, several industrial sidings and a short-track. These were once clustered in the vicinity of MP 28 along the current NS New Holland Secondary.

Through the mid-1970s, William H. “Bing” Bingaman, a local railroad freight agent, worked in the building and the Railway Express Agency served the station via truck. A concrete roof supported by steel I-beams capped the concrete block, one-story, 1,550 square foot structure, accented with brick quoins.

Built in 1947, the depot replaced a nearby single-story, frame combination freight and passenger station, erected in 1905. When built, the ground-level, right-side portion of the new freight depot was identified by PRR documents as the tool house. This section featured a rear dock door and rails embedded in the concrete floor for housing a track speeder. A vintage, in-floor scale remained in the depot’s freight warehouse. The previous owner enlarged the depot’s loading dock and painted the exterior concrete block walls white. It is sad to see reminders of the small-town railroad landscape disappear.



FORMER PENNSYLVANIA / PENN CENTRAL FREIGHT STATION ON DECEMBER 10, 2022 – For 75 years, the freight station at New Holland Pennsylvania served as a centerpiece among several rail sidings in the vicinity of MP 28 of the current Norfolk Southern New Holland Secondary.

The depot was sold at public auction on October 3, 2022, and the new owner plans to replace the building with a battery warehouse and store on the 0.4-acre site. Norfolk Southern removed the switch for the station track, the west leg of a former wye, on November 2, 2022. On a sunny Sunday, December 10, 2022, the view from along South Railroad Avenue shows the station’s days were numbered. The building’s tenant, a screen printing/embroidery business, completed its move out.



ARRIVING ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 20, THE DEMOLITION CREW WORKED QUICKLY –They rapidly chewed through the building. The end result is shown in this rear view on an appropriately dreary Sunday, January 22, 2023.

By the next weekend, all that remained was a pile of concrete and cinder block chunks from the once sturdy station and loading dock. It is heartbreaking to see this symbol of former small-town railroading activity pass into oblivion. The depot's removal reminds us to get those photos of historic/special structures, facilities and trains before it is too late. Do not take them for granted.

On a positive note, during 2022, work was underway to improve four grade crossings in New Holland Borough. New railroad signage, flashing lights and gates, safety warning devices and supporting relay boxes will soon replace simple crossbucks at South Hoover Ave., South Custer Ave., South Railroad Ave. and Brimmer Ave.

The upgrades are part of a federal million dollar project, overseen by the Penn Department of Transportation. Very poor visibility plagues the crossings, and motorists forget the tracks are active or try beating the train. The Norfolk Southern local freight, usually H28, runs as needed on an irregular schedule at this eastern end of the line to serve Sweetwater Propane and Musselman Lumber in New Holland. Installation work by NS workers has included coordinating with a number of other intersecting public utilities.

Editor's Note: Many thanks to Harrisburg Chapter for sharing this article from the Harrisburg Railroad Review, February 2023 issue.

President's Column – Membership and Dues

By TONY WHITE, President, NRHS

The temperature and weather is taking us to strange experiences so far in 2023. The extremes are affecting every one of us. Chapters are still going to train shows and making good money and contacts. Word of our signature programs are spreading. Without a closer look, it all seems well.

As the largest rail-related organization in the world, we provide the *Bulletin*, a world-renowned publication that has a very strong following due to its uniqueness. We provide the *NRHS News*, the publication that allows any NRHS member or chapter to highlight what they are doing to remember rail history, maintain rail history and promote it. These two publications are the publicity arm of the NRHS. They display our efforts to countless towns, cities and rail enthusiasts everywhere and keeps us prominent.

Each year we struggle to avoid a dues increase. We remember the pain of the membership with the previous dues increases. Everyone reading this knows that prices have gone up across the board. Costs have hit us hard also. Brainstorming ways to maintain the dues, the simplest is for every person who is not a NRHS member who receives copies of our News or receives chapter

and other chapter's newsletters, to become a member. We like that we are able to share, but we are not giving those people who are not dues-paying members a chance to support the NRHS. We are giving them a chance to make ends meet without an increase. In other words, they are cheating all of us members and devaluating our membership benefits. Please consider asking those folks to join the NRHS.

The Membership team thanks all of you who have renewed. We are impressed at the number of people who have trusted our system and set up a recurring renewal. For those who have renewed online, you should be receiving your membership cards in a few weeks if you haven't already. For those of you who renewed via mail or through your chapter, it will take longer to receive your membership card due to all of the manual processing that is involved. Sorry about that.

The Convention Committee has been busy setting up the 2023 Annual Convention with our hotel located in Deerfield Beach, Florida. The hotel and events have been selected. It will be nice to reconnect with and hang out with fellow members whom we only see one week a year.

Editor's Notes – Share Your Photos & Events!!

By VALLI HOSKI, Editor NRHS News and member Harrisburg Chapter NRHS

The NRHS News has new features for 2023!

Members have new space to showcase a favorite photograph. Chapters have a new section to post chapter's events, anniversaries, excursions, train shows and programs.

Want broader coverage and publicity for your chapter events? Reach fellow NRHS Members by sharing your event flyer or information sheet in the 'Events Board' in each News issue.

Enjoy photography and have a favorite image to share? New to the rail enthusiast family?

The new "Back Page" is your space to showcase your best rail photograph that has not been published before.

Have questions or wish to submit? Please send your event information, photograph or questions to News@nrhs.com with your contact information.

Best wishes, Val

About the NRHS News

The *NRHS News* is published nine times a year by the National Railway Historical Society. A full-color issue is published each even-numbered month and is available as a pdf file on the NRHS web site. The three remaining issues are printed black-and-white and mailed to members in March, July and either September or November.

Valli Hoski, Harrisburg Chapter NRHS, Editor. Alex Mayes, Potomac Chapter NRHS, Content Assistant. Elizabeth Guenzler, Central Coast Chapter NRHS, Editorial Assistant. Eileen Weber, St. Louis Chapter NRHS, Editorial Assistant. Email submissions to News@nrhs.com or mail to NRHS News, c/o Valli Hoski, P.O. Box 234, York Springs, PA, 17372.

The address for the Society is: National Railway Historical Society, Inc., 505 South Lenola Road, Suite 226, Moorestown, NJ 08057. Membership information changes should be sent to Patti Webb at Membership@nrhs.com. Membership dues should be mailed to NRHS - Membership, PO Box 31074, St. Louis, MO 63131-0074.