



# **WESTERN RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY**

*Dedicated to preserving the skills and  
artifacts of our western railway heritage*

*E-News Issue - 4 Sept 2010*

## **The Electronic Newsletter of the WRPS**

### **President's Report**

Welcome to the latest E-Newsletter produced by the Western Railway Preservation Society and e-mailed to all our WRPS members in order to keep you up to date on the latest news from the Preservation Society.

Since our last newsletter, it has been a busy summer with the beginning of new projects and great progress made on others. In my last report, I wrote that our efforts to save the South Baker SVRy shops from destruction had hit a road block when we were unsuccessful in our efforts to purchase the shop buildings.

Most of our members will remember that one of the motivating factors in forming the WRPS was to save the old home of the original Sumpter Valley Railway. Well, I'm very pleased to now report that this goal has now been achieved!.....Well; sort of.....

I have learned over the years that sometimes the best way to save a historic building or railcar is to "just get out of the way". The South Baker Shops have become a great example of this theory.

The new owners of the South Baker Shops have completely removed the old, deteriorating roof and replaced it and many of the support

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*President's Report continued from P.1*

beams with new material. They have also done a lot of work to improve the building's foundations and interior structure.

Because of this work, I am happy to report that the old historic Sumpter Valley RR shops are now secure and should stand up to many more eastern Oregon winters thanks to the efforts of the new owners. We at the WRPS are very pleased to see the completion our project of bringing the old SVRy shops back from the brink of destruction. Yes, even if we didn't do it! The building has been saved and that is all that really matters. Check page 13 for more on this story.

In other new, the recently acquired West Side caboose #3 has been successfully moved into the restoration shop at McEwen. WRPS director, Mike Roberts has already started the slow process of dismantling and documenting this unique logging caboose. Look for a report on West Side Caboose #3 on page 11.

The Western Railway Preservation Society will be holding our annual meeting in McEwen, Oregon this year. At this meeting, we will cover Society business and discuss some future ideas while we enjoy a casual picnic lunch. So, we invite everyone to come out to the WRPS Restoration Shop in McEwen and check out some of our recent restoration projects. We will start at 12 Noon on October 9<sup>th</sup>.

Remember that the SVRR's annual meeting will be held that same evening and we would encourage all WRPS

members to attend both meetings if you're able. It should prove to be a great weekend to see what both organization have accomplished this year and have planned for the future.

Also in this newsletter, I would like to welcome back WRPS member and "guest author" Jason Midyette, the president of the Boulder County Railway Historical Society. In our last issue, Jason introduced us to one of their long term projects; the restoration of a Denver & Rio Grande Western caboose #04990 and then how an arsonist set fire to this recently restored caboose. In this issue, Jason has returned to complete this story in part 2 of this article.

I would like to thank Jason for his contribution to this newsletter and encourage everyone to check out the Boulder County Railway Historical Society. They have done some great work in the field of historic rail preservation and are well worth our support. They can be found on line at [www.bcrhs.com](http://www.bcrhs.com)

In closing, I would like to give my personal thanks to the members that have already contributed to the work of the Preservation Society. Without your ongoing support, we could not have completed all the work that we have over the last year.

I hope you will enjoy this current newsletter and we'll talk again soon.



Tim Bain – President  
*Western Railway Preservation Society*

# Along the Right of Way

## Restoration Shop Up-Date

By Jerry Huck

In this issue I'll depart from examining the original structures along the Sumpter Valley Railway's right of way. Instead, I would like to bring everyone up to date with one of our current projects.

Located in the far, south end of the current McEwen rail yard is located a simple structure that was originally built in 1996 to house the newly restored SVRy locomotive #19. However, after the backshop building was erected, the #19 was moved to the new building and the old "19 Shed" became the restoration shop of the SVRR.

Recently, the Western Railway Preservation Society has signed an agreement that would allow us to continue doing restoration work in this building. However, this building was in need of a lot of attention and repair. The wiring was crude, the floor is dirt and the

roll-up door on the front of the shop could not be closed. So we have started the work of up-grading the Restoration Shop.

To Date members Of the Western Railway Preservation Society have completed the following work on the SVRR restoration shop at McEwen Oregon. The shop has had the defective overhead door system removed along with the sheet metal skin covering the front (North) wall of the building. During the disassembly process, several wiring issues were revealed and measures are being taken to correct the deficiencies. The wiring was rerouted into the wall cavity where it is no longer in contact with the building siding.

New framing was erected with provisions for windows allowing natural light into the interior space. Plastic sheeting was

**As of July, we had the old metal sheathing removed and the board & batten was going on. We had also installed the new doors but new framing was still needed in order to make this doors fit into the square opening.**



Along the ROW – continued from p.3

installed over the new framing and blocking, the wall was then resided with salvaged planking in a typical board and batten pattern. Railroad style swinging doors (Supplied by SVRR) were then installed into the former roll up door opening using hardware salvaged from the old Car shop lean-to doors (which had been removed by SVRR some time ago).

The Society plans to insulate and then clad these doors in a period manner. Three windows (donated by the Society) were installed on the front wall and were trimmed appropriately. The society will insulate and install interior sheathing as the project continues in addition to completing the electrical upgrades.

Period appropriate exterior lighting fixtures have now been installed and the exterior will soon be stained and sealed. Windows and trim will then be painted in an historical manner.

While a lot of work has now been completed on the Restoration Shop, a lot more work is yet to come. Over the winter we hope to have the wiring and lighting updates completed and then we can turn our efforts towards installing a floor in this building.

For years, we have worked through out the winter in this drafty, old shed. By undertaking this new project, we hope to make those cold winter days a lot more pleasant for our members and they work on their winter projects.



*As of September, we have completed the board & batten on the front of the shop including the new porch roof. At the time of this photo, the insulation and external paneling has been completed on one of the shop doors. The second door should be finished by this fall.*

# Denver & Rio Grande Western caboose #04990

## *A Story of Restoration and Destruction - Part 2*

By Jason Midyette

After the fire D&RGW 04990 was a gutted ruin upon its arrival at the BCRHS's Valmont display site on July 27, 2007. Jason Midyette photo.



I ended part 1 of this story by describing a very bad day for the members of the Boulder County Railway Historical Society, (BCRHS) who had just spent years restoring D&RGW caboose #04990. On July 2, 2007 two arsonists set our newly restored caboose on fire as they wandered through Boulder's Central Park.

Thankfully another person was walking through Central Park and saw the caboose erupt into flames. He called 911 and the fire department responded within a few minutes and put the fire out. Given the combination of century old, dry wood and a gallon of gasoline, that few minutes was all it took to essentially destroy 04990. Following the fire, the caboose looked reasonably intact, however the

cupola, roof, doors, windows and much of the wall structure had been destroyed. The fire even burned through the floor in a few places.

The City of Boulder was not quite sure what to do with the charcoaled remains of 04990. It was clear that it could not remain in Central Park, as it was now an eyesore and a hazard.

Eventually it was decided to move the car to the BCRHS's display site on the east side for Boulder. On July 27, 2007 04990 departed Central Park. Beyond cleaning out the interior, boarding up the windows and tarping the roof, the City would not allow the BCRHS to do any work on the caboose. By the end of 2008, 04990 was rapidly deteriorating and in danger of being totally lost.



**BCRHS volunteers Adam Glazier and Jason Brummett at work on 04990 removing the burnt material including the entire cupola. May 19, 2009. Jason Midyette photo.**

**D&RGW 04990 – continued from p.5**

Finally in 2009, the City accepted the BCRHS’s offer to once again restore the caboose. The City agreed to provide \$10,000 towards the project and the BCRHS would perform the work. (The final cost was substantially more, with several BCRHS members making up the difference.)

In April of 2009, work on 04990 began. The project was led by BCRHS member Adam Glazier and his daughter Ashley, who spent her summer vacation working on the caboose. Many of the BCRHS’s monthly workdays in 2009 were devoted to 04990 and many volunteers lent a hand to the project, including Todd Hackett who built the new doors and windows. (Todd had built new windows for 04990 the first time around and was not thrilled to get to do it again “just because some idiot wanted to see a flaming caboose”, a sentiment shared by many of us on the project).

By December of 2009, the work was complete and 04990 was once again a caboose.

The restoration work was extensive. Essentially the only parts of 04990 that survived the fire were the frame, the structure of the long end side walls and the entire long-end end wall and roof over the platform. The entire roof, cupola, short end side walls and short-end, end wall had to be rebuilt with new materials. All of the interior and exterior siding was replaced, new windows and doors were built and installed, a new roof walk was built. The holes in the floor



**By July 11<sup>th</sup>, our crew had all the new siding finished and were ready to begin building the new cupola. Jason Midyette photo**

D&RGW 04990 – continued from p.6

were covered with plywood and a new layer of tongue and groove flooring was installed. 04990 was back to the shape it was in on July 1, 2007, needing only an interior and the installation of the brake system to be completely restored.

In February of 2010, the City of Boulder moved 04990 from the BCRHS's museum site to an empty warehouse, pending a decision as to what to do with it. It is felt that moving the caboose back to the same city park where it was fire bombed, is not a wise move. However the city, who owns the caboose, is currently unsure of just what to do with this historical railcar.

While the caboose's future is uncertain, it is at least in a secure and dry location and the BCRHS is hoping to continue some finishing work on the car in the near future. However, if possible we would really rather not rebuild the whole thing AGAIN. Twice is enough thank you.



**D&RGW 04990 departs the Boulder County Railway Historical Society's Valmont site on February 8, 2010. The crane is about to load the caboose on a truck for its move to a city warehouse to be stored until the city decides what to do with it. City of Boulder photo.**

**The Boulder County Railway Historical Society is located near Boulder City, Colorado. For more information on the BCRHS and to help support their efforts, please check out their website at [www.bcrhs.com](http://www.bcrhs.com)**



**D&RGW 04990 after the restoration, December 29, 2009. Jason Midyette photo.**

# West Side Lumber Company Tank Car #5

## *A Short History and the Resurrection - Part 4*

By Mike Roberts

Volunteers Ken Hittle and Kevin Rasmussen have just helped roll tank #5 out for the start of the fifth work weekend season in April 2010.



The fourth installment of the West Side #5 tank car story starts in April 2010. After a very visually productive 2009, 2010 has seen progress slow down as the last of the repairs get more technical.

In 2010 we also received some very generous support for our project from ***The Kinsman Foundation***. They have awarded the WRPS a grant that will be used to help us finish tank car #5. After spending the last few years working on this project, I am very pleased to have the support of The Kinsman Foundation as we see this project through to its completion.

The start of the fifth season saw the finish of the deck board installation under sunny April skies, the tank bolted to the steel sawhorses, and the first section of rusted-out tank skin removed.

In July and August two more sections of tank skin were cut out as well. The tank had a century's worth of rust, scale, dirt, and debris in the bottom – well over a cubic yard's worth. It was a very dirty and dusty cleanout job, too! The access holes also showed us a badly rusted out tank baffle that will have to be replaced. Luckily, the floor of the tank is sound, and won't require any major repairs. One discovery was a pipe coil in the 'B' end of the tank, used to heat the bunker C fuel oil. A couple of oddball pipe fittings on the outside of the tank now have an explanation.

After over a century's worth of wear and tear, the nominal thickness of the tank's steel is now 3/16 of an inch instead of the original 1/4 inch. All of the worst rust damage is on the outside of the lower curve of the tank, due to

**West Side Tank Car – continued from p.8**

decades of collected dirt and water slowly eating away the steel. To fix the tank damage, seven new 3/16 inch mild steel patch panels will have to be fabricated. The six skin patch panels will extend two inches above the tank's lower curve, and extend about one foot underneath. The new baffle is the only flat piece to replace. Plans are being drawn up, and hopefully the new steel will be at McEwen, OR before the snow flies. The skin panels will be welded into place, with new 1/2 inch diameter rivets added to duplicate the originals. The new baffle will require thirty new rivets, too. This installation will be a story in itself, and hopefully nobody catches on fire either!

The pipe hand railing on one side of the tank was too badly damaged to save, and new sections of pipe were cut, threaded, and fit into place. Two of the handrail brackets had to be removed from the tank to thread it all back together, and will be riveted back to the tank soon. All of the handrail brackets were realigned as well. Work also started on the new



**Ken Hittle and Kevin Rasmussen work on one of the last new deck boards to be installed.**

wooden tool box and platform. A lot of measuring and cutting has been done, and the two crosspieces that straddle the tank's handrails have been fitted.



**With the first rusted section of the tank removed, the badly rusted center tank baffle is visible – it will be replaced.**



**Here we see project manager Mike Roberts (or part of Mike anyway) cleaning out the first section of the tank shortly after it was opened up. With the accumulation of nearly a century's worth of rust and debris, it was very dirty work.**



**Cut by volunteers Keith Masterson and Mike Roberts, the tool box platform cross pieces get their final fitting. The new tool box and platform can be assembled and painted off the car, and will be installed when the tank is done.**

**Volunteer Arnie Lipshetz has fit the new handrail piping into place. The two center brackets will need to be re-riveted.**

**West Side Tank Car – continued from p.9**

The WRPS is working with the SPCRR group at the Ardenwood Historical Farm in Fremont, CA on new brake shoes. We hope to have a new brake shoe casting to trial fit this fall, followed with the purchase of ten shoe castings. The grant money from the Kinsman Foundation will also allow us to have a new coupler lift bar and the brake staff fabricated, and we hope to have a Lovestad brake wheel casting made as well. New coupler knuckles and lock parts are also on the casting agenda.

We would like to kill the rust on the inside and outside of the tank, and are looking at various products. A promising water-based rust killer is



made here in Oregon. We'll also need to put some sort of coating on the inside to allow us to fill the tank with water occasionally. Of course there are still the air brakes, and.....

And it's time to finish this up – we'll cover more of this in another WRPS newsletter!



**The side sills of the #5's car body have just received a fresh coat of primer and paint prior to the stirrup step installation.**

**In the back ground can be seen two other WRPS projects. First is the West Side Caboose #3 and behind that is our grey D&RGW bunkcar.**

**For more pictures of the work being done to tank car #5, check out the "Restoration Projects" section of the web site at [www.westernrailwaypreservation.com](http://www.westernrailwaypreservation.com)**

# Is that an Espresso Stand?

Or a really ugly parade float?

By Jerry Huck

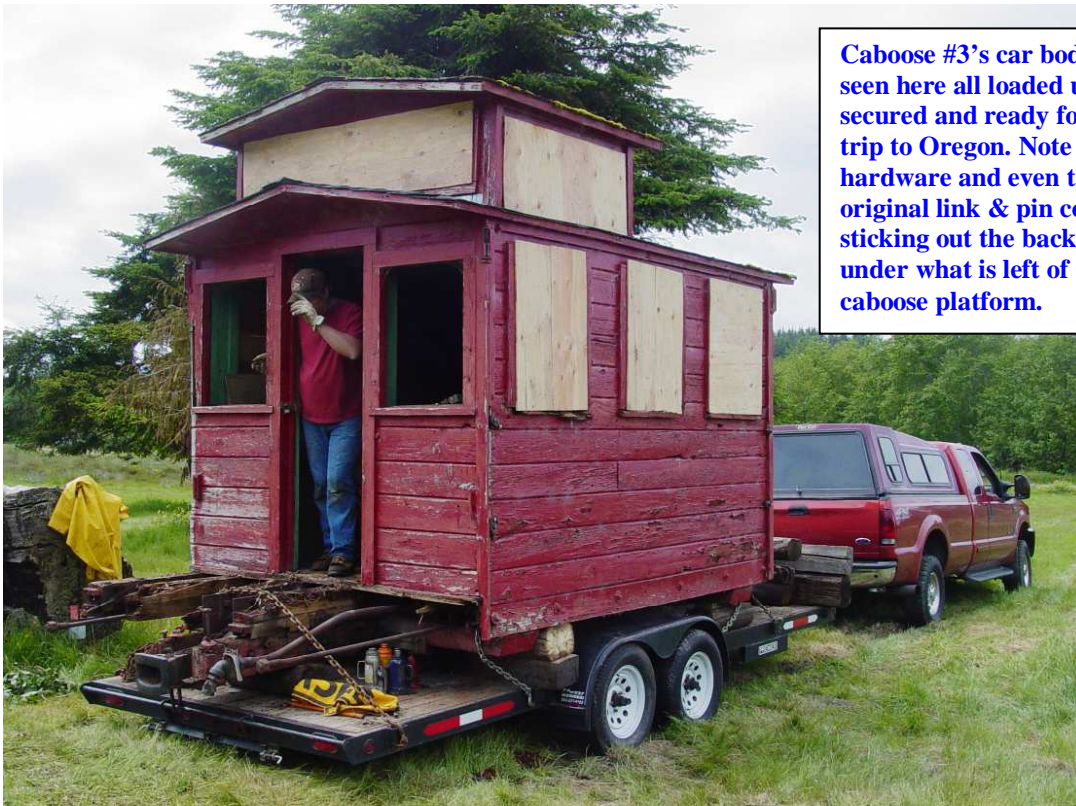
Well, it's nether. Its West Side Lumber's caboose #3 on its way to her new home.

In May, the WRPS crew headed to Northern California to retrieve our recently purchased Westside Lumber Company caboose #3 from the Stone Lagoon RV park in Trinidad CA. The crew consisted of Mike Roberts, Mike Stewart, Arnie Lipshietz, Ken Hittle, Adam Novakovich and myself.

We took two diesel pickups and car trailers to bring the caboose back to the Sumpter Valley Railroad shops in McEwen, Oregon. The caboose was prepped for shipment by removing the

hand rails, windows, steps and truck pins. Then the openings were covered with plywood to seal the car for the trip to McEwen.

We fully documented the caboose prior to lifting the car body off the trucks, then beams were positioned under the sills and hydraulic jacks were used to lift the caboose off the trucks. Since the car was sitting on panel track. We had little difficulty winching them onto one of the trailers which left the car body suspended high enough to easily back the second trailer under the caboose and lower it onto blocking.



**Caboose #3's car body is seen here all loaded up, secured and ready for its trip to Oregon. Note all the hardware and even the original link & pin coupler sticking out the back end under what is left of the caboose platform.**

Retrieving Caboose #3 – continued from p.11

The weather held up well for us as we secured the trucks, the caboose body and all the assorted tools we used to prepare this car for transport. Then we started back north on the highway with our “parade float” in tow.

As luck would have it, the Oregon weather failed to cooperate for us and most of the drive home was done in falling snow. However, I’m happy to report the caboose is now at the Sumpter Valley Railroad and is safely stored in the restoration shop along with the Coffin tank car.

Mike Stewart and Ken Hittle are working here to help Jerry Huck load one the caboose trucks onto a trailer for shipment.

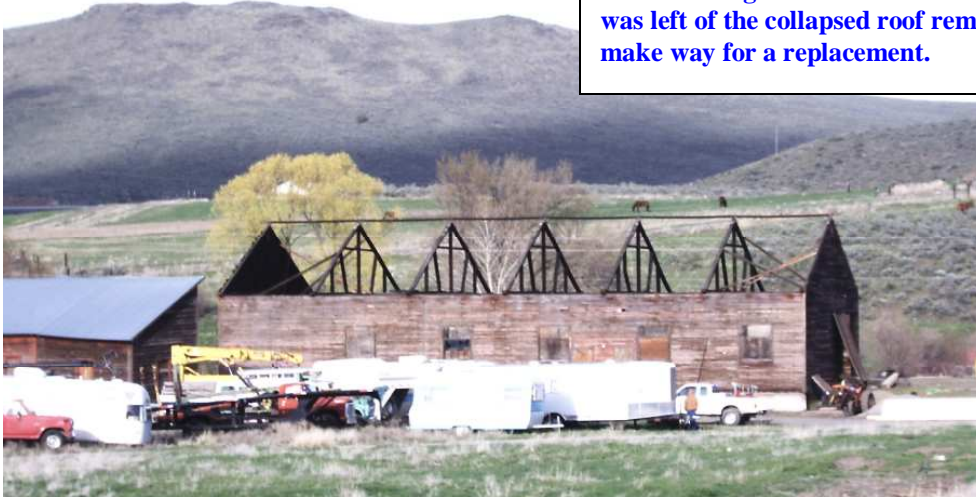


Here can be seen both trucks now loaded and secured on a trailer as the caboose body, which is on a second trailer, gets “wrapped up” before hitting the road.



# Sumpter Valley Railway's South Baker Shops

By Tim Bain



By April 2010, the renovation of the SVRy South Baker Shops was in full swing. One of the first things to be done was to have what was left of the collapsed roof removed to make way for a replacement.

As you may remember from past newsletters, the Western Railway Preservation Society had attempted to purchase the Sumpter Valley Ry's engine house located in South Baker City. This historic structure, which once was the home to the famed 2-6-6-2 mallets, was in poor condition and the roof was already caving in. With the interior now open to the elements, it was feared that the collapse of the rest of the building was not far behind.

So, it was decided that one of the priority projects for the Western Railway Preservation Society was to acquire this building and work to restore it. However, the building was sold before we could complete a deal and the new owners were not interested in selling the building again. Instead, they took on the project of restoring the old SVRy engine house.

Well, a couple of days ago, I received a message from Donna Kanyid, a long time Baker City resident and the new owners of

the SVRy S. Baker engine house. Donna wrote;

*I would like to personally invite everyone to the Open House of the Sumpter Valley Railroad Building in South Baker. The restoration is complete and I thought you might like to see it first hand on how it turned out. Feel free to bring photos and other information you may have about the building. It will be Sept. 26th 2010. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.*

*Sincerely,  
Donna Kanyid*

I'm very excited to hear that Donna and her family have completed their work on the old S. Baker Shops and have saved these historic buildings. So, if you get a chance, come by South Baker for the open house and take a look, and if you see her, remember to say "thanks" to Donna for saving a valuable piece of the Sumpter Valley Railway's history.

## **WRPS Membership Information**

The Western Railway Preservation Society is *dedicated to preserving the skills and artifacts of our western railway heritage*, with particular attention given to the narrow gauge railways such as the Sumpter Valley Railway in northeastern Oregon.

If you have not already done so, please consider joining the Western Railway Preservation Society. All you need to do is send your e-mail address to; [tim@westernrailwaypreservation.org](mailto:tim@westernrailwaypreservation.org) and we will place you on the e-mail list. Then, we will be sending you our e-mail newsletter, where you can stay informed on the progress of the WRPS's restoration projects including the efforts to save and preserve the West Side Lumber Co. caboose #3 and tank car #5.

Membership levels are;

General \$20  
Sustaining \$35  
Life Membership \$250

Membership fees and donations for the Western Railway Preservation Society can be mailed to;

**Western Railway Preservation Society**  
**PO Box 1112**  
**Baker City, Oregon 97814**

If you have any questions or comments about the WRPS or any of our projects, please feel free to contact Tim Bain at [tim@westernrailwaypreservation.org](mailto:tim@westernrailwaypreservation.org)

or Jerry Huck at;

[jerry@westernrailwaypreservation.org](mailto:jerry@westernrailwaypreservation.org)

We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

### **Notice of 2010 Annual Meeting!**

Once a year, the WRPS will be holding an annual meeting that is open to all who wish to attend. Since we are closely related to the Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration Inc., our directors have chosen to hold our meeting as close as possible to the SVRR's annual meeting. This would allow our members to attend both annual meetings without making two trips to Baker County, Oregon.

This year the Western Railway Preservation Society will be holding it's annual meeting in McEwen, Oregon. At this meeting, we will cover Society business and discuss some future ideas while we enjoy a casual picnic lunch. So, we invite everyone to come out to the WRPS Restoration Shop in McEwen and check out some of our recent restoration projects. We will start at 12 Noon on October 9<sup>th</sup>.

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