



# **WESTERN RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY**

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

*E-News Issue - 5 Feb 2011*

## **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, the Western Railway Preservation Society held our annual meeting at the restoration shop of the Sumpter Valley Railroad in McEwen, Oregon. It was a casual affair this year taking place outdoors over a bar-b-que lunch. The bar-b-que was well attended by members of both the WRPS and the Sumpter Valley Railroad but once the food was gone and the official part of the meeting started, most of the members returned to their weekend restoration projects.

However, during the meeting, we took care of the usual business and also held the Elections for the Society's Board of Directors and Officers. The election results saw all five incumbents re-elected to the board with Jerry Huck being voted in again as Vice-President and Mike Robert as the Society's secretary. Also I was also given another term to serve as President of the Society. In that role, I would like everyone to know that they are free to

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contact me at anytime if they ever have questions, concerns or just comments about the WRPS.

Things have slowed down a little on the usual society projects but in this newsletter, we will hear from Jerry Huck about the new "Restoration Office" building that is taking shape on the south end of the Sumpter Valley Railroad's main yard in McEwen.

I personally felt that the structure which would become the new Restoration Office was a write-off and destined to become fuel for the SVRR #3 locomotive. Most people that saw the "White Building" next to the McEwen backshop could have been easily reminded of Dorothy's Kansas farmhouse after it fell out of the sky and made a hard landing in the Land of Oz.

However, in his usual fashion, Jerry pulled this heritage building back from the brink of destruction and with help from other WRPS members they have been developing the structure into a very nice home for our people and our growing collection of artifacts. In this newsletter, Jerry tells the first part of this story in his regular column "Along the Right of Way".

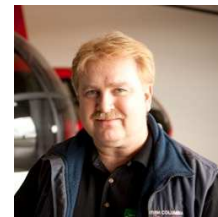
Another thing to look for in the current newsletter will be our first report on one of our new projects. The restoration of Denver & Rio Grande Bunk Car #04951. Over the fall season, this project has really gained momentum in no small part

thanks to a grant from the *Leo Adler Foundation*. Thanks to their generosity, great progress has been made on returning this 1895 outfit car to the rails for the first time in over 60 years!

Speaking of donations, I would also like to say thank you to Mr. Ron Harr who has really given the Restoration Shop up-grade project a big boost with his generous contribution. Ron has been a supporter of the Sumpter Valley Railroad for decades now and I am now happy to have him on board as we work towards saving and preserving not only the history the Sumpter Valley Railway but other western railways as well.

In closing, I would like to give my personal thanks to all the members that have already contributed to the work of the Western Railway 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

## Rescue of the Warnock Ranch Building

By Jerry Huck

In August of 2010, crews from the Western Railway Preservation Society began renovation of an unused building that has sat across the track from the McEwen Engine shop for nearly 6 years. The structure was originally used as a tack shop on the nearby Warnock Ranch located on the south side of the Sumpter Valley. The building had out lived its usefulness to the Ranch so in 2005 the ranches owner, Dan Warnock donated the small, white structure to the Sumpter Valley Railroad (SVRR).

Not sure just what to do with this building, the SVRR set it in the ground near the locomotive shop facilities with the intentions of renovating it at a later date. However, as the years went by, the building started to deteriorate to the point that the directors of the SVRR were considering tearing down what was left of the aging structure. So, the Western Railway Preservation Society stepped in and offered to take on the restoration of

this vintage building and put it to some constructive use.

Our intention was originally to use the building as additional work space for the Restoration Department. However it has now evolved into office space for the WRPS as well as classroom space to be used by the leaders and crews of the Baker Youth Community Action Project, or **BYCAP** for short.

**BYCAP** is a community focused alternative education program that give young people the opportunity to gain education, employment, work ethic and leadership skills through integrated classroom and field-based learning projects, such as restoring old railcars and railway structures. By entering into this partnership with **BYCAP**, the Society gains a great group of young people that want to work on several of our current projects and a few others that we have in the planning stages.

**By August, we had the old “White Building” finally skidded into its new permanent location near the Restoration Shop, seen on the left.**



[Along the ROW – continued from p.3](#)

We will get more into our partnership with **BYCAP** in another article, so for now. Back to the update on the renovation work happening on the old Warnock Ranch building.

In August, the building was moved to its new, permanent location between the locomotive fueling system and the Restoration Shop (the old 19 shed) at the south end of the McEwen yard. Rick Gorden, Allan Sommerstrom, Taylor Rush and I prepared the building for the move by installing additional bracing and clearing out several years of accumulated clutter stored in the building.

Initially the building was to be moved by pulling it with the SVRR's crane. However halfway thru the move we discovered the building wasn't able to be maneuvered around the fueling facility and the project was shutdown for a "rethink".

The next day, after additional repairs were completed, the move was completed. Using Rick's pickup as the primary power with assistance from the forklift, we were able to move the building to its new location.

When we had the building set up in its new location we could begin to repair the damage the building had received in the original move from the Warnock Ranch to McEwen back in 2005 as well as the damage it sustained from sitting for several years in McEwen without having the roof and load bearing walls properly supported.

The north wall required considerable repair work as it had suffered significant structural damage. This was due to a lack of support under the windows caused a fire at the Warnock Ranch many years ago as well as being damaged during the initial move from the ranch to McEwen.

While it was nearly miraculous that the building survived its most recent move, this was only the beginning. Over the years, this building had a great many "creative" repairs made to the structure including the replacement of the original wood floor and joists with a poured in place concrete slab. In order to move the building, it was necessary to cut the wall studs off at the floor level, meaning the building no longer had any sills or joists to tie the walls together. As a result the structure had developed a great many issues during its journeys. So, the first task the crew faced was squaring the building up and installing new sills to the studs.

Most of the wall framing was in poor condition requiring additional supports be installed before we could lower the building onto its new timber foundation. However, once on its foundation, the sub floor was installed along with two rails out to the near by shop track. Once completed, a new 10' x 24' loading platform was also built between the building and the shop track.

The doors and windows were repaired and work continued on the exterior siding and the roof. The goal was to have the building weatherproof before

[Along the ROW – continued from page 4](#)

any significant snowfall occurred, which was accomplished by the WRPS crew on December 1st.

In mid December the Society was approached by the BYCAP crew leader, Ben Titus, who was interested in using the Students involved in the BYCAP program to complete the interior framing, insulation, sheetrock and interior finish of the building as well as painting the interior and exterior.

While there is still a lot of work to complete, we envision the building in use by the end of May 2011 which would coincide with the opening weekend of the SVRR.

**By November of 2010 the walls of the old ranch building were repaired and the new wood foundation was completed, just in time for the first snows of winter.**

To date the Society has spent \$63.17 on materials and has invested over 430 hours in this project. I'm happy to say the building is now solid and insulation and wiring has been nearly completed.

However, a significant amount of money will be required to purchase the materials needed to complete the interior. If you wish to donate any funds to help complete this project, please contact me at;

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

Or you can send a donation to;

**Western Railway Preservation Society  
PO 1112 Baker City, OR 97814**

And please indicate the donation is for the "Restoration Office" project.

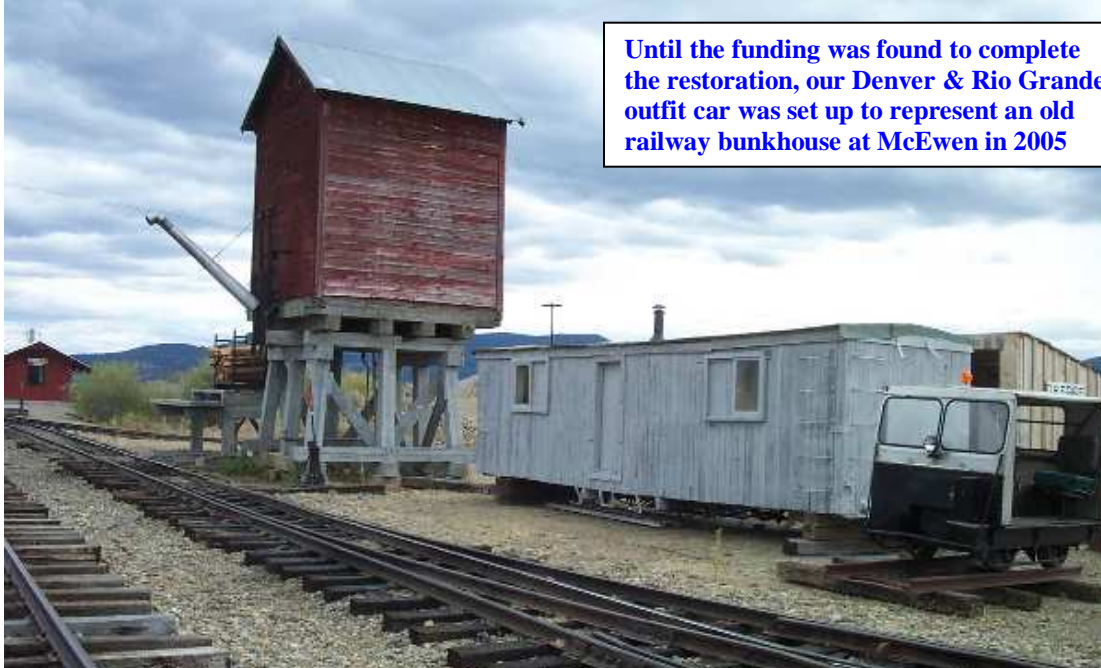
My thanks to everyone who has helped move this project forward so far. - Jerry



# Denver & Rio Grande Western Bunk Car #04951

## *Part 1 - Some History Behind Our New Project*

By Tim Bain



Until the funding was found to complete the restoration, our Denver & Rio Grande outfit car was set up to represent an old railway bunkhouse at McEwen in 2005

Since 2004, visitors to the Sumpter Valley Railroad would have seen an old, grey boxcar sitting on the ground next to the water tank in McEwen. The boxcar had no wheels but it was being used as a bunkhouse “display” since it already had widows and doors.

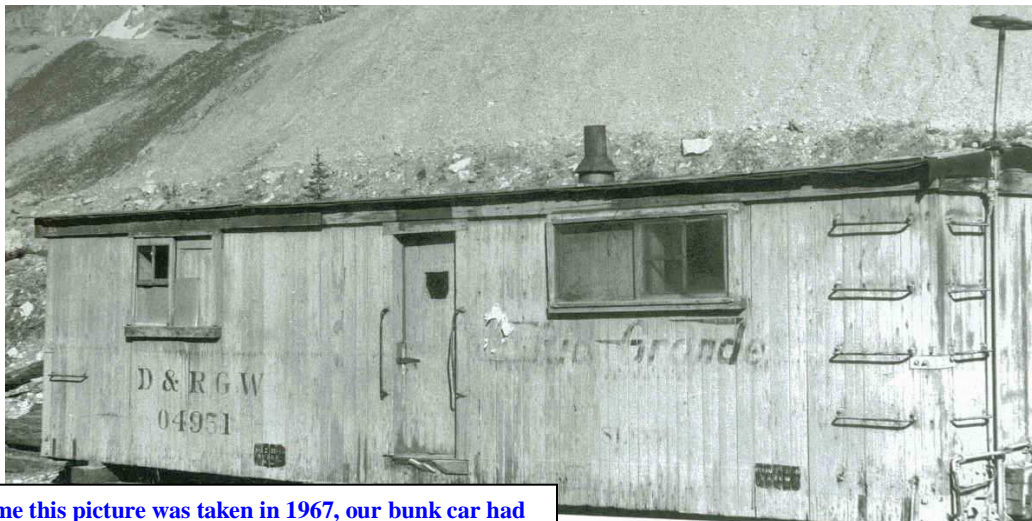
Not many people gave this old boxcar “structure” much of a second though since it didn’t have any markings or lettering on it. However, this forgotten piece of rolling stock was at one time an outfit car owned by the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad of Colorado.

This outfit car was originally built as a boxcar for the Denver & Rio Grande Railway in 1895 by the Ohio Falls Car Manufacturing Company of Indiana. It

was given the number 4951 and served on the narrow gauge lines of Colorado as a 20-ton, revenue boxcar for nearly 20 years.

However, by 1904, the D&RG had newer, larger boxcars built and many of the older 20-ton cars like the #4951 were being scrapped or converted to outfit cars. By 1914, boxcar #4951 had been converted to a “Bunk car” and was assigned to the Denver & Rio Grande’s Roadway department to serve as sleeping quarters (bunk car) for track gangs that maintained the railway’s right of way and trackage.

Around 1948, this car was taken to Monarch, Colorado to be used as a bunk car by Carmen and section gangs.



By the time this picture was taken in 1967, our bunk car had been reduced to little more than a shortage shed sitting on the ground at Monarch, Colorado. - Photo: David Grandt

[D&RGW Bunk car – continued from page 6](#)

Not long after that, the car was taken off its trucks and set on the ground at the Monarch limestone quarry. It continued to serve the D&RGW as a bunkhouse for many years.

After it was abandoned, the car was saved from destruction by a Colorado railfan named Don Drawer and taken to his ranch in Ft. Lupton, Colorado. There, it was used by Mr. Drawer as a bunkhouse for his guests that came to visit his Sundown & Southern Railway that he was building on this ranch. However, the Sundown & Southern railway was never a success and following Don Drawer's death in 2000, the Sundown & Southern Railway's equipment, tracks and structures was auctioned off two years later.

In July of 2002, Outfit car #04951 was purchased by four Sumpter Valley Railroad members named, Jerry Huck, Matt Mattioda, Steven Peck and Tim Bain. By the end of 2002, they had the outfit car moved

to the grounds of the Sumpter Valley Railway in McEwen, Oregon.

The new owners built new windows for the outfit car and put a plywood roof on it to keep the weather out but with limited funds available, the idea of buying new trucks and draft gear for the outfit car was dismissed for the time. So, it was decided to give the car a paint job and set it up as a bunkhouse next to the McEwen water tank in order to add to the historic feel of the area.

The bunkhouse display looked quiet nice for a number of years but by 2010, the



For nearly three decades, outfit car #04951 rested on blocks at the Sundown & Southern Railway located near Ft. Lupton, Colorado. The car is seen here in the summer of 2000

**D&RGW Bunk Car – continued from page 7**

area was beginning to look rather rundown due to a lack of maintenance. So, one of the SVRR board members asked to have the bunkhouse removed from the area.

Not having any money to complete a restoration to the old outfit car and not wanting to see this historic car destroyed, the four owners donated the car to the Western Railway Preservation Society in August of 2010.

At that time Jerry Huck, who is the current vice-president of the WRPS stepped up to the plate and took on the restoration of outfit car #04951 as the project manager. Jerry was one of the original four owners that donated the outfit car to the WRPS so Jerry was very familiar with the car and what was needed in order to restore it to operational condition.

**In Part 2 of our story, we'll see Jerry get to work on the restoration of Bunk Car #04951**



**Jerry Huck is seen here giving the old Bunk Car a new coat of paint while we were setting the car up as a bunkhouse in September 2005**



**By June of 2009 the railcar bunkhouse next to the McEwen water tank was looking a little tired. So the car would soon be moved and the restoration would begin**

**In July of 2002, Outfit car #04951 was purchased by four of the founding members of the Western Railway Preservation Society and they had it moved to McEwen, Oregon**



# Dedication or Insanity?

From Jerry Huck



If a picture worth a thousand words then the photo above would speak volumes!

You are looking at a donated woodstove for the new restoration office. What you don't see is the giant snow bank the stove was buried in requiring the use of Rick Gorden's backhoe and two men with shovels to excavate.

Rick was aware of our need for a good heating stove and thru his contacts located this stove which the owner donated to the WRPS along with the stove pipe.

Rick was generous enough to bring his backhoe the three miles to town to excavate and load the stove for us on a cold and wet winter day while the former owner of the stove and I manned the shovels.

Due to the extremely icy conditions encountered, Taylor Rush, President of the Sumpter Valley Railroad, loaned us the railroad's four wheel drive pickup to transport the stove back to the Restoration Shop at McEwen, Oregon; where the stove will be reconditioned prior to being installed in the new Restoration Office building.

All of the fuel, labor and materials were donated to accomplish this in less than pleasant weather. It is exactly this kind of determination and dedication by our members that has enabled the WRPS to grow and thrive and I would like to thank all of our members for their continuing assistance as we grow and develop into a world class facility.

Remember also, the WRSP has a great many needs in terms of tools, materials and equipment. Donations are always welcome. (And tax deductible as well.)

## **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.

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.

## **West Side Lumber Company Tank Car #5** ***A Brief Up-Date from Mike Roberts***



**Mike Roberts pushing his hand through one of the tank car's rust holes that will be repaired in 2011**

Most of the progress on Tank Car #5 has slowed down for the winter month so there is not too much new information to report. However, I can report that the new steel replacement panels have been order and paid for thanks to a grant from *The Kinsman Foundation*.

During our next work weekends, we will be putting the new steel in the tank and getting ready to mount the tank back on the flatcar.

We are finally in the home stretch on this project. If you would like to join us for a work weekend on this project, please e-mail me at (360) 834-4638 or e-mail;

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