

# Snowshed

December, 2011

Volume 4 Number 4

## Jim Dobbas Inc. donates Steam Crane to TDRS



### News Flash!

- Museum Receives donation of 1930 Crane
- Railyards development moves ahead
- Additions and repairs made to Interim Museum

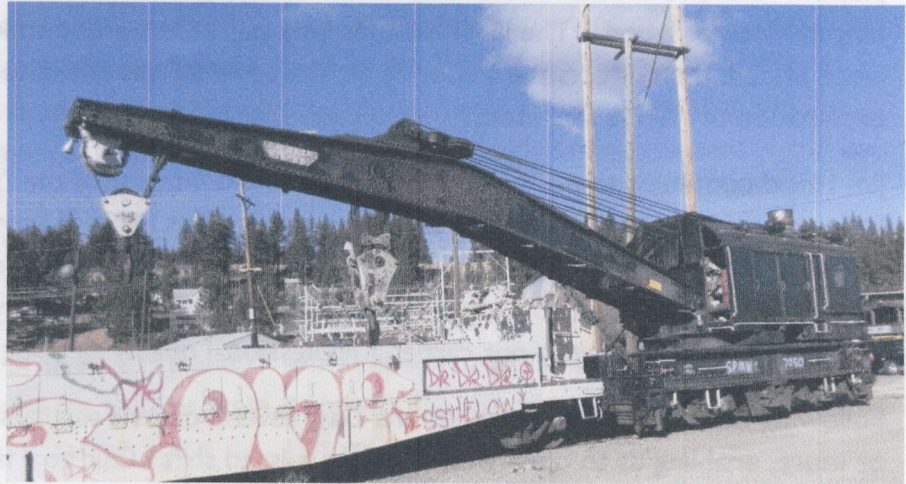
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On November 21, 2011, the above 1930 Bucyrus-Erie locomotive crane and boom car were successfully moved from the UP active siding to the TDRS siding, thus completing the donation of this historic piece of railroad history by Jim Dobbas Inc. to the Society.

The construction of the 160 ton capacity crane was completed in June 1930, and shipped to the Southern Pacific Railroad in July of that year as SP MW No. 691. Large cranes such as this had been in use since the 1890s in accident recovery work.

The design of this unit has been consistent for more than a century: a rotating crane (in this case steam powered) with a boom and operators cabin mounted on a sturdy self propelled chassis capable of pulling a few loaded cars at 5 to 10 MPH. The boom car (in this case a converted steel flat car paired with the crane for the last 30+ years) accommodated the length of the boom and provided for storage of extra fuel, spare trucks and other miscellaneous supplies.

The last visible SP service date was Feb 13, 1988. Records indicate that the re-numbered SP MW 7050 crane spent most of its service on SP's Sacramento and Salt Lake Divisions righting de-railed locomotives.

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## Interim Museum Happenings Don Davis

During Truckee's reconstruction of the depot parking lot and our museum closing, we took the opportunity to complete some projects including the addition of a new antenna that emulates the vintage design adding realism to the caboose exterior and significantly improving the scanner's reception. Many thanks go to Dale Fowler for his effort.

The date nail, donated by Ron Mason, provided our first experience with "interactive" displays. We drove the nail into the tie in the "rail gauge" exhibit and covered it with a small, hinged block of wood. The label explains why railroads wanted to keep track of when ties were placed, then directs the visitor to lift the cover to see the date nail, and presents a brief explanation of how it was used.

Jim Hood continues to make progress restoring the interior of the "roomette" and expects to have a few more details in place before you receive this issue of Snowshed. The wall panel, complete with the sink and toilet is now in place, as are the closet door, heater duct, and light diffusers. Special thanks go to Dan Pearson for breaking out his heavy-duty vacuum cleaner and rug shampooer to give our carpet a professional quality cleaning

Following our reopening after Veterans Day, several docent regulars worked at least one shift, or more, enabling us to open with only one missed shift. Our goal is to have enough docents so each person need work no more than one 3-hour shift a month. We need a few more to meet that goal. Please contact me at [ddavis@itol.com](mailto:ddavis@itol.com) if you would like to help out.

## TDRS Receives Grant

Shortly after the deadline for the fall Snowshed, the society received notice that we received a \$15,000 grant from the Brewster West Foundation in San Francisco. Each year the foundation awards grants to deserving non-profits with unfunded projects to enable them to better perform their missions. This is the largest individual grant that TDRS has received to date and is a very positive indication that we are gaining traction in our efforts to build a Truckee Railroad Museum.

Last spring the Foundation asked us to propose projects that could be undertaken immediately and would enhance the visitor experience in the Interim Museum. We proposed purchasing a flat panel television to be mounted in the window of the "Roomette" display and contracting with a video firm to produce a narrated video of the scenery as viewed from a train as it comes up the hill from Colfax. The proposed video would include photographs and short narrations of significant historic locations along the way. Our project is well underway. Jerry Blackwill has written a draft script and is working to obtain the necessary copyright permissions for the historic photographs. On the production side, we have arranged with Tahoe TV to shoot and edit the video. Some preliminary scenes have already been shot but they are waiting until we have snow to enhance the scenery before shooting the balance.

## Presidents Report

### Jim Hood

As we come to the end of 2011, I would like to reflect on the accomplishments of the Tahoe Donner Railroad Society. This year we received our largest ever cash contribution from the Brewster West Foundation. This contribution is allowing us to make significant improvements and upgrades to the displays in the interim museum and keeping the exhibits "fresh" for visitors. We have received our most significant equipment contribution in the history of our Society from Jim Dobbas, Inc. They contributed the SP MW Locomotive Steam Crane No. 7050 and Boom Car No. 7051 which was stationed in Sparks, NV and used numerous times in our area to clear train derailments and other similar tasks. It is a truly historic piece of railroad equipment that will be restored and exhibited in our permanent museum area.

Numerous other cash and equipment donations have been made to the TDRS all of

### SP MW No. 7050 Steam Crane

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Jim Dobbas Inc. acquired the crane in 1998 in a desire to see it preserved and kept from being scrapped. SP MW No. 7050 has national significance as one of only a few surviving 1930 steam cranes.

The Truckee Donner Railroad Society is grateful to Don Dobbas, President of Jim Dobbas Inc. for this most generous and significant donation.

which help to allow us to continue to expand our capabilities. We have continued to operate our interim Museum in 2011 and are extremely pleased with the number of guests we have been able to attract.

We have continued to work with Rick Holiday, the developer of the Railyards project in downtown Truckee. This project is a multi-year, phased development of a large parcel of land to the East of the Historic Downtown area of Truckee. The development will include retail, entertainment, residential and Industrial facilities. Our hope is to acquire space within this development and to expand our museum into this area and to grow with the overall project. To that end, we are working with an architecture firm to develop concepts for our permanent museum within this area.

I want to thank all of our members and friends for their support throughout the year and to wish them and their families, Happy Holidays.

### Don Colclough

We are deeply saddened to report that Don Colclough died of a stroke Dec. 13, 2011 at his Martinez home after a long bout with cancer. An enthusiastic supporter of Truckee museums, Don was active in the Historical Society's Jail museum and in 2008, when he learned of our plans to develop a museum, he joined TDRS and became a valuable source of "Jail Museum Lessons Learned."

After we opened the Interim Museum, he was one of our most frequent docents. We will miss his cheerful willingness to volunteer.

# Truckee Donner Railroad Society

## Society Mission:

To preserve, interpret, and educate the public about rail-roading life and history in the Truckee region including its contribution to Truckee and the Nation. Specifically, depict railroad involvement in local industry through the acquisition, preservation, and restoration of relevant equipment, documents, and artifacts all to be part of a permanent museum facility in downtown Truckee.

### Board of Directors:

- Jim Hood—President
- Bob Bell—Vice President/  
Treasurer
- Ed Czerwinski—Secretary
- Nelson Van Gundy —  
Historian
- Jerry Blackwill
- Don Clukey
- Don Davis
- Steve Disbrow
- Ted Owens

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[www.truckeedonnerrailroadsociety.com](http://www.truckeedonnerrailroadsociety.com)  
501(c) 3 non-profit organization

## Truckee Railroad museum Vision:

*Keeping Truckee railroads alive!*

Railroads of the Truckee area played a significant role in founding and developing the town of Truckee.

From the blasting of black powder in the granite over Donner Lake, to the hissing of the first steam coming in to town, to whistles of lumberjacks in the mountains, to the crack of ice being loaded in the reefers, and tourists flocking to share the beauty of the area, the Truckee Railroad Museum tells the story.

- ◆ A place to Discover
- ◆ A place to Enjoy
- ◆ A place to Interact

### Current Projects Seeking Support

- ◆ Caboose Museum Interior
- ◆ Crane Rehabilitation
- ◆ Rotary Restoration
- ◆ Sleeper Restoration
- ◆ Switcher Operational repair
- ◆ Internet Book Sales

If you are able to support any of these projects with your time, talent or dollars, please contact us.

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