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# SAGEBRUSH HEADLIGHT

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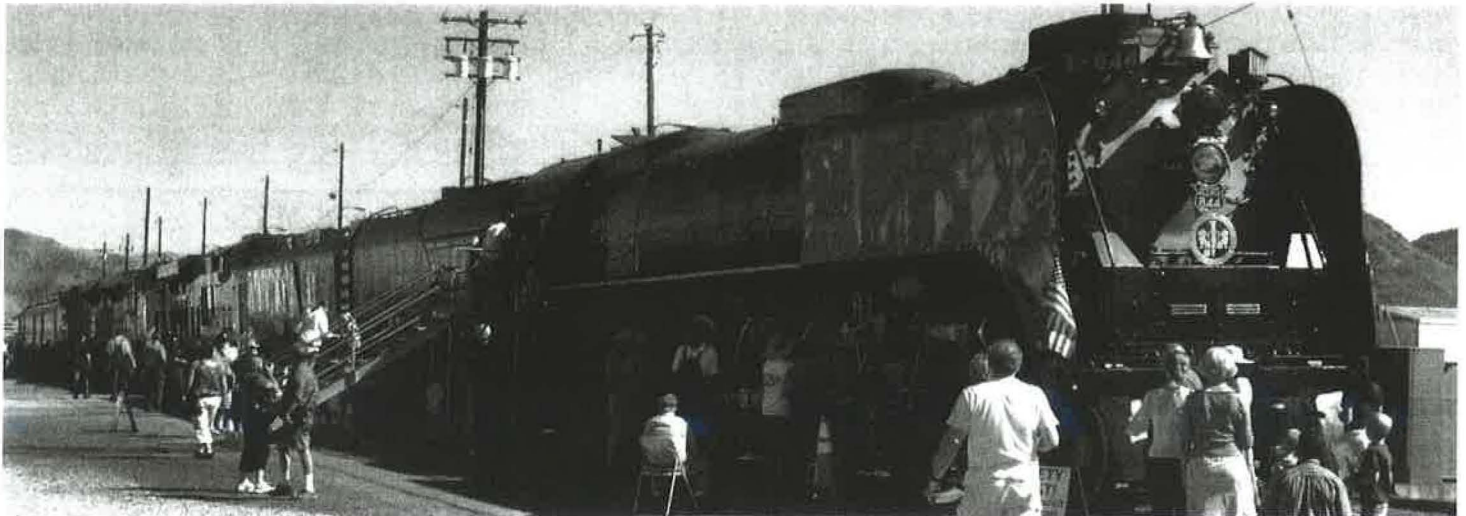
THE NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM  
An Agency of the Division of Museums & History  
Nevada Department of Tourism & Cultural Affairs

Fall 2012

## The Union Pacific Railroad Celebrates 150 Years

### **Building America: Story of the First American Transcontinental Railroad**

Provided by The Union Pacific Railroad Museum. Reprinted with permission (Please see Page 2).



*Mesmerized by the size, the public walked around No. 844 in Sparks, Nevada. A staircase allowed visitors to view inside the cab.*

NSRM Photo

### **Opening the West, Land of Opportunity**

Discovery of gold in California not only created a market for transcontinental traffic, it also significantly changed the American public's attitude. The West was no longer considered a wasteland; instead it was seen as the land of opportunity. People began traveling and settling beyond the Mississippi River, in territories that stretched to the Pacific Coast.

In 1853 congress passed an act providing for the survey of possible railroad lines from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. At least five routes were explored, but unfortunately, an increasing rift between the Northern and the Southern states rendered agreement on a route impossible. In 1859 Abraham Lincoln traveled to Council Bluffs, Iowa, to inspect land in his possession. While there, he was introduced to Grenville Dodge, a young railroad engineer, who was completing surveys west of the Missouri River for the M&M [Rock Island] Railroad. As they talked, Lincoln became more and more convinced that the route proposed by Dodge, beginning in Council Bluffs and following the Platte River Valley through Nebraska, was the best path west for the transcontinental railroad.

### **Pacific Railway Act Signed, Construction Begins**

In 1860, Abraham Lincoln became the 16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. Almost immediately his election caused the longstanding rift between the North and the South to intensify, and very shortly thereafter, the Southern states followed South Carolina into secession. The American Civil War had begun. With the Southern states no longer participating in the discussion, the disagreement over the transcontinental

*Continued on Page 6*

**NEVADA STATE  
RAILROAD MUSEUM**

2180 South Carson St.  
Carson City, NV 89701  
775-687-6953

[www.NevadaCulture.org/museums](http://www.NevadaCulture.org/museums)

Open 8:30 to 4:30 Fridays through  
Mondays except Dec. 25 and Jan. 1

Admission: \$6. Children under 18, and  
members of the Friends of the Nevada  
State Railroad Museum, admitted FREE.



**NEVADA**  
DEPARTMENT OF  
TOURISM AND  
CULTURAL AFFAIRS



The museum is an agency of the  
**State of Nevada**

Brian Sandoval, Governor

**Nevada Department of  
Tourism & Cultural Affairs**

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The Nevada State Railroad Museum  
publishes the *Sagebrush Headlight*  
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of the Nevada State Railroad Museum  
distribute it as a membership benefit.

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**2012 Santa Train**

Saturday and Sunday, **December 1 & 2**  
and

Saturday and Sunday, **December 15 & 16**

**All Seats \$3**

Train Rides are from 9 AM to 4 PM.

Each Santa Train trip leaves the depot  
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Santa Train runs sun, rain or snow.

Cash, Visa, MasterCard and checks accepted.

No American Express.

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For more information call (775) 687-6953 or  
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**New Publication Schedule**

The *Sagebrush Headlight* will be published three  
times a year: April, August and November. **April  
Sagebrush Headlight items are due March 5.**

***Sagebrush Headlight* Numbering**

Each *Sagebrush Headlight* newsletter is assigned three numbers.  
The first, "volume" is for the year. Each year the newsletter is  
published a new number is assigned. The second, "number" is  
for each issue published within one year. The third, "edition" is a  
consecutive number of all newsletters from the beginning.

As some have noted, the numbering of the *Sagebrush Headlight*  
is off. Recently I went through our archives, checking each  
newsletter from the very first. Interestingly, the error in  
numbering began with the second newsletter in 1980. Although  
there have been attempts to make corrections throughout the  
years, additional errors were made in the meantime.

This issue of the *Sagebrush Headlight* is correct in volume,  
number, and edition. I will make every attempt to ensure the  
numbering stays correct.

—Lara Mather

The article that starts on page one of this issue was  
prepared by the Union Pacific Railroad Museum as  
part of the toolkit it developed to assist teachers in  
telling the story of America's first transcontinental  
railroad. This concise account reviews familiar  
facts, but it also reports lesser-known information.  
We think it's worth your time and attention.

## FNSRM President's Message

Can you believe it? Fall has arrived and shortly it will be winter. We have recently had two very successful academic events (as far as railroad fans are concerned) with the conclusion of the History Symposium in Ely and the V & T History Conference here in Carson. Both were well attended and well received. Thank you goes out to all presenters and sponsors for their continued support and dedication to our interests in these great events. I also want to say thank you to the Board of Directors and the other officers for a great Annual Meeting. It was very well attended and I believe a huge success.

It's going to be a challenging year ahead, and will require all members to do their part in volunteering to help achieve the successes that are needed. As I outlined at the Annual Meeting, the Friends will be "tackling the task" of the largest fund raiser that has ever been proposed by our organization. We will be deploying a Capital Campaign for a complete rebuild of our locomotive # 8. As most of you are aware, it has been out of service for the past three years and we have been forced into using the V & T # 25 for our regular train service. Although most rail fans probably relish that use, it is a true artifact and therefore, we want to preserve it for future generations by limiting its use to special occasions.

The number 8 is very representative of the equipment used by the V. & T., but we are not using up the fabric of our artifacts with its continued use. Therefore, it is imperative that we raise the funds necessary to complete its rebuild. At the time of this writing, the actual figures are being prepared by Chris DeWitt (restoration foreman) and will be made available, hopefully by the time you are reading this. We are anticipating that those figures will come in somewhere around \$ 500,000.00. So you can see this is a very ambitious project and will require everyone's support and hard work to bring it to fruition. However, we are up to the challenge and will succeed with all of your assistance.

In order to complete this goal, we will be contacting every avenue possible, including grants from foundations, businesses, individuals, and corporations. Please "bear in mind" that your help in identifying those sources will be of great value. We certainly can use assistance in the grant writing process, so if you have or know of someone with those capabilities, please let me know so that those talents can be "tapped". As more details become available, we will be discriminating them to you.

Another great event on the horizon is our annual Santa Train set for December 1, 2, and 15, 16, 2012. This is one of the most enjoyable operation weekends that we do each year. After all, we are all "kids" at heart and look forward to seeing Santa. So please put these dates on your calendar and plan on volunteering for them. No matter your skill level, your help and support is greatly needed and appreciated. Where else can you spend such a rewarding time and do something so worthwhile?

So in closing, please keep in mind how you can assist us with our projects and services to the museum. Sometimes it appears that we do not say thank you for all of the hard work accomplished by the volunteers of our great organization; but believe me the museum would not be the great place it is without our efforts. Looking forward to seeing everyone down the track.

—Ronald J. Allen

### Union Pacific No. 844

The UP celebration train is led by the last steam locomotive purchased by the Union Pacific. Known as the "Living Legend" the American Locomotive Company 4-8-4 was delivered in 1944. In 1960 the locomotive was saved from scrapping and set aside for special service.

The train includes museum car *Promontory*, a 1965 baggage car that now holds a smaller version of the UP's "Building America" exhibit that opened on May 12, 2012. Named in 1993, it is the newest car in UP's Heritage Passenger Fleet.

*Union Pacific No. 844 as it heads out of Reno September 27.* Photo by Theresa Wojtkowaik



## ***New from the Museum Store***

### **View the building of the Transcontinental Railroad the way it was seen 150 years ago!**

This new book uses 218 of Alfred A. Hart's 19th-century stereo photographs, including many in Nevada, to document construction of the Central Pacific Railroad. The images are shown both as stereo cards and as red/cyan anaglyphs, with 3D viewers included. Text is by Wendell Huffman, NSRM Curator of History. The anaglyphs were prepared by University of Nevada, Reno journalism professor Howard Goldbaum.

***Waiting for the Cars***, item #18705, is priced at \$29.95.

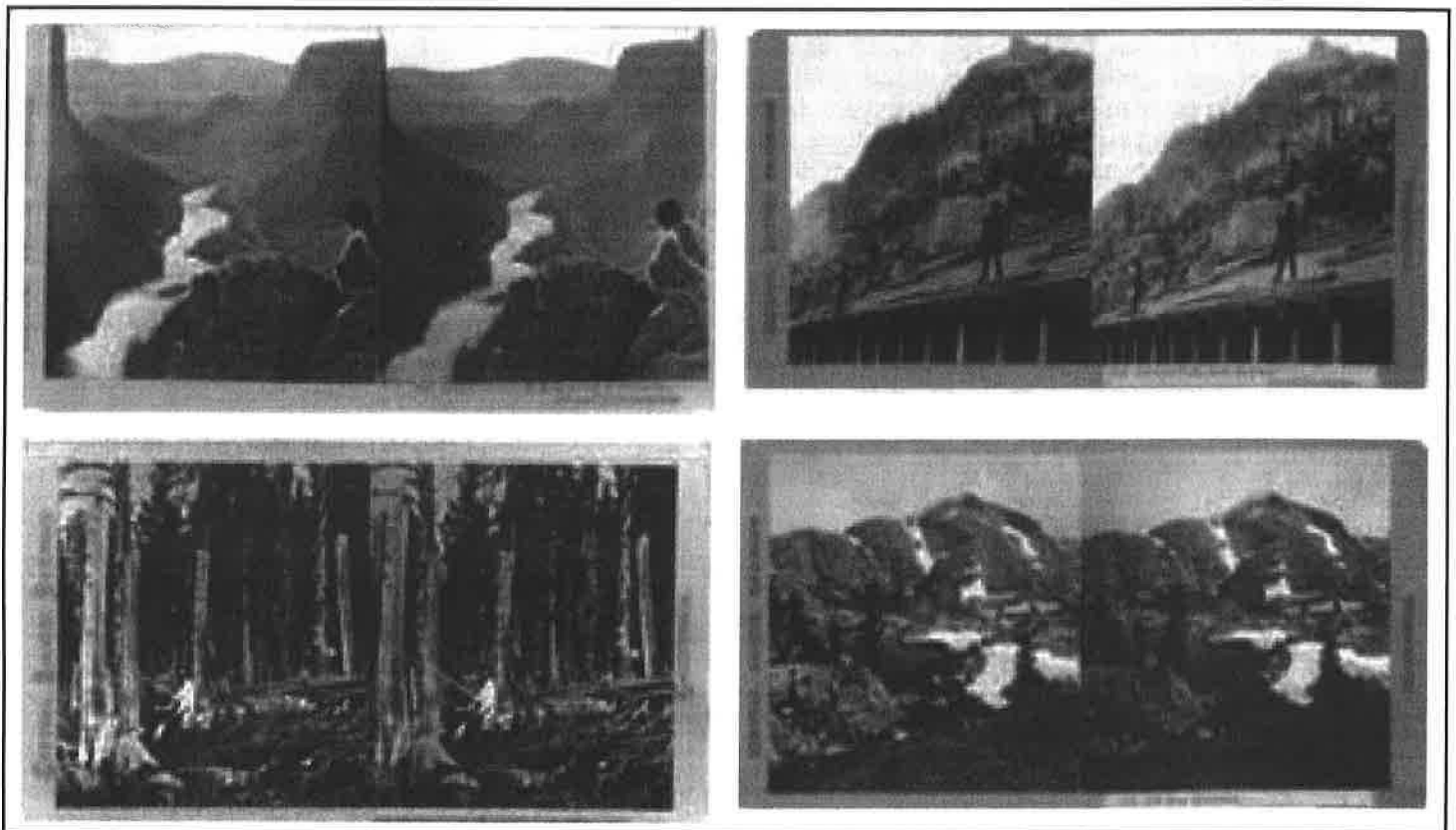
Plastic-framed 3D glasses (item #18708) are available separately for \$4.95 per pair; Clip-on glasses, (item #18708) are \$6.95. A 15-percent Friends of NSRM member discount applies to all three items.

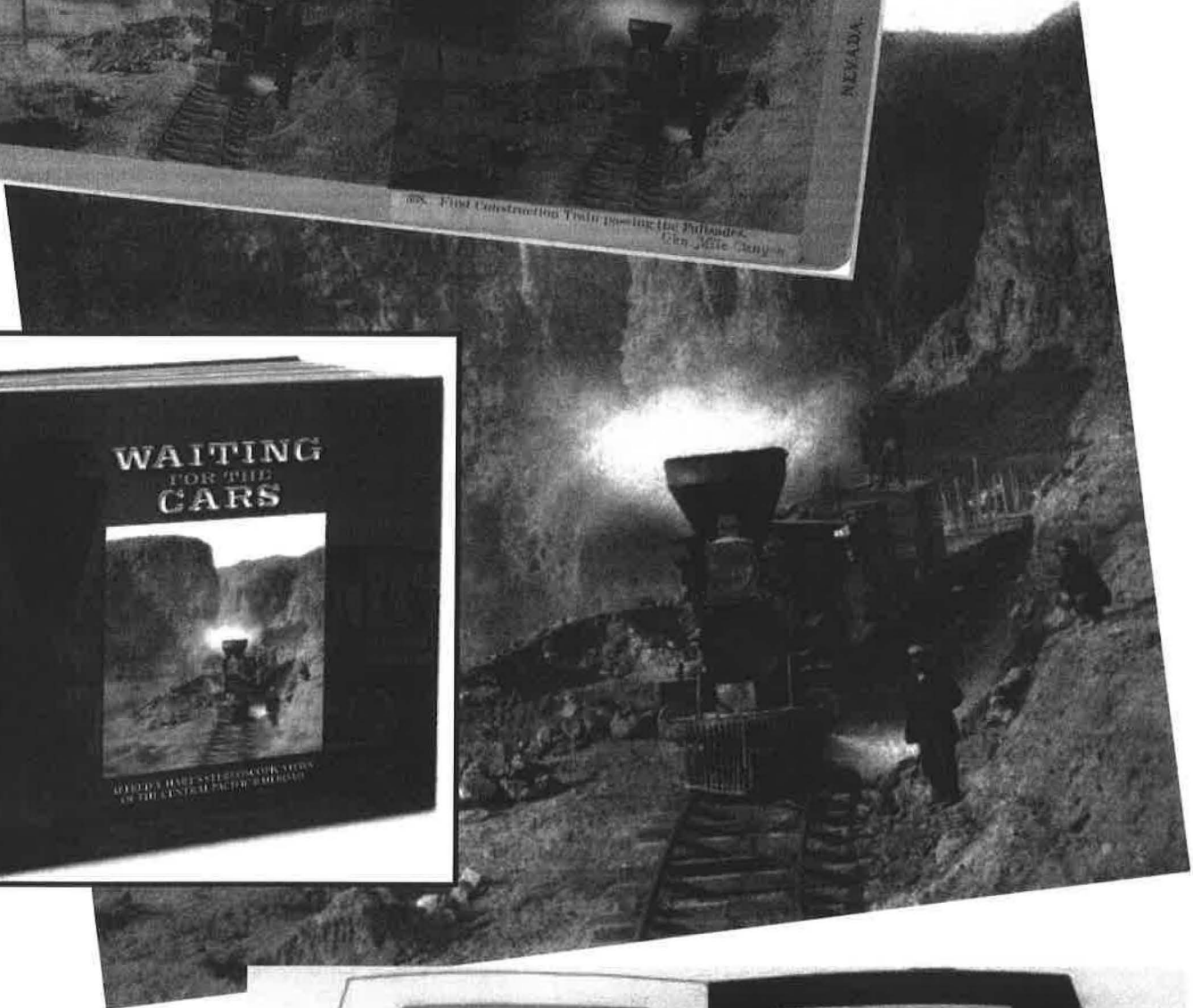
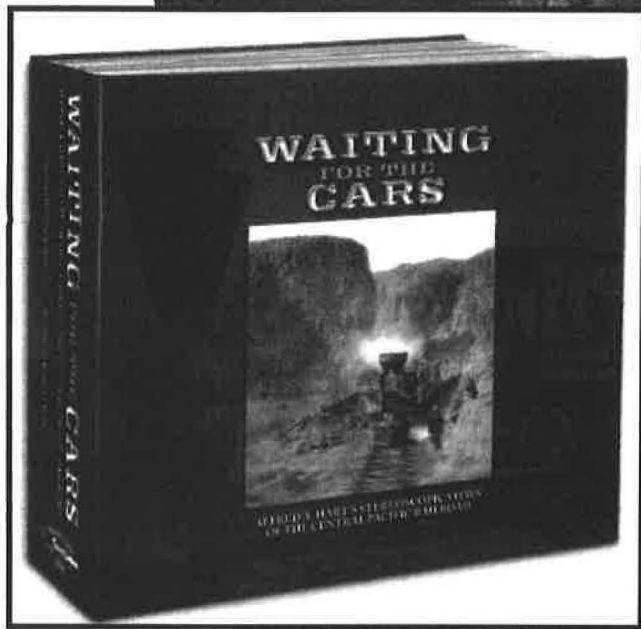
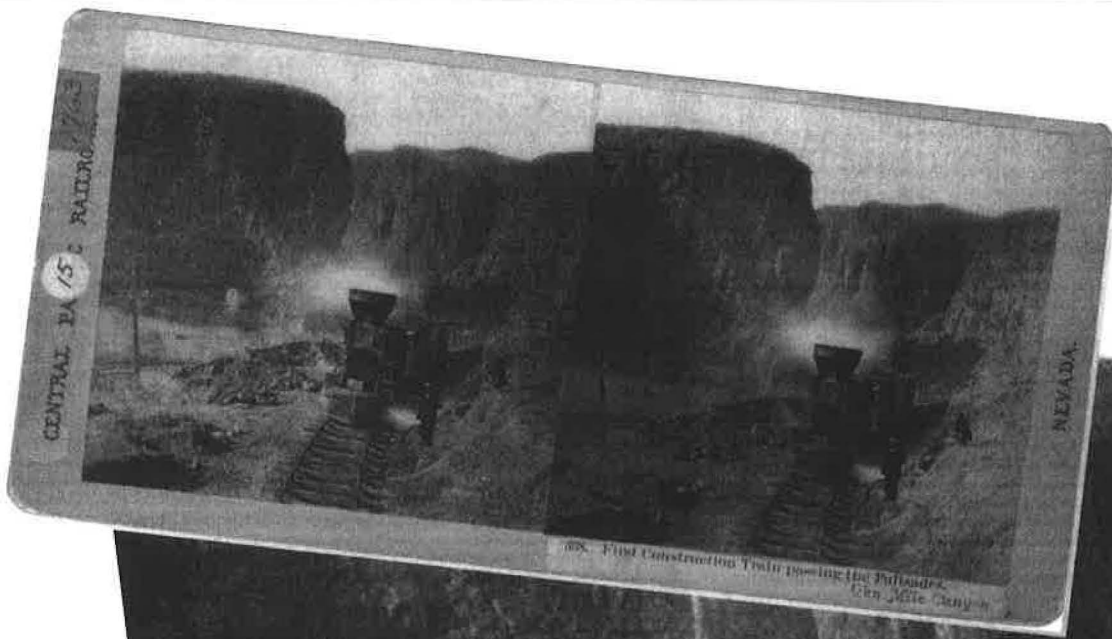
USPS Media Mail Shipping (2-8 Days) is available for an additional \$5.05. Up to two of items #18707 or #18708 will be sent at no additional shipping charge if ordered with the book. Send checks and money orders *payable to*

**Nevada State Railroad Museum**

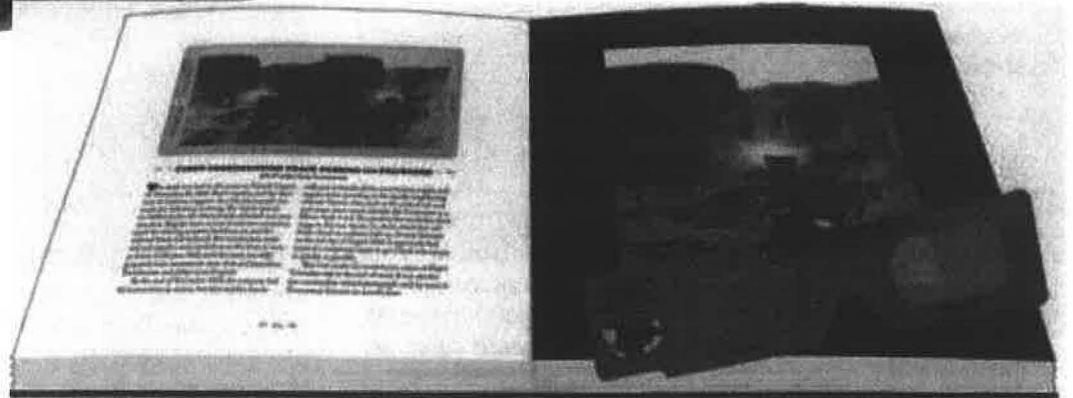
**2180 South Carson Street, Carson City, NV 89701.**

The museum store accepts VISA and MasterCard orders over the telephone Fridays through Mondays, 9:00-5:00, at 775-687-6953 Ext 237 or 231.





**See it  
in 3-D!**



*Continued from Page 1*

railroad routes ended. Both the Senate and House of Representatives were able to pass the Pacific Railway Act of 1862. President Lincoln signed the act into law on July 1, 1862, creating the Union Pacific Railroad Company. Under his direction, construction of the nation's first transcontinental railroad began with Union Pacific building west and the already established Central Pacific Railroad building east. Charters awarded to the railroads gave them territory to build on, the use of available stone and timber, and alternating 10-square miles of land on both sides of the track to sell for construction funds. This land grant was increased by the 1864 Pacific Railway Act to 20-square miles of land. The act also awarded both railroads money for each mile of track completed; however, these funds were loans to be repaid.

### **Recruiting Laborers in Race to Construct the Route**

Central Pacific broke ground in Sacramento, Calif., in January 1863. Union Pacific began construction at the Missouri River in Omaha, Neb., in December 1863. Competition swelled between the railroads' construction crews as they raced to finish first.

In 1865 the Central Pacific Railroad faced a severe labor shortage. Many of the men hired by the railroad worked only as far as the gold mines, then went their own way. Continuously looking to grow its forces, the Central Pacific hired Chinese workers against the wishes of many crews and supervisors. When the first group proved to be efficient and hardworking they reversed their opinions. In fact, the Chinese crews were largely responsible for Central Pacific forging through the Sierra Nevadas.

Nearly two years after breaking ground, Union Pacific track crews had only reached the outskirts of Omaha. Not until the end of the Civil War in 1865 were there finally enough laborers to make significant progress. The Union Pacific workforce, largely made up of Irish Americans, was supplemented by organized and disciplined veterans from the Civil War, including railroad engineer Grenville Dodge, now a military general, who joined the effort in 1866.

As the two companies approached Utah's Great Salt Lake during the spring of 1869, there was no consensus as to exactly where they should meet. On April 8, 1869, Union Pacific's Grenville Dodge and Central Pacific's Collis P. Huntington convened in Washington D.C. and with the Treaty of Hopper's House agreed the meeting point would be at Promontory Summit, Utah.

### **Union Pacific and Central Pacific Meet, Uniting the Nation**

At noon on May 10, 1869, the "golden spike" ceremony began with approximately 600 people in attendance. Positioned nose to nose at the end of the last rail were the Central Pacific's *Jupiter* locomotive and the Union Pacific's No. 119. A bottle of champagne was broken over the laurel tie, while a telegraph went out across the nation with the simple message: "Done." The transcontinental railroad was complete.

At that instant, coast-to-coast travel time was reduced from four to six months to only seven days, having an instrumental impact on the growth and development of the United States. The seven years of physically demanding and dangerous work, to which many laborers lost their lives, led to the uniting of the nation. Union Pacific had built 1,086 miles of railroad lines from Omaha, Neb., conquering the Rocky Mountains, and Central Pacific had built 690 miles from Sacramento, Calif., prevailing through the rugged Sierra Nevada.

The transcontinental railroad was started in the midst of a war that divided America, but its completion marked a connection between the East and West coasts that defined the United States as one nation.

### **Helping Union Pacific Celebrate 150 Years**

On Wednesday, September 26, NSRM participated in the Union Pacific Railroad's 150 year anniversary celebration in Sparks, Nevada. Staff and volunteers David Bell, Mike Godwin, Paul Martinovich, and John Williams set up a shaded information booth. With help from Brian Sheldon we had a board with photos of our equipment, the Jacobson Interpretive Center and Wabuska Depot.

We handed out museum information and showed off *Waiting for the Cars*, the new book co-authored by Curator of History Wendell Huffman. Wendell brought the tools of the trade, giving the public a hands-on experience while he explained how the railroad crews worked. Visitors were able to handle the tools and attempt to lift a piece of rail with rail tongs.

Staff carefully removed the track-laying car from its home inside the Jacobson Interpretive Center. Chris de Witt transported the car to Sparks allowing us to show the first piece of equipment to run on the Transcontinental Railroad. Union Pacific placed us next to a yard track, so that the track-laying car could be on the rails.

## NSRM Volunteers, Staff have a Busy Season



**Motorman Class, April 20-22**, was a great success. Volunteers and seven students had a fun weekend learning to operate the Edwards car.



**May 12, National Train Day.** Harry Leonard, John Williams, Paul Martineau, David Squire, Russ Tanner and Bill Kohler operated the MCKeen car for NSRM visitors on National Train Day.

**May 19.** Volunteers took the handcar to the Living History Fair in Reno. Cristol Greer, Matt Digangi, Mark Owens, and Peter Johnson promoted the museum while giving rides on the handcar.

**June 8-10.** The 2012 Carson City Rendezvous theme was "The first Transcontinental Railroad" with the NSRM hand car at the center of attention. volunteers also created a working telegraph system giving the visitors a hands-on experience.



*Volunteers Cristol Greer and Kevin Owens giving Shay Thompson a handcar ride.*

**Memorial Day Weekend, May 26, 27 & 28.** With the help of volunteers the public was able to board the No. 27, the McKeen car, and the Edwards motorcar in addition to rides on the train pulled by No. 25. (below) No. 25 pulls No. 27 out of the annex.



**Fourth of July Weekend, June 30-July 4.** Thanks to our volunteers the museum was open six days in a row. Train operated on five of those days.



*Museum Staff Frank Ackerman, Lara Mather, Chris de Witt, Wendell Huffman and Theresa Wojtkowaik pose with exhibits at Sparks. (See story, Page 6.)*

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**NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM**

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**Governor Sandoval Receives  
His Copy of *Waiting for the Cars***

On Wednesday, October 10, 2012, authors Howard Goldbaum (*left*), Associate Professor at the Reynolds School of Journalism of the University of Nevada, Reno, and Wendell Huffman, NSRM curator of history, presented a copy of their book "Waiting for the Cars" to Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval.

The governor said he had planned to sleep on the afternoon plane to Las Vegas but intended instead to peruse the book during the flight. Anyone who noticed the governor at the back of the plane with colored 3D glasses would have been amused.



**On October 17, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced  
the designation of Virginia & Truckee Railway McKeen motor car No. 22  
as Nevada's eighth National Historic Landmark.**

The Secretary noted that the car "Is the best surviving example of the first commercially viable application of internal combustion power in a self-propelled railroad car."

The Denver & Rio Grande Railroad San Juan Extension ( Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad) in Colorado and New Mexico, also was designated a National Historic Landmark.