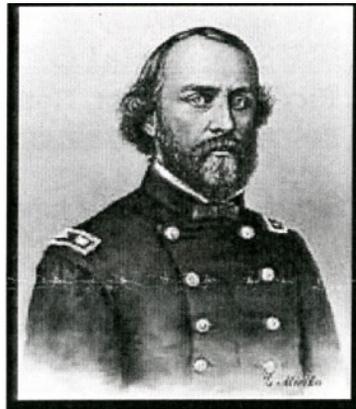


Southern Oregon Chapter National Railway Historical Society  
P.O. Box 622 Medford, Oregon 97501  
Newsletter for Jan 2010



**Major Sullivan Ballou**

**July 14, 1861**

*Camp Clark, Washington*

*My very dear Sarah:*

*The indications are very strong that we shall move in a few days—perhaps tomorrow. Lest I should not be able to write again. [feel impelled to write a few lines that may fall under your eye when I shall be no*

*I have no misgivings about. or lack of confidence in the cause in which I am engaged, and my courage does not halt or falter. I know how strongly American Civilization now leans on the triumph of the Government and how great a debt we owe to those who went before us through the blood and sufferings of the Revolution. And I am willing—perfectly willing—to lay down all my joys in this life. to help maintain this Government. and to pay that debt . . .*

*Sarah my love /or you is deathless. it seems to bind me with mighty cables that nothing but Omnipotence could break. and yet my love of country comes over me like a strong wind and bears me irresistibly on with all these chains to the battlefield.*

*The memories of the blissful moments I have spent with you come creeping over me. and I feel most gratified to God and to you that I have enjoyed them for so long. And hard it is for me to give them up and burn to ashes the hopes of future years. when, God willing. we might still have lived and loved together: and seen our sons grown up to honorable manhood. around us. I have. I know. but few and small claims upon Divine Providence. but something whispers to me—perhaps it is the wafted prayer of my little Edgar. that I shall return to my loved ones unharmed. If I do not my dear Sarah. never forget how much I love you. and when my last breath escapes me on the battlefield. it will whisper your name. Forgive my many faults and the many pains I have caused you. How thoughtless and foolish I have often times been! How gladly would I wash out with my tears every little spot upon your happiness . . .*

### Editors Note

**Major Sullivan Ballou was killed a week later at the first Battle of Bull Run, July 21, 1861. This letter did not find it's way home to Sarah until after the war was over in 1865.**

**Greetings from the Plush NRHS Editorial Offices-** Bringing the chapter news to the railroading faithful .....Ric Walch Editor, Home 772-6255 or cell 840- 4380  
engmgr@medfab.com

**Contributors in this issue;** Tony Johnson, Steve Bruff.

**Jan. Activities-** The following is our fan. activities schedule, this schedule will appear monthly to help remind everyone of our monthly meetings and any special planned activities.

**11 Jan. 7:00 P.M. @ Model Railroad Clubhouse-**

Our January general meeting program will be a presentation by Larry Mullaly "Ashland Railroading in the Golden Age of Steam". Should be a great show see you all there...

**25 Jan. 7:00 P.M. @ Model Railroad Clubhouse-**

NRHS board meeting, seeking perfection in an imperfect World.

Editors Note- Anyone that would like to contribute articles or pictures to the newsletter to publish please submit them; share your last vacation, train ride, railroad experience with us. I promise to publish them unedited as long as they are not X rated. Please submit them to my e-mail address

## **News Bits-Around the Block, Around the World**

**Membership** Most of you have probably already renewed your membership, if not please do not forget to send it in soon. At this point as the club is poised to take our organization to the next level every member is important. We need everyone's ideas, support and insight as we struggle with ever larger projects and commitments. **We need you; sign up soon, sign up often.** ...Editor



**Motorcar Madness, Continues To Run Rampant**— Recently the chapter received a donation of a Canadian National crew motorcar. We are currently organizing our recovery crew under the leadership of our “ever ready for a new adventure” Ken Hill. This is an all aluminum body motorcar with some very unique features. The cab is hinged front and back and is split in the middle. With the cab halves opened you have total access to the engine and drive train. This car sports a 4 cylinder Kubota diesel engine with hydraulic drive and disc brakes. Talk about a tractor, I think you could pull a full size coach with this hummer. This should be an easy restoration as we need to replace the alternator, starter and hydraulic pump, beyond that it should be just cosmetic work. This motorcar was in service until about 14 years ago and was then released to our donor and has been in storage since then. At press time I did not have any photographs but it is very similar to the unit shown below. Editor

### **CN Motorcar Similar to Ours**



Museum/Archives Building— Tony Johnson has been busy cataloging and storing all of our considerable collection of historic documents and photographs in the archival section of our new museum building. Tony indicated that he will be complete in the near future and that he didn't realize we had so much stuff. We will soon begin installing many of our artifacts in the museum section and we should be complete well before our April park opening. Tony was kind enough to include the following article detailing his efforts..... Editor

MUSEUM REPORT — During the second week of November, I made a lot of trips moving our chapter's collection with my pickup truck. About twelve trips were needed to move what I had kept inside a self-storage unit near my home. There were a few additional trips made hauling more that was stored in my garage and home office. By the time of the Railroad Show there were rows of boxes, railroad supplies, paperwork, books, and so on.

Opening and sorting through each box took about 60 hours of labor. About 75 per cent of the collection was already accounted for in my database, but due to storage space limitations, whatever was donated the last couple of years was not entered in the database, although we had records of what was donated and by whom.

Through the generosity of the **Southern Oregon Historical Society**, Jerry Hellinga is able to have them donate acid-free storage boxes, heavy duty metal storage shelves, protective plastic photo pages, with more to come as we need it, and we'll need it very soon.

The first order of business was to classify and separate each item. For example, we do not yet have the metal rack for book storage, so I have them temporarily stored on wood book shelves in the main room. This is way too small for our needs, but at least it allowed me to empty boxes and make sure we have each book and booklet accounted for. Eventually these publications will either be enclosed in a locked bookcase in the main room, and/or stored in the archives room.

The easy part was placing our collection of railroad videotape in boxes. At the moment we have 161 videos. With other times, such as public timetables and employee timetables, I would try to keep them together in the same storage boxes. The same is true for locomotive operating and maintenance manuals, rule books, instruction books, tickets, magazines and items like that.

The most difficult job is categorizing items that fall under "miscellaneous". This could be Santa Fe golf balls, a Southern Pacific keyboard pad, a pair of passenger car brass hooks to hold coats on, a Burlington Northern Railroad Frisbee, and so on. I tried to keep these miscellaneous items together for further sorting.

How large is our chapter collection, you might ask? I don't know. A few other members have previously donated items at their homes. I don't know what and how much they have because most of these donations were given to our chapter prior to 2002 when I became the newsletter editor. Plus, there remain smaller items, such as photographs, documents, and color slides still waiting to be moved from my house and sorted at the museum.

I can try to give you a small idea of how much we have. If you assign one railroad book one line in the database on where to find it, the book's title, the year published, the donor, when donated, and so on, that fills one line in the database. As of this writing we have over 3,000 lines in the chapter database, with a lot more to follow.

Most of the inventoried items will be looked at again for further sorting. An example would be photographs. Each photograph will be placed in a protective clear plastic photo page and placed in one of many albums. This will involve many hours of work. For example, in one box we have a collection of over 1,100 black & white photographs. Each of these photos is already included in the database, so with a few strokes of the keyboard, a person will be able to locate any of the photos in an album or file folder.

We have several empty file cabinets in the archive room. These will hold file folders containing railroad correspondence, maps, instructions, brochures and other paper articles. Medford Fabrication has offered us a large plat/blueprint file cabinet for our archive room. We will inventory items for this cabinet as soon as it arrives. Medford Fabrication has already told us they will be giving us a fairly new model computer, printer and monitor for use at the museum office.

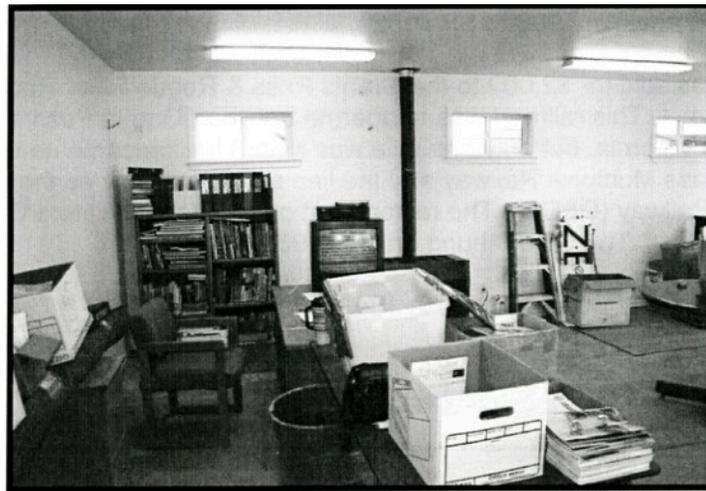
Items too large for storage boxes will be kept in the archive room, or they will be used for displays on the museum display floor. Very soon we will start moving in display cases and other large items from other storage locations at the railroad park. Since we now have a general idea of what's in our collection, we'll begin hanging displays on the walls, placing large heavy items at various spots on the floor, and so on. We want to have the main floor ready for visitors when the park opens in April.

We are pleased to announce two more donations to our chapter. My good friend Dave Martin of Mountain View, California donated six railroad ticket envelopes. They represent the following railroads: Missouri—Kansas—Texas (KATY) Railroad Company, Baltimore & Ohio, Gulf, Mobile & Ohio,

Louisville & Nashville, and the Northern Pacific Railroad. The sixth ticket envelope is from Chicago Union Station. The ticket envelope is used by the four railroads using the station at that time: GM&O, CB&Q, Milwaukee Road, and Penn Central. Thank you, Dave. Your donation will soon be on public display.

The second donation is a very heavy, cast iron, railroad depot stove. **Mr. Mike Broomfield** stopped by the railroad park in early last month and asked if we were interested, which we were. He told me it weighed about 350 pounds and doubted the two of us could lift it, so I called Art Turner for help. We met Mike at Ashland Fabrication to borrow a portable lift from a friend of Mike's. The portable lift made lifting and moving the heavy stove a breeze. The entire move from Ashland to the Railroad Park took less than one hour. Thank you, Mike for your generous donation.

### **Organized chaos inside the museum**



### **Thanks Mike Broomfield for the generous donation**



## **More Information on the GP&RR —**

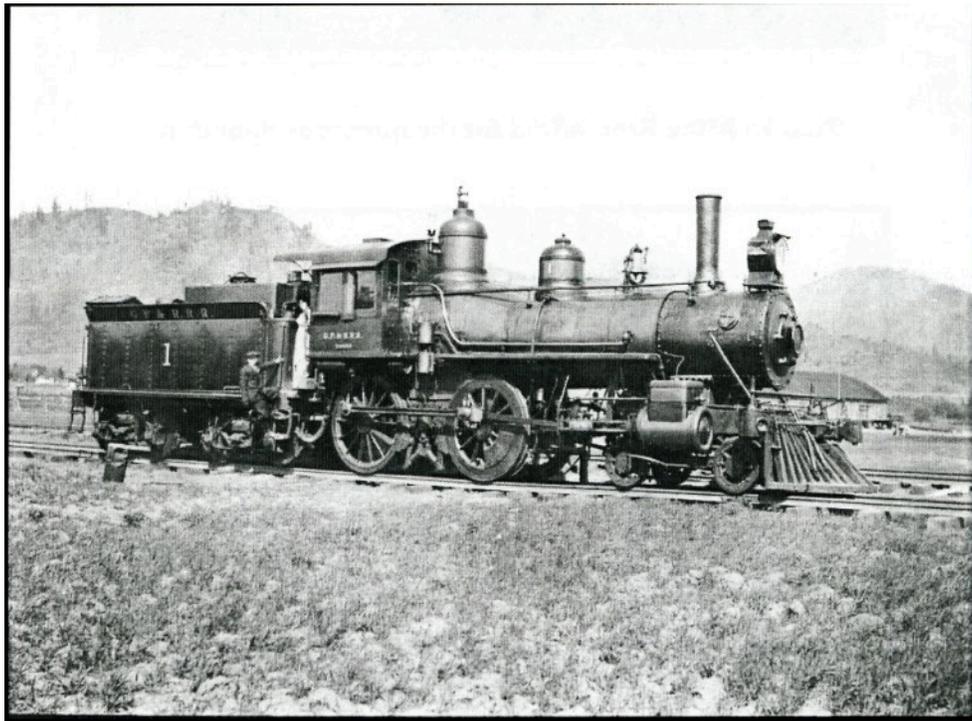
Here's a wonderful photo I found in our archives. It is the best photograph I've seen of a locomotive that operated out of Grants Pass, OR.

This nice discovery from our NRHS chapter archives is of Grants Pass & Rogue River Railroad (GP&RR RR) 4-4-0 #1 at Grants Pass, OR in 1911. Built by Rogers Locomotive & Machine Works (later changed to Rogers Locomotive Works in 1901, and later acquired by the American Locomotive Company in 1905) the 4-4-0 was built in October 1872 (c/n 2078) for the Central Pacific Railroad as their No. 180. It was placed in service on 11/4/1872. In 1891 it was renumbered to Southern Pacific #1287, and renumbered again in 1906 to SP #1524.

On 3/13/11 it was sold for \$2,000 to the Grants Pass & Rogue River Railroad to become their No. 1. This railroad was to operate between Grants Pass, Oregon and Crescent City, California, but only one mile was built. The line came under the control of the Grants Pass Municipal Railway and the line reorganized by as the California & Oregon Coast Railway (C&OC). The railroad got only as far as Waters Creek, 15 miles west of Grants Pass. The C&OC hung on until 1955.

GP&RR (C&OC) No. 1 was scrapped in 1942.

### **GP&RR (c&oc) No. 1**



Steve Bruff has edited and condensed a review of the book SNOWPLOW CLEARING MOUNTAIN RAILS by Gerald M. Best for our newsletter. It will be reproduced in six parts starting with part I in this addition....

Part I In The Beginning

Part II The Snow sheds

Part III Fire Prevention

Part IV The Bucker Snowplow

Part V The Rotaries

Part VI Snow is King

Part I: In The Beginning. In California, on the main transcontinental line of the Southern Pacific between Oakland and its connection with the Union Pacific at Ogden, Utah, is a section known to employees of the railroad as “The Mountain.” This is the Sierra Nevada range, with the railroad passing over Donner Summit at 7,017 feet in elevation.

For the original construction of the Central Pacific railroad over the pass, surveyor Theodore D. Judah recommended the Donner Pass route in part because his work was completed during fairly mild winters and his observations of indicators of maximum snow depth for any given winter led him to believe that even with successive snowstorms the highest accumulated level of snow would not be over 13 feet during a winter season. Judah: “It is only necessary then to start an engine with snowplows from the Summit each way at the commencement of a storm, clearing the snow as it .... ..a crust soon forms upon the snow which prevents its drifting badly.” Oh, such wishful thinking! (Photo 1: Truckee, California, after a blizzard during the winter of 1890)

Judah’s survey was adopted and used by the Central Pacific. But regarding snow conditions, Judah was badly misled by the information he had gathered. During his survey the winter was an unusually mild one, and he had measured the snow height only near the summit, not realizing that the worst snow conditions to be encountered would be on both sides of the two-mile level section at the summit. Ten years after the 1869 completion of the railroad a record snowfall of 783 inches (65 feet) — five times the depth observed by him — was recorded at Donner Summit during the season. (Photo 2: digging out a Bucker snowplow stalled on the mainline, date not known)

In the fall of 1866 during construction severe storms began and continued until by Christmas there was 12 feet of snow on the level at Donner Summit and deeper snow on the east and west sides of the summit. The exciting race with the Union Pacific was just beginning, one building west, the other east and both groups were eager to have the lion’s share of the government land and money subsidy which went with each mile of railroad built. To have ceased work during the winter while the Union Pacific forces continued west with relatively few interruptions due to snow storms would have given the UP an enormous advantage.

An army of snow shovelers was required to keep the ground clear. At one time during that winter the snowfall was so great that the only work which could be done was that of building the 1,650 foot tunnel through the mountain at Donner Summit because men working within the tunnel's bore could continue without interruption.

Forty feet of snow fell in the Sierra during that terrible winter and at no time was there less than 18 feet on the level. A plague of snow slides added to the workers' troubles; in one case an entire camp was carried away by an avalanche, the bodies of the workmen not being found until the following summer. Some of them still held their working tools in frozen hands.

In the spring, 12 feet of snow and ice remained as late as the first of May, necessitating the use of blasting powder to break up the huge frozen masses of ice. The severity of the winter convinced the management of the Central Pacific that snow sheds had to be built. No matter how many men with shovels were put to work and even with the aid of a monster plow hastily built at the Sacramento Shops it would be impossible to keep the railroad open more than half the time during a winter of heavy snows without snow sheds.

#### **Truckee after the 1890 blizzard**



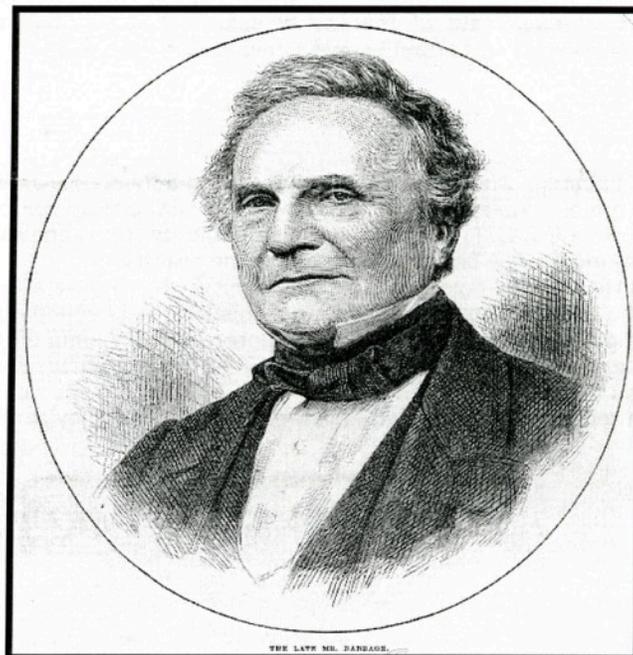
**Digging out a bucker snow low stalled on the mainline in 20ft. drifts.**



**So you think you know railroading quiz for today.**

Who is this gentleman and what was his contribution to railroading?

(Answer is on the following page)



ANSWER  
Charles Babbage  
(Invented the cow catcher)

A cow catcher is not a person but a device. It is a contraption attached to the train's front side. The cow catcher's function is to clear any obstacles that may litter the train track. The cow catcher was invented in 1838 by Charles Babloage, a British engineer. The cow catcher is still in use today in North America. The device is not used as much in Europe anymore because the modern European railway systems now have tracks that are fenced off. This makes it less likely to get any kind of obstacles or objects on the tracks. A cow catcher is also known as a pilot.

**The Last Page**  
(“Always leave them Laughing” Red Skelton)

Laws of infernal dynamics:

- o An object in motion will be moving in the wrong direction.
- o An object at rest will be in the wrong place.
- o The energy required to move an object in the correct direction, or put it in the right place, will be more than you wish to expend but not so much as to make the task impossible.

**Accident at a railroad crossing**

In a terrible accident at a railroad crossing, a train smashed into a car and pushed it nearly four hundred yards down the track. Though no one was killed, the driver took the train company to court. At the trial, the engineer insisted that he had given the driver ample warning by waving his lantern back and forth for nearly a minute. He even stood and convincingly demonstrated how he'd done it. The court believed his story, and the suit was dismissed. “Congratulations,” the lawyer said to the engineer when it was over. “You did superbly under cross-examination.” “Thanks,” he said, “but he sure had me worried.” “How's that?” the lawyer asked. “I was afraid he was going to ask if the lantern was |it!”

**Railroad**

A man who had spent his whole life in the desert visited a friend. He'd never seen a train or the tracks they run on. While standing in the middle of the railroad tracks, he heard a whistle, but didn't know what it was. Predictably, he was hit and thrown to the side of the tracks, with some internal injuries, a few broken bones, and some bruises. After months in the hospital recovering, he was at his friend's house attending a party. While in the kitchen, he suddenly heard the tea kettle whistling. He grabbed a baseball bat from the nearby closet and bashed the tea kettle into an unrecognizable lump of metal. His friend, hearing the ruckus, rushed into the kitchen, saw what had happened, and asked the desert man, “Why'd you ruin my good tea kettle?” The desert man replied, “Man, you gotta kill these things when they're small.”