

# THE MANIFEST

## August 2016



Greetings!

The summer has been going fast, and hot of late. We have had good attendance at the park despite weather and parking. Allen and Larry have done a lot of electrical work on the Burger Shack and we now have better lighting, including the storage room.

I attended the annual Sacramento Steam-up for G-scale steam engines, as did Jerry and Stephanie. We all had a great time running our engines, and Jerry purchased a couple while he was there. Any of you that are interested in steam in that scale would love that gathering.

Along the way home, we stopped and took pictures of the Shay that is in the park by Dunsmuir. Below are a few pictures of the steam-up and the Shay.



This is my little Ruby; I built her a few years ago.



Jerry's Heisler



Some cool standing displays at the Steam-up



Jerry inspecting the Shay.



It is a great little park where you can eat in a dining car, and spend the night in a caboose with all the comforts of home.

While looking through some old railroad stories I came across this one. The title very much intrigued me. I contacted the author, who graciously extended his permission to reprint it in our newsletter.

Smouchin' on the Rogue River Railway –  
the little engine that couldn't

By  
Bill Miller

Johnny Barnum was busting his buttons, walking down the aisle and taking tickets. His story had been printed in newspapers across the country and the 13-year-old was a national sensation.

"The youngest railroad conductor in the world," of 1893, he dressed the part from head to toe. He wore a swallow-tail coat over a white shirt and a buttoned up vest, and, though his black tie was loose and his shoes a bit scuffed, the lettering on his oversized hat told the world that this little man was: "Conductor — RRVR" (Rogue River Valley Railway). Chugging the six miles between Medford and Jacksonville on an unpredictable schedule, the RRVR had been in business since 1891.

The rules on the car were simple and Barnum had no problem enforcing them. There was no smoking while riding and no one could spit on the floor.

The local newspaper marveled at what a good job he was doing.

"He's taking lessons in the guttural rendition of 'TICK-ETS' and pays as little attention to the passengers as does the average real man conductor."

As it often does, the trouble came in the form of teenagers. Pretty young Jacksonville girls quickly discovered that handsome young boys were catching the last roundtrip coach in the evening. As slow as the train traveled, the opportunity for some serious smooching was just too good to pass up. Johnny learned to look the other way.

His father was William S. Barnum, chief engineer, general manager and eventual owner of the line. He was an energetic and cantankerous character with a foot-long white beard and could probably work up more steam than his railroad ever would.

Before Johnny started to help, Barnum had to do just about everything. He'd stand on the platform, shout, "All aboard," then take off his conductor's hat, run up to the front of the train, stoke the engine's boiler with wood and set the throttle on low.

While the train crawled along the track, Barnum donned his conductor's hat again, leaped off the train, waited for the last car to pass, then jumped on the rear platform and entered through the back door.

He collected everyone's tickets, climbed over the tender car and into the locomotive. There he drove the train until he had to play conductor again.

If only the train had kept to its schedule. No matter what engine Barnum bought or what he tried to do, the railroad became a laughing stock.

The nicknames grew increasingly sarcastic. It was the "Tea Kettle," then the "Cannonball," the "Jerkwater," the "Rogue

River Fast Mail," and finally the "Toonerville Trolley" — taken from a rickety old commuter car featured in a popular comic strip.

By 1926, it was all over. Johnny moved to Portland and Barnum sold the railroad to the city of Medford. With no more late-night smoochin' on the Jacksonville Cannonball, teenagers had to get creative with their social interactions. Anyone who's ever been a teenager knows it probably didn't take very long.

Thank you Bill Miller for this delightful, true story.

I can use more stories and pictures for the newsletter.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
7/12/16**

As I was unable to attend, I do not have any minutes.

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## UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

Allen Dobney will be presenting the entertainment for our upcoming meeting on August 9, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

"Ore Hauling Short Line Railroads of Arizona & California"

*If you know of any other events that should be added to our newsletter, please email, (chrismanleysteam@gmail.com), or call, (541-291-1705), with the details.*

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