

MOJAVE TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM FOUNDATION

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PLANE CRAZY SATURDAY

After Action Report – May 16, 2015



Thank you Voyager Restaurant for allowing us to set up inside this month, as the winds from the west were cool and variable.

Thank you to all of the members of the Tehachapi Pilots Society for flying in, we always love seeing all of their beautifully restored aircraft!

Thank you Bill Deaver, Ursula Finkbeiner and Wen Painter for helping on Saturday. It really was enjoyable to meet so many new people!

Mark Shinnick visited with Wen as pilots dropped by to sign in.



A delightful young couple from France came to Plane Crazy Saturday as they traveled across America on their Honeymoon! Guillaume and Roxane Guerlou live in Dublin, Ireland and he works at the airport. He was thrilled to visit Mojave Air and Spaceport and actually had the opportunity to meet Voyager Pilot, Dick Rutan!

The gentleman on the right was from Quebec, Canada and they were all speaking in French. Ursula had fun with them as they all reminisced about their travels in France.

Thank you Bill Deaver for the following report on the Railroad Photography presentation of Mike Masee:
At the May 16th PCS at the Mojave Air and Space Port, Mike Masee, a long-time XCOR Aerospace employee and MTM Founding Board Member, who is a talented photographer, videographer, and graphic artist, shared photos of a Nevada railroad that continues to preserve a heritage similar to Mojave's, along with photos of the old Southern Pacific Narrow Gauge line that connected in Inyo County with standard-gauge SP trains from Mojave for many years.

Nevada Northern

The Nevada Northern Railway, based in Ely, Nevada, is operated much the same as it was when it transported miners and the copper they dug from 1905 until the line closed in 1983.

According to Masee, mining began early in the last century when an enterprising businessman noticed that the nascent electricity and telephone industries would need a whole lot of copper wire to connect their services to their customers.

Mark Requa, president of the Eureka and Palisade Railroad in central Nevada, purchased two of the Ely area's largest mines in 1902, and built the new railway from Ely to a connection with the Southern Pacific Railroad at Cobre, Nevada, some 165 miles away. "Cobre" is the Spanish word for copper.



Additional trackage, known as the "Ore Line," was built in the Ely area in 1907 and 1908 to serve local mines.

As he showed a large number of magnificent photos of the present-day Nevada Northern to a roomful of railroad enthusiasts, Masee said the railroad's owner, which was the Kennecott Copper Company in later years, transferred the entire Ore Line, as well as the railroad's yard and shop facilities in East Ely, to the White Pine Historical Railroad Foundation, a non-profit organization which today operates the property as the Nevada Northern Railway Museum which operates a heritage railroad on this part of the former NN.

Passenger excursion train service in vintage passenger cars pulled during the summer by steam engines that hauled them in the past, is offered between Ely, Ruth, and McGill, said Masee, adding that he sometime manages the operation as a volunteer.

The Nevada Northern has earned a reputation as the "best-preserved standard-gauge short-line railroad in North America."

For information on the line, check their website at www.nnry.com.

Carson and Colorado

Closer to home, Masee is also working on a project to catalog and eventually publish railroad photos taken by the late Donald Duke, one of the premier rail historians of the last century.

Masee's current project involves photos Duke recorded and collected of the Southern Pacific Railroad's Narrow Gauge Branch in Inyo County.

The line was built as the Carson and Colorado Railway, incorporated in 1880, four years after Southern Pacific rails reached Mojave and the Antelope Valley.

The line was created with the goal of connecting Carson and Colorado rivers through what its owners hoped was some of the best mining country in the world.

By the time the line reached Keeler in Southern Inyo County in 1883 the owners realized they'd built "300 miles too far or 300 years too soon". They hung on for 20 years and then lost interest and sold out to the Southern Pacific.

In 1908 the city of Los Angeles built its aqueduct and the S.P. followed with a standard gauge line from Mojave.

Due to the economy, between 1938 and 1943, the SP shut down the northern part of the line, reducing trackage to 69.7 miles between Laws (near Bishop) and Keeler.

Known locally as the "Slim Princess," the line, powered most of the time by tiny narrow-gauge steam locomotives, hauled talc and other minerals mined locally.



It interchanged with the SP Jawbone line from Mojave at Keeler, dumping minerals from its tiny cars into standard-gauge cars from a platform over the standard-gauge tracks.

Over the years, the line's occasional steamers came through Mojave on flatcars on their way to Bakersfield and Los Angeles for major service.

One of the remaining locos is being restored for operation by a group of dedicated enthusiasts in a tent at Independence, where the engine has been on display.

For more information, check

www.carsoncolorado.com. A number of books have been written about this fascinating line, which was the inspiration for a cartoon series called the "Fiddletown and Copperopolis" in the 1950s.





The Tehachapi Society of Pilots made a nice showing at Saturday's event. Ronny Alldredge brought his pristine Beech T-34 Mentor, Jim Roberts 1957 Bellanca, Jim Wilhelm's Cessna 182 and Dustin Mosher's newly purchased 1946 Cessna 120!

Tom Nault offered this little Cessna for sale at the February 2015 Plane Crazy Saturday and Dustin couldn't resist!



Mojave Air & Spaceport's Ron Langford is always a big help and we appreciate him so much!

Thank you to our PCS sponsors: Mission Bank; Mariah Country Inn & Suites; Rosamond News; Kieffe & Sons Ford – Mojave and Rosamond; Karl's Hardware – Mojave and Rosamond; Voyager Restaurant and The Loop Community Newspaper – Tehachapi!

Mark your calendar for June 20, 2015 – 'TRAIN CRAZY SATURDAY with the Tehachapi Loop Railroad Club and Bob Alvis presentation – 'Railfanning in the Antelope Valley, circa 1970's'! See you next month!