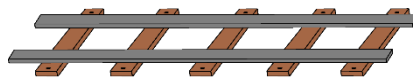


On Track



Vol. 5, Number 10, October 2026

If you are receiving this newsletter for the first time, welcome to the fold! We continue to catalog our visitor logs, and your email appeared! If you wish to be taken off our list, just let us know, but we hope that you will stay with us, follow us online, and visit us in person sometime soon. **Additional financial support will never be turned down (maintaining and operating a steam locomotive is expensive)!** Previous editions of this newsletter may be found on our [website](#). If you have comments on the newsletter, please send them to nmheritagerail@nmheritagerail.com or to your humble editor, [John Taylor](#).

FROM THE FROM THE PRESIDENT New Mexico Railroad Days 2026 is in the books—and what a weekend! For the first time, Santa Fe 2926 operated over our expanded mainline limits, completing approximately 80 miles of test runs. It was the longest run by a Santa Fe 2900-class locomotive since the days of regular Santa Fe steam operation and the longest train pulled by a 2900 since the steam era. **66 in its 100th year, during America's 250th anniversary. That is the stuff of legend!**



Seeing 2926 stretch her legs across the central Rio Grande Valley, hearing that whistle carry through the night, and watching the steam and smoke roll back across the train beneath a beautiful New Mexico sky was something I will never forget. And in that moment, I could not help but think about all those who helped make this possible over more than twenty years but were no longer here to see it. Their hands, their work, and their determination are part of 2926. I know they would have been proud. NMRD was made even more special by the appearance of ATSF 5704, one of Santa Fe's original Bicentennial locomotives, made possible through the cooperation and support of BNSF Railway.

None of this happens without strong partnerships. NMHR deeply values our working relationships with NMDOT, New Mexico Rail Runner Express, BNSF Railway, and the City of Albuquerque. Their trust, cooperation, and support helped make Railroad Days and these historic operations possible. And, of course, none of it happens without our volunteers, members, donors, supporters, and families.

Now comes the next chapter—and there is a trainload of work to do. If you can spare an hour, a day, a week, or anything in between, NMHR can use your help. More than twenty years ago, people dreamed of seeing 2926 back on the mainline. This weekend, we lived that dream. **High Greens, 2926 and NMHR. Send it!**

Respectfully,

Mathew Casford
President & Chief of Rail Operations

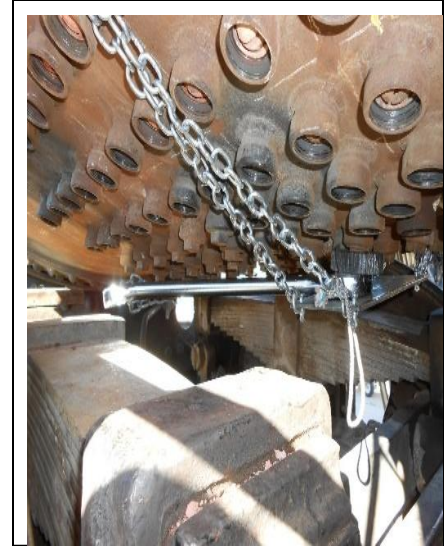
PROFILE OF A MEMBER “Remembering Ron Taylor” by George Trevor

On September 17, 2026, our long-term member Ron Taylor passed away. We will sorely miss Ron as he was instrumental in the formation of the yard infrastructure in support of the



many years of restoring 2926 back to operation.

Ron joined our Society in 2012 and provided expert machining and electrical skills. Besides



machining replacement parts for 2926, he was frequently called upon to devise tools to assist restoration activities. Of note, was the “wrenchito” tool (above right) he designed to free the many rusted stay-bolt caps on the boiler where access was difficult.

Ron’s legacy can be seen everywhere at the 2926 yard by the miles of electrical and signal cables that brought power and surveillance to Conex boxes and the yard. Who can forget seeing Ron on those tall ladders stringing cables and making the Safety Officer nervous as all get out. Today, the many mounted security cameras still provide recordings of taggers, metal thefts, and other nefarious actions at the yard.

As 2926 was looking more like a finished product in 2016, Ron, a professional photographer, conceived of the idea to string Christmas lights about 2926. The resulting effect was a magnificent display under the evening December sky. The sight was so spectacular that the Albuquerque Trolley was chartered to bring hundreds of visitors to bask in this once in a lifetime sight.



When we had leftover firebrick from relining the 2926 fire-box, Ron knew exactly what to do. The excess fire brick immediately went to creating our foundry. Ron and Bob Martin set in motion the casting of homemade brass souvenirs for our store and passenger car wheel bearings for Cumbres and Toltec Scenic RR. Ron fabricated most of the bronze pouring tools and designed the furnace burner. Who can forget the alarm horn followed by Ron and his team, clad in silver fire suits, as they removed a hot crucible and poured hot bronze into molds.



Without fanfare, Ron and his wife, Lori, took care of the many feral cats that kept using the steam locomotive as a home out of the weather. Once the Engine House was built, Ron installed a one-way cat-door as a hint for the furballs to take up residence in the “apartment” cat shelter he installed under the Pup trailer. He and Lori saw to it that all cats were sterilized in hopes of keeping the

feral cat population manageable. Every day, Ron and Lori ensured that our furry tenants were provided with plenty of food and water. To this date, Lori continues to support our fluctuating feral cat population.

We will all miss his skills on the site – the machinist, electrician, security guru (cameras, alarms, fence repair, locks, etc.) and so much more.

We wish to acknowledge Dr. Mike Harthshorne, former President of the NM Steam Locomotive and Railroad Historical Society, and Bob Martin for the many photos and insights to Ron's contributions to the Society

A SHORT HISTORICAL NOTE: How about some speed records?

The officially recognized speed record for a steam locomotive is 126 mph, set on July 3, 1938, by a British Mallard. The official U.S. speed record for a steam locomotive, 113 mph, was set on April 5, 1935, by a Milwaukee Road Class A.



Mallard



Class A

The unofficial speed record of 168 mph for a diesel-electric locomotive was set by a Russian TEP80 in 1993. The officially recognized record of 127 mph was set in Germany in 1936 by a DRG Class SVT



TEP80



DRG SVT

The current world record for rail-based transport of any kind is 375 mph and is held by a Japanese MagLev (Magnetically Levitated) LO series.



LO MagLev

In 1966, the New York Central fielded the experimental, jet-powered M-197 railcar, known as the Black Beetle. The locomotive was powered by two General Electric J47-19 turbojet engines from a B-36 intercontinental bomber which were mounted on a Budd RDC-3 railcar. On July 23, 1966, this combination was clocked at 183.68 mph.



The Black Beetle

HOW DOES IT WORK: There are lots of pipes in and on the 2926, but perhaps the most important are the 272 tubes and flues and the 58 superheater bundles in the boiler. This is where the energy in the fuel is turned into steam to drive our massive machine.

There are 52 inch-and-one-half tubes on the sides and in the lower half of the boiler and 220 three-and-one-half inch flues in the center and on the top half. They are welded to a tube sheet in the forward end of the boiler and swage-rolled into the tube sheet at the firebox end. Each of the tubes and flues is 20 feet long.



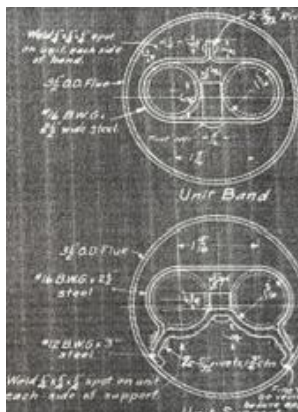
Boiler tube sheet

“So why,” you ask, “do we have only 52 small tubes, when, if the boiler was filled with them, there would be significantly more heating surface?” The answer, of course, is that larger flues are required to accommodate the bundles of one-inch superheater tubes.

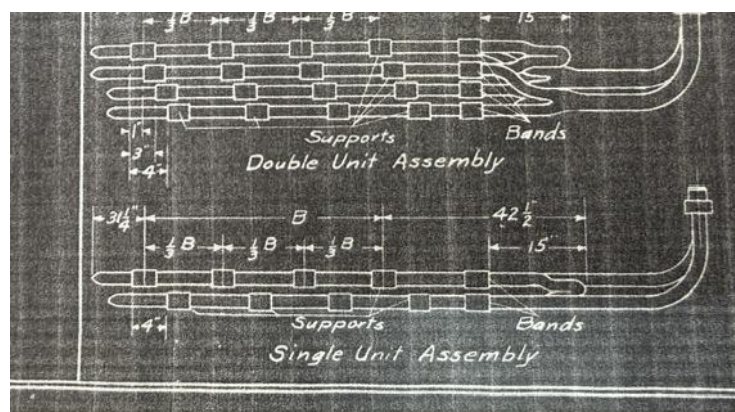
The tubes and flues carry the hot gases from the firebox which is in the rear of the boiler, to the smokebox in the front. These tubes are surrounded by water on the outside and heat the water to saturated steam. The saturated steam is then collected in the steam dome. About half of the steam in the dome then passes down the dry pipe into the superheater header and through it to the superheater tubes. These tubes have hot gas on the outside and steam on the inside, raising the temperature of the steam from 418°F to 700°F.

This “superheat” adds substantial energy to the steam at almost no additional cost in fuel. Superheating was probably the single most important efficiency improvement to steam design and technology in the 20th century. The technique became widely adopted after about 1910. Many locomotives built before superheaters became available were upgraded with them between 1910 and 1930. Locomotives not equipped with superheaters were referred to as saturated-steam locomotives or “soakers.” Superheated, higher-energy steam is what propels the 2926 drive wheels and provides energy to some auxiliaries.

Each flue has two superheater tubes inside, as shown below. The tubes are bundled into 58 clusters that ensure that each packet of steam makes six passes through the flues.

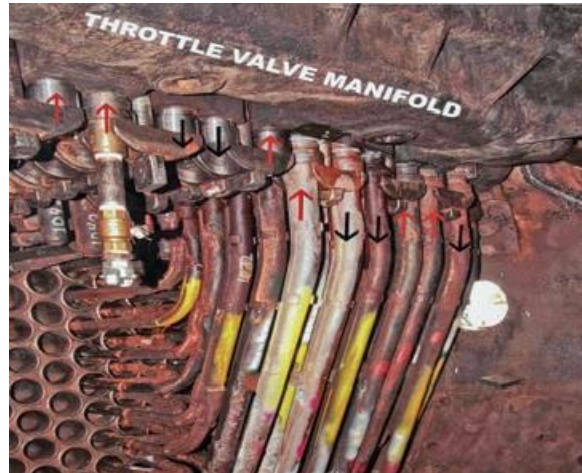


Configuration in flues



Configuration of clusters

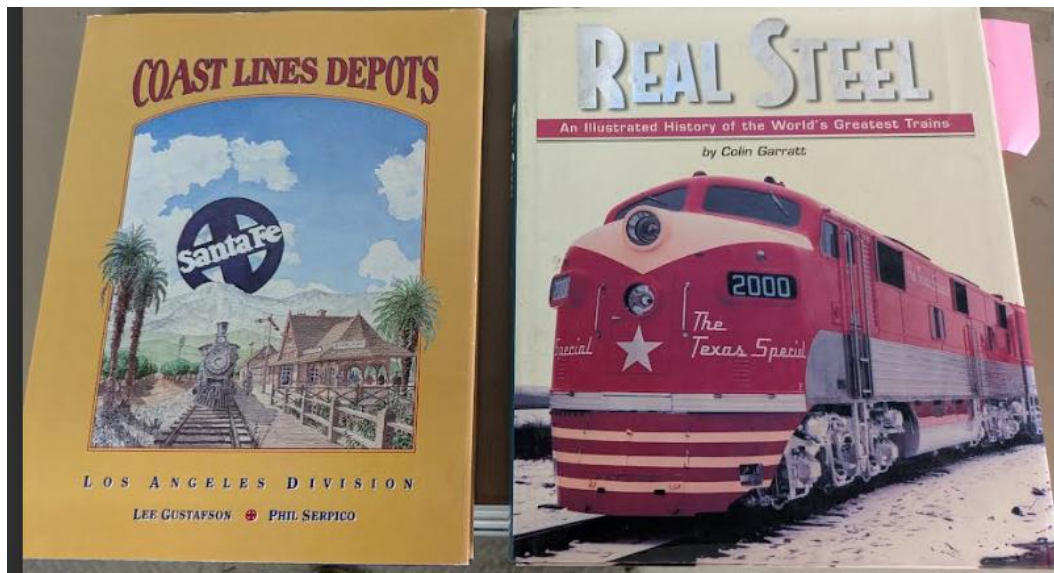
This gives us a total of nearly three miles of pipe in the boiler. This translates into 4,700 square feet of heating area turning water to steam at 418°F and nearly 2,400 square feet of heating area raising the steam temperature to 700°F. The superheated steam is routed into the throttle manifold, and the exhaust gases from the tubes and flues go into the smokebox and up the stack.



WHAT'S NEW IN THE STORE: Just arrived, Santa Fe metal signs in mint condition!



Also two new books:



How you can help and other tidbits: If you are interested in donating to our cause (because operating a steam locomotive is expensive!) go to our [GoFundMe](#) and [Venmo](#) links! Be sure to check out our [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [Instagram](#) pages as well! Other potential sites of interest: our friends at the [Wheels Museum](#), [Rio Metro](#), and activities at the [Albuquerque Railyards](#). Please see our Membership page to discover our other volunteer opportunities.

Happy and Spooky Halloween!

