



The **SUNDAY** Coupler

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Oh My! It's Almost Time

It is just three weeks until opening day. Work is continuing at a feverish pace, just ask Dale. Much work remains to be done but we should have enough done for operations to commence.



Work still remains to be done on the new crossing but should be ready soon.

Trains have been running to test the locomotives. 13 is ready to go and 928 and 535 have been run with no problems. Work still needs to be done on the rolling stock such as greasing and reassembling some of the cars stacked for space last year.



535 under steam for testing.

Earlier this month the City of Wildwood held their trail day. We were asked to provide one way transportation for the event and did although very few people took advantage of this.



One of our few full trail runs.

Work is continuing on the new car frames but it will be quite awhile before they are ready for use. Unfortunately we have had to correct some of the work done for us because of misalignment.



Jimmy Scott priming the first frame

Jim Greathouse has turned the souvenirs over to the girls (Barb, Gena, Paula and Betty) this year. Good luck to the girls in

their endeavor to increase souvenir sales.

Today we had a very special guest at the railroad. Joe Geders was back in the states on business and arranged to spend time with us today. He reports his Italian is bad but the high speed trains in Italy are very nice. He leaves tomorrow so have a nice trip home Joe.



Joe trying to look like he is working



Jim Strain and friend on 928



Put it on the right way Joe



Locomotives ready for testing



Tom Heil at work on 535

History

During the 1940's, Carlisle Schade had discovered a 12" gauge 4-6-2 in storage in Denver, Colorado. He was interested in purchasing it but could not get the owner, Ben Kramer, to sell or even quote a price. In 1948, a price for the locomotive and tender was finally set at \$2,000 and a little later a price of \$3,500 was set for the locomotive, tender and 14 cars. The locomotive was one of two that had been built for the Philadelphia Sesquicentennial Exposition of 1926, which celebrated the 150th anniversary of the founding of the United States. After the expo was over, both locomotives went to amusement park service in the Midwest. The WF&P dearly wanted to purchase the locomotive, but since the owner insisted on a one lump sum payment, negotiations were delayed until financing could be arranged.

After the sale was completed, the locomotive was trucked to St. Louis by the PIE trucking company and arrived at Brown Road on the morning of **March 28, 1949**. Total weight of the shipment was 8,975 lbs.; the locomotive and tender were estimated to weigh 5,000 lbs. As received, the locomotive was numbered 1501 and had a Frisco herald on the tender sides. This was a mystery since the full size 1500 series on the Frisco were 4-8-2s rather than 4-6-2s. Once again, Joe Hess was put in charge of the rebuilding.

Originally a coal burner, No. 1501 had been converted to oil and was quickly converted back to coal by the WF&P. The locomotive was first disassembled and cleaned. The boiler was retubed by the Nooter Boiler Company. A steam-driven air pump and air brakes were installed, new couplers were added and the original tender trucks were replaced with WF&P standard trucks. The tender was slightly modified to provide more space for both the operator and the coal supply.



Identified as No. 400, she was first steamed up on November 23, 1949, for a test run. The valve timing needed to be tweaked a bit, but otherwise, the test run was a resounding success. No. 400 was officially placed in service on December 4, 1949, and became the mainstay for the WF&P for the next ten years. With a tractive effort of 770 lbs. and a boiler pressure of 200 psi, No. 400 was a powerful and beautiful addition to the stable.



Contact Information

Contact me at wfpr@gmail.com. I can always use information to fill out these pages. Send me updates on subscriptions, birthdays, anniversaries and the like and I will try and include them.

I want to thank all of you for your support in this endeavor and appreciate the feedback. Greg Wapelhorst