

# NEW MEXICO STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

AND  
RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 27270, Albuquerque, NM 87125-7270—Tel (505)246-2926



## New Telephone Number

The NMSLRHS now has an on site telephone —and a new number.

The phone was installed upon completion of Warren Jenke's renovation of our WHO—World Headquarters for the uninitiated.

A minor number change was necessary. Qwest's Representative was helpful, and found a number ending in 2926, so only the prefix has changed.

The new number is:  
**505 246-2926**

The old number with the 332 prefix will soon go away.

## BNSF FOUNDATION GRANT

Chuck Mangold is a relatively new member, but he has already made a significant contribution to the Society.

When Chuck is not at the controls of a Air Force C-130J Super Hercules, he spends a lot of time writing proposals in an effort to find funding for the 2926 restoration.

One such effort paid off. Thanks to Chuck's efforts, the Society has a \$5000.00 grant from the **BNSF Foundation**, BNSF Railway's main vehicle for charitable giving.

Here is a sincere thanks to Chuck for getting up to speed so soon.

\* \* \* \* \*

## THANKS BNSF

AT&SF 2926 is a historical icon of the SF half of BNSF—the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe railroad. We are proud of that connection.

The grant continues a good relationship with BNSF. From the beginning of our efforts to acquire 2926 from the city in 1995, local BNSF officials and staff have been helpful.

The Foundation, BNSF management and employees can rest assured that the grant will be used wisely in bringing an important piece of their historical equipment back to life.

## CMO CHANGE

### Rick Kirby Is New Chief Mechanical Officer

The ATSF 2926 restoration is an all volunteer effort. Managing such a complex operation can be very demanding of one's time. Late last year, CMO Bob DeGroft discovered just how demanding. His business and personal responsibilities increased just when our on-site work level increased. He asked for help with his CMO duties.

This is where the strength of our Society was revealed once again. Up stepped Rick Kirby to assume the duties of CMO. Rick, owner of Accucraft Mechanical, is a longtime member of the Society. He has 35 years experience in mechanical contract work, ranging from large facility HVAC systems to power generation plants.

Bob agreed to continue some of the duties in support of Rick's role. Functions such as dealing with vendors, contract activities, etc, he can still help with. He just can't be on site as much as he has been.

In this arrangement, the Society is the winner. These two constitute a top notch management team. Each has built and run successful companies in the real world of business. Our budget would never allow the purchase of the combined technical and management skills they bring to the project. The only way we can afford such services is if they donate their time and professional skills.



Bob DeGroft



Rick Kirby

*These two are hands-on guys. Rick (L) applies his cutting and welding expertise, while Bob (R) pushes one of six wheelbarrow loads of soot from the smokebox.*



## CHANGING TEAMS

### NMSLRHS Member Goes Navy

Mike Swanson has for several years been a key member of the restoration team. He has spent many hours at one of our primary tasks—parts and appliance cleaning.

He is also a member of another team—the U.S. Navy Reserve. Mike has just changed teams. He will be serving on active duty for a year.

Mike is pictured here with a recently cleaned appliance. We wish Mike a good tour and look forward to getting him back at work on 2926 in a year.

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### MEMBERS SADDENED BY DEATHS

Late 2009 saw the passing of two Society members. We extend our condolences to their families. Both will be sorely missed by our members as well.

#### **Richard J. (Dick) Sons**



Dick Sons, 73, an original Society member (He was Member # 4) passed away in November. An electrical engineer, he retired from Sandia National Labs after a career of 31 years.

A lifelong rail fan, rail modeler, ham radio operator, and skilled photographer, Dick was also an accomplished classical accordionist.

Dick was especially helpful in one specific role. When Sandia Labs donated a rail car mover to the WHEELS museum, it was loaned to us. Dick could operate it. He had operated it at the Labs. He drove it to the site and trained other members to operate it.



Early on a Sunday morning in May 2002, Dick drives 'Lurch' up 5th St en route to our site.

The car mover is an extremely useful piece of equipment. Because of its ungainly appearance, it was nicknamed 'Lurch'. Lurch can move the locomotive, the tender, and any other rolling stock we might encounter.

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# BANGING ON A 2900

Mike Hartshorne, President NMSL&RHS

*The member featured in this issue doesn't bang on 2926. He is too busy banging on a keyboard, printer, and related computer equipment. But as our IT chief, he plays a very critical role in the restoration project. In describing Marlin Allison and his role in the project, President Mike Hartshorne provides proof that not every product of Española is an Española joke.—Editor*

Born on November 6, 1955 in Española, New Mexico was the son of a city civil servant, Marlin. This local boy grew up after the Chili Line was long gone from Espanola. He did the things kids did going to school and helped his mother clean up after her job as a bartender in the Mel Patch Lounge.



Young Marlin in 1956 in front of a typical New Mexico adobe wall.

In that establishment Marlin once met Burl Ives, one of my childhood stars, and a man who could sing a good railroad song. He also met ATSF 2926 as a youngster.

Marlin made trips to the big city, Albuquerque, with his mom to shop. She always stopped on 4<sup>th</sup> street to let the kids play on the 2926 in Coronado Park.

After graduation from Española High School in 1974 Marlin went to Wyoming to work in the oil fields for the summer. He learned quick about that line of work and enlisted in the USAF on December 6, 1974 leaving for Lackland AFB for his start as a "rainbow" recruit. (I'm told by authoritative sources that we cannot call them rainbows anymore but I lived in San Antonio for 10 years and thought that was a pretty good description of the incoming parade of youngsters about to get a tight haircut and definitely non-rainbow uniforms.) Marlin got his basic training there and was sent to Texas where he trained as an aircraft mechanic for the F-4 Phantom.

Then it was off to Luke AFB in Phoenix to be a crew chief on that aircraft and where his life would take a big turn. A gal named Barbara took her girlfriend to flirt with the airmen in Marlin's organizational barracks. When Barb spotted Marlin for the first time she immediately announced "that is the man I'm going to marry".

She did, but she had to chase him a long way. Barely old enough for his first legal beer, Marlin had completed training, and had been posted to England at RAF Upper Heyford north of Oxford.



Barbara isn't really so short. The little guy in the first picture grew tall.

On April 30, 1977 they tied the knot at the Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriage in Brackley, England. While settling into married life and his new USAF assignment, Marlin had another adjustment.

He was enrolled in a quickie course in F-111 maintenance when a savvy first sergeant had a better idea. He grabbed Marlin for a transient maintenance outfit where he would work on a lot of different aircraft including F-105s, ancient Canadian F-83s, German F-104s and help with the restoration of a B-17, Sally B (still flying as recently as the August Rougham Air Display 2009), and an A-26 (since wrecked).

In November 1981 it was back to the states for Marlin with a posting to George AFB near Los Angeles. He almost made it to the F-4 flight line but was needed as an F-4 maintenance instructor instead. That was doing well

until a buddy recruited him to train as a flight engineer for the C5A/B. That meant first surviving survival training at Fairchild AFB in Washington and then three months of basic instruction in Altus, Oklahoma, a month back at George, and then another three months of advanced training in Altus. Then, finally a duty assignment at Dover Delaware.

Flying out of Dover, Marlin's C5 trips would take him all over the globe. Once he left for Germany, then to Saudi Arabia, Diego Garcia, the Philippines, Japan, Hawaii and finally back to Dover completing a circuit of the world "hauling trash". The cargo could be a couple of M1 tanks or inventory for the Base Exchange or anything in between.

Then in 1991 came Desert Storm. It would pile on the flight hours. Instead of 300 per year it was 900 in less than that, —and some very interesting cargo. An East German Scud launcher with Frog missiles in the same load with a Patriot battery had to be hauled to Florida for testing. The hard work, long hours, and longer flights during Desert Storm earned Marlin the U.S. Air Force Air Medal.

Torrejón Air Base in Spain was a good place to gas-up between the states and Dhahran. Dhahran did not have fuel so each trip in included a quick

hop to a gas station at King Fahd Airport to wait in a gas line before flying home. Marlin flew a few missions he still can't talk about.

After medical retirement from the USAF in 1992, Marlin and Barb came back to Albuquerque. He enrolled at TVI and began working there as a computer jockey in their testing division. He became a member of a local ham radio club (K5MHA). At a tailgate function one day, another member, Travis Atwell, tipped him off about the NMSL&RHS.

In '03 Marlin walked in and signed up. We were just beginning to accumulate a large amount of information that called for an IT manager. He immediately put his computer knowledge and experience to work helping the Society. His IT skills became key to keeping the outfit running. He has served as a board member and is now focused on some serious upgrades to our already popular website.

In a visit to 2926 you might not find him inside the boiler or lugging wrenches. Look for him in the reefer behind a computer keeping our records and restoration business straight.



(Above) Marlin at his C5 duty assignment at Dover.  
(Below) And in his 'office', a C5 flight engineer's console.



Marlin, Española native and our IT guru, with wife, Barbara.

Lots of folks who never see the 2926 in person can track the project because Marlin is moving our electrons around. Not the dirtiest job on the site but one of the most important! The little boy who played on the 2926 in Coronado Park is now a big boy. And now he is back with that lovely big machine. Where have I heard that story before?



**TWO VERY DIFFERENT BIRDS:**

(L) Sally B, the WWII era B-17 Flying Fortress that Marlin worked on at Upper Heyford. It is just a few months younger than AT&SF 2926.  
(R) A C-5 Galaxy on which Marlin served as flight engineer. COST: B-17—\$238,329 C-5—\$152.8 to \$179 Million (fiscal 1998 dollars)

**HARDNESS TESTS**

Another 2926 boiler milestone was completed in December. A select group of members headed by Dr. Frank Gerstle, retired Mechanical Engineer, performed hardness tests on all of the boiler sheets.

Hardness measurements are done to get tensile strength data for FRA Form Four compliance. A series of six measurements were obtained for each specific sheet of steel that comprises the boiler. The measurements obtained were within the limits specified.

*Bob DeGroft*

**SPREADING THE 2926 STORY**

Information about the resurrection of 2926 will soon be available throughout New Mexico and beyond. Our story will be told with an informative card placed in racks throughout the state, and distributed by NMSLRHS members.

The rack card project, with New Mexico Dept. of Tourism funding, involved a number of NMSLRHS members. But kudos go to Andy Rutkiewicz in Albuquerque and Patsy Mastrobouni, in Irvine California. They did most of the work, and the result is a really eye-catching card.

The Department of Tourism, Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau and other organizations will display the card to help us spread the news that some day in the not too distant future, 2926 will bring steam power back to the high rails in New Mexico.

**HAVE A SAFE NEW YEAR**

The coming year will be quite pivotal for the restoration of 2926. We are getting ever closer to that magic day when 2926 comes to life again. 2010 will see major progress on it's boiler and if you'll excuse the pun "the light at the end of the tunnel" may just be 2926.

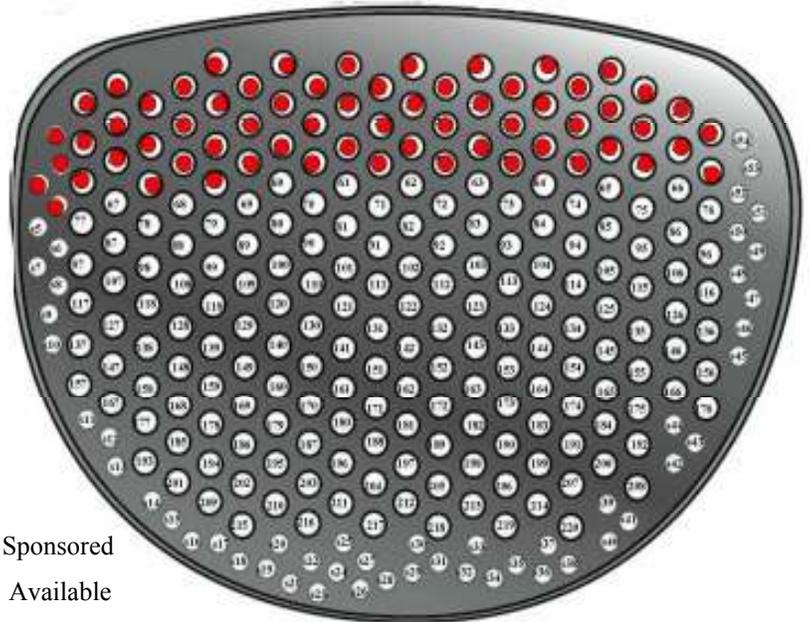
Our spirits are high and getting higher. Even so we must be on guard. We can't let enthusiasm override common sense and we certainly cannot let our guard down when it comes to safety. Taking short cuts in the name of enthusiasm is a sure recipe for problems.

Join with us then in increasing our efforts to make 2010 a banner year for safety so that we all will be here to enjoy the light of 2926 emerging from the tunnel.

*Jon Spargo, CSO*

**HELP RAISE FUNDS TO RESTORE 2926  
SPONSOR ONE OR MORE FLUE TUBES**

Sponsorship can honor sponsor, spouse, children, grandchildren, friends, other relatives, organizations, or it can be anonymous.



**FLUE SPONSORSHIP: 3.5 Inch Flue—\$300 2.5 Inch Flue—\$200**

Check website for current status of tubes sponsorship. <http://www.nmslrhs.org/>

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*(Deaths: Continued From Page 2)*

**Charles Griffin**

Former locomotive engineer and NMSL&RHS member Charles Griffin passed away in December. Former railroad employees from the steam era are always welcome on site. There is much we can learn from them.

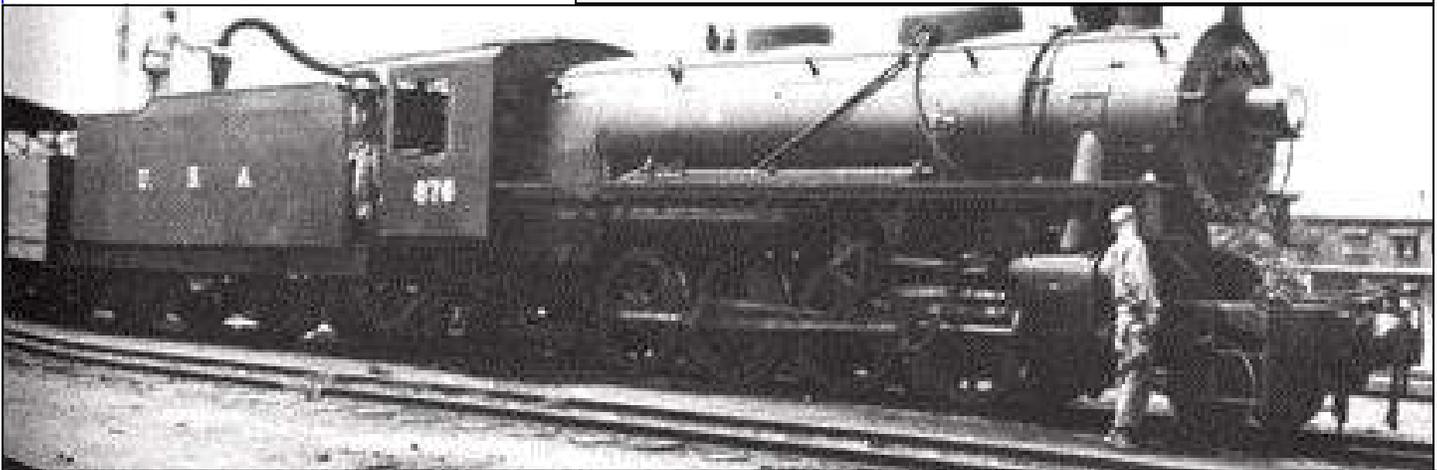
From WWII until he retired, Mr. Griffin operated a wide range of steam locomotives, including the 2900 and 5000 series AT&SF locomotives. He loved to drop by and spend some time with a surviving 2900.

We will miss his visits to see 2926.

Pictured below is one of Mr. Griffin's early rides during WWII.



Charles Griffin, Engineer



Railroad engine in the yard at San Fernando Pampanga on Luzon, Philippine Islands—Sgt Charles Griffin, Engineer