



# Maricopa Live Steamers

## STACK TALK

February, 2021

The official newsletter of the Adobe Mountain Railroad in Phoenix, Arizona.  
Operated by the Maricopa Live Steamers Railroad Heritage Preservation Society.



### President's Page



One month in and I have not been impeached yet. Dang!

I have some very sad news. Raymond Hughes passed away Sunday, Jan. 24. Ray and Charlotte had been married 53 years. Both have come out and helped repair sidings all over the railroad. Ray will be missed, but Charlotte says she will be coming out and helping with track repairs after she recovers from surgery. Our condolences to the family.

Our crack security team has found the doors to the club house unlocked a time or two this month. **PLEASE**, if you think you are the last one out the gate, get out of your car and check all three doors that should be locked. That goes for the gate also. This is your club. Please take care of it. Lights are another problem. People come in at night and leave the lights on all over the place, and don't bother to turn them off (the one or more of you know who you are). Part of your dues pays for the electricity. Money does not grow on the mesquite trees at the park.

Big **THANK YOU** to Scotty Brooks for building two number 7 switches. Bill Lowe had a heart attack a few weeks ago after leaving the park. He was in the hospital two days getting a stent in one artery, with another one later in Feb. He is recovering very well at home. Take it easy, Bill, and rest up well. Scotty stepped up and made the switches that Joe Schnyder and Dave Kulman needed. **PLEASE**, if you see Joe Schnyder, Dave Kulman, Terry Liesegang or Scotty Brooks, **THANK THEM** for all of the hard work they do on their hands and knees repairing the track.

Just a friendly reminder, the club is keeping the FIRE BAN in place due to all the weeds that are on the property. Propane fired engines are allowed to run at this time. Safety first. — Perry

### Vice President's Page



I see **GREEN**. Well, it rained and now I see little green weeds popping up, so here we go with this year's crop of weeds. We have managed to get quite a bit of work done on the track this month, and will continue on with our concrete tie program with **MANY THANKS** to all who have contributed to our success.

I wish to stress to all who come out to run a train to watch the board for route closures. When I close a route, there will be a red board to your right as you approach the beginning of that route. I usually put them within the first 100 feet of the subdivision so that, if you start down that route, you should see the stop sign. I do not put them in the middle of the track because we still need access to the area with our work trains. With that rain, and now a warm day, the weeds are starting to grow really well now. I am hoping the county will lift the fire ban soon, but looking at the park, I don't think it will be lifted for very long before we will have to go back to Stage One fire restrictions again. That is propane fires only, and no solid fuels. I think the type of weeds that were imported here, from who knows where, are going to be a nuisance and a menace to us from now on. In 2020, we had many volunteers help out with weed control so that we could run our trains, and I want to **THANK EACH AND EVERY ONE** who helped.

*(continued next page)*

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**VICE PRESIDENT PAGE (cont'd)**

During the week that we would have had the Operations Meet, some people had made their travel plans long ago, and since they are members, they came out and rode their trains all week long and had a wonderful time. I received their reviews of their rides, and they all agreed how much better the ride is with the wide base concrete ties that hold the track stable. We also received quite a few donations to the concrete tie fund to keep up with the track rehabilitation projects we are working on.

Due to the pandemic, there will be no Spring Meet, but members can come and play trains. In March, when we would have had a Meet, some people had made their travel plans long ago, so they plan to be out here during that week. I do not plan to have anything closed during that week. Let's just hope Mother Nature does not slap me upside the head and say it's not nice to mess with Mother Nature.

Again, I wish to **THANK ALL** of the folks who donated to the concrete tie and steel rail program, as we are changing switches to plastic ties and steel rails to last for many years to come. We were inspecting the switches in front of the tower that get the most use by nearly every train on the railroad, and the wear has been very slight for being in for over ten years. It looks like that will last for many years before we need to think about replacing any rails through that area. — Joe

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*With Deepest Sympathy and Friendship  
during your time of loss*



To: *Charlotte  
Hughes*



To: *Bill  
Lowe*

*May your hospital stay  
be safe and successful  
with a speedy recovery.*

**COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS are still in place.**

**For members' health and safety, until further notice, all social activities at the Park have been cancelled.**

State mandates are still in place prohibiting gatherings of more than 10 people, and everyone must stay at least 6 feet apart.

**ONLY members / immediate family can be at the Park. NO parties or gatherings of any type may take place.**



From the Desk of: Gail Woodward

Subject: **Bob Woodward Estate Sale**

Cash or Cashier Check [GAIL080953@yahoo.com](mailto:GAIL080953@yahoo.com)

View/Pick Up at home or LALS – California

7.5" Gauge – Two TANK cars \$ 800 each  
CABOOSE \$ 500

1" Scale – Three FLAT cars w/containers \$ 500 each  
GONDOLA \$ 500  
FLAT car w/trailers \$ 500  
CN Steam Engine \$ 9,000 OBO





From the Desk of: Joe Schnyder – Consignee

Subject: **Rolling Stock and Engine FOR SALE**

This is all 2.5" scale equipment, 7.5" gauge.  
All have RMI trucks and couplers.

Engine -- Phoenix sound, Electric drive,  
Custom made in Houston, Texas.

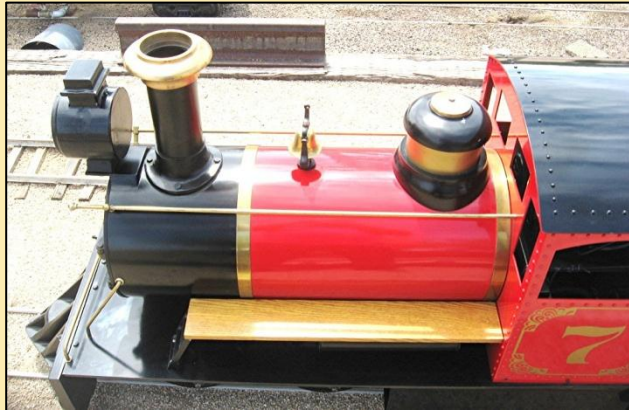
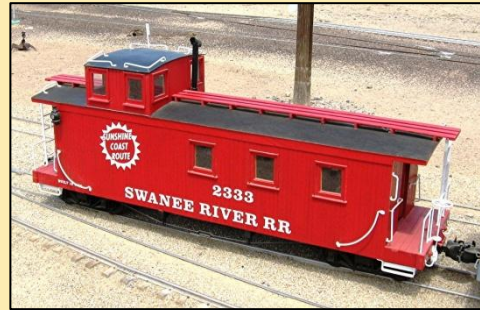
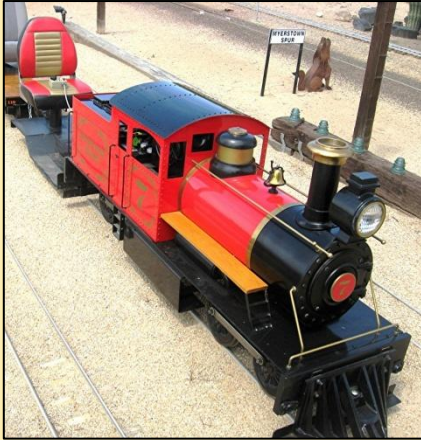


**\$10,000 dollars for Locomotive and riding car with new batteries**

**\$15,000 for the whole train**



Joe Schnyder 623-332-0238





# MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS!

### story and photo by Donna Hohm

Tim Freeman showing his recently purchased steam engine to his grandfather.



### story and photos by Hank Gallo

Za'vion and I finally began to display some of Teacher Frank's Art Class' Gnome Homes in the Park. Teacher Frank E.'s students created over 90 Gnome Homes for our Park. I'll post more photos as we put them on display. Each is a unique, beautiful work of art. The existing pen and horses are a bit aged.



### story and photos by Hank Gallo

Steve Bible and his new Pacific loco. He just completed the build and it is performing great.

Marty Simmon is engineering Steve's new Pacific while Steve is relaxing in the Conductor car.







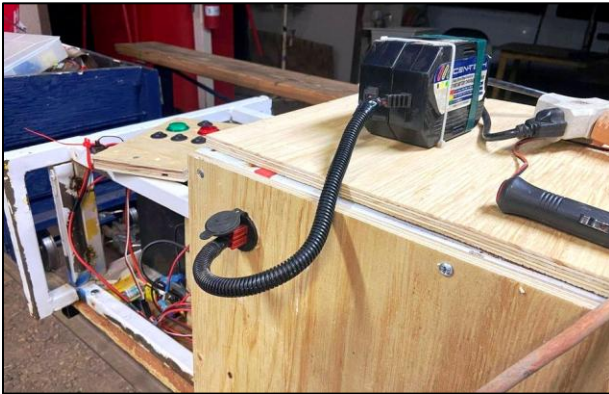
**December 27, 2020**  
Hot air balloons just outside the Park.

**story and photos by Hank Gallo**

We're sorry our club is still closed to the public, but several of our members continue to maintain the property. Members are also allowed to use the park with their families. On this beautiful day, other members were out enjoying a train ride. So, Paul Hegreess and I took our children out to do some train riding and playing. Paul has adopted "The Playground" and is improving it with a new barn and a movie screen for hosting family movie nights. Cody and Za'vion are seen here having fun.

**story and photos by Hank Gallo**

Member Jeremiah Sheward was in town working on his recent acquisition, an electric rail speeder and some cars to haul. He has some track at his house, but it's too tempting not to take advantage of our 18 miles of track.



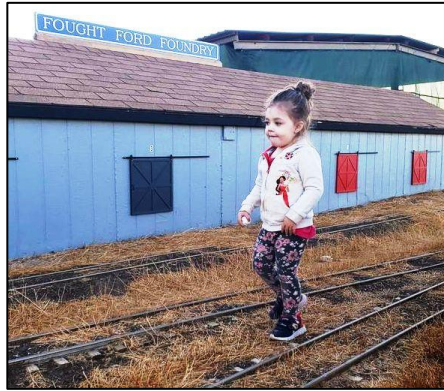


stories and photos by Hank Gallo

Za'vion and I went out to the park Sunday. We took a short ride and met with Paul Hegreness and his family, who were already there running their train. Next week we'll run the Mad Dog train that Fred Greenwald and Mike Grant repaired for us. Then it will be ready for Jr. Engineer School whenever we reopen.

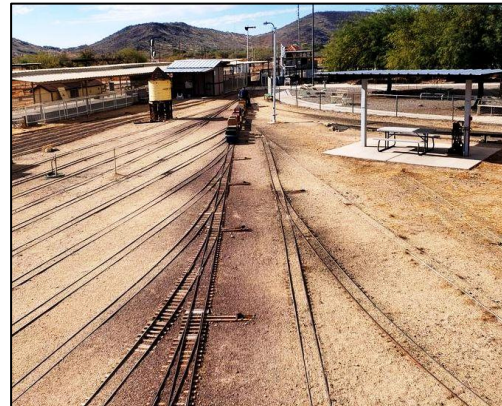
Today, Za'vion was napping, so I brought granddaughter Olivia out to the Park to run our train and do some exploring.

After three hours of playing (with still more to go) Za'vion needed a little rest time. He fell asleep on the way back to the barn.



Here's the view from Zoo Tower, Za'vion's favorite place for train watching.

Za'vion likes to imagine driving some of our larger machines.



Olivia and her Uncle Za'vion, soon to be Junior Engineer Trainers





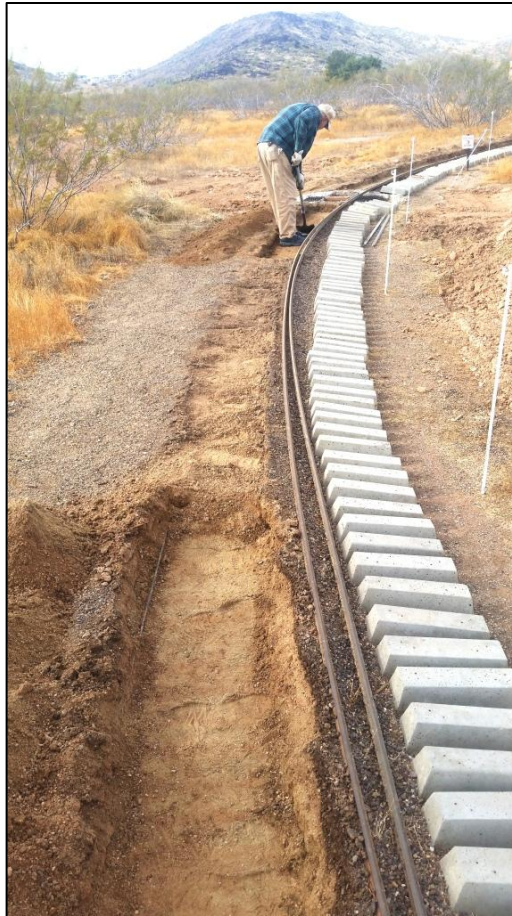
# TRACKING TRACKSIDE PROGRESS 2020

Here is Dave Kulman cleaning out the ballast from the old track and getting it prepared for the concrete ties that go in the hole. This is from the West switch at Racewatch to the switch just before the Arntchoo crossing, which takes you straight onto West Werner or reroutes you onto Eastbound Arntchoo for the trip back to Adobe station. Just Dave and I digging out the ballast took all day, and then putting the ties into the hole took the better part of an afternoon. This process is very time and labor intensive, but the end result is very positive for a long lifespan of the railroad. After getting the ties in the hole, it will take about three days to secure the rails to them and another day to fill in the ballast, followed by another day to level and tamp the ties. The final day is to sweep the ties down to expose the concrete tops, because we do not have to worry about the Arizona summer sunshine drying out the concrete ties.

After we get done at Racewatch, we will be doing a section between the East switch of Moore Turn to Pieter Pass, and will have that part of Far Flung closed for a while. East Werner will be finished and back open before we start on Far Flung so that there won't be more than ONE branch closed at any time while we are working. I have other people working on places where there are East- and West-bound tracks, and we will always have one side open while we work on the other side, so as not to completely close that branch while we work.

## RACEWATCH

story and photos by Joe Schnyder



Where we will be working, we will have tracks routed around our work areas, and I will have red boards located by the track to let you know where it is not passable. You will be able to get around where we are working as we will have switches lined for your movement around any tracks that are out-of-service.





# TRACKING TRACKSIDE PROGRESS 2020

## Concrete BLOCK BRIDGE I

story and photos by Joe Schnyder

Here is a new concrete block bridge to replace a wooden bridge for water runoff, if it ever rains again in Arizona! These concrete blocks have proven to be termite resistant and will not dry out and rot away like wood does. Once we get the rocks off to the side and all filled in around it, we hope to never have any other repair work to do here. Wherever we have installed these, we have found that they carry quite a bit of water through the opening and have not had one wash out yet. We are looking at this as one less place to have a problem with wood drying out in the Arizona sun.

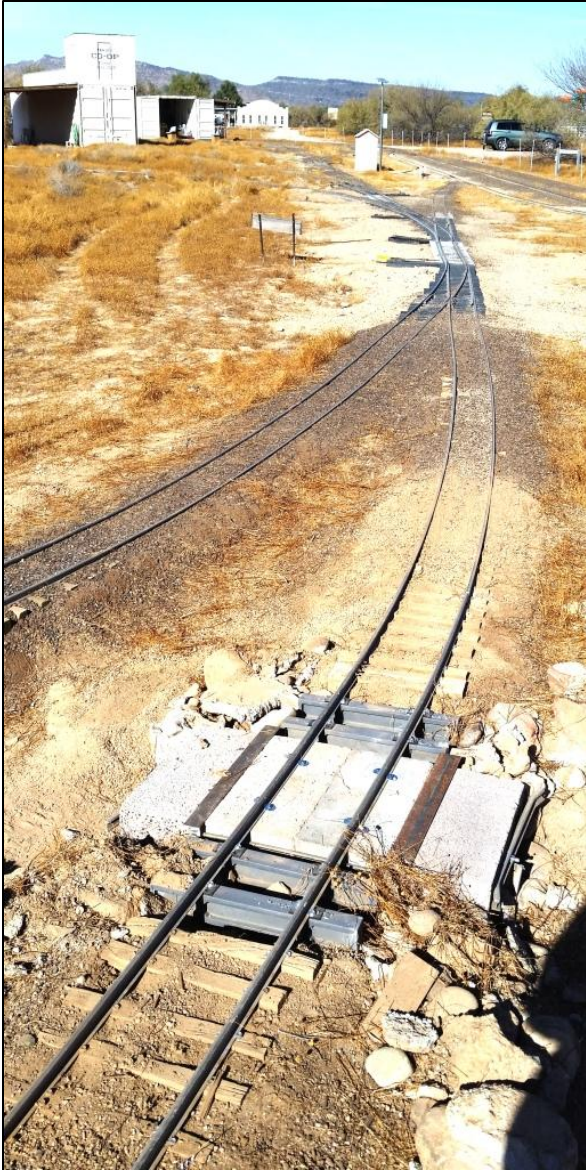




# TRACKING TRACKSIDE PROGRESS 2020

## Concrete BLOCK BRIDGE II story and photos by Joe Schnyder

Here is one of the concrete block bridges that we are making to replace the wood bridges, and any of them with wood ties that are in a termite prone area. These are made with concrete blocks and parts that I had laying around the place, so there is no cost to the club to do these replacements. I have found that if one block would not be enough water flow to that area, I could put two side by side and that would seem to have enough of a flow rate to handle the summer monsoon storms that used to hit the park years ago. We will be ready, if we have another gully washer like we had in 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016. Remember those?



**Plastic Switches  
& Concrete Ties**



# TRACKING TRACKSIDE PROGRESS 2020

## ROUTE BOARD

photos by Hank Gallo

You have all read Joe Schnyder’s pleas to check the Route Board before heading out into the layout, to avoid ending up in a Subdivision that is under repair and either having an accident or needing to back up all the way out of the Subdivision. Besides watching for red flags to the right of the track, which is another traffic control signal that needs to be obeyed, like the lighted signals, you must check the Route Board every time you leave the station or East Yard – BEFORE you push that route selection button. The forewarning is for YOUR BENEFIT.

The uptick in accidents at repair sites must be due to all of the new members who haven’t been made aware of where to find the Route Board. Seen below, it is along the fence to your left as you wait at the route selection buttons for your green signal to leave Adobe Station. It will be somewhat in front of you as you wait at the route selection buttons for your green signal to leave the East Yard. With the station to the right outside of the photo below, look at the track and Tower orientation. You will realize that the entrance track to the return balloon passes right in front of the Board, but, from that direction, you’re not looking at it.







# STEAM LOCOMOTIVES

## BOILER Appliances and Attachments

### Feedwater Heaters

by Dave Griner

Hello, again. Well, here we begin another year. Oh, boy. More adventures. This time we'll look at feedwater heaters.

Once more, plagiarized from the ICS course.

**2. Heating Feedwater.**—When considering the feeding of the boiler by feedwater heating equipment, it must not be overlooked that the injector is also a feedwater heating device. However, with the injector, the heating of the feedwater is done by live steam from the boiler; with feedwater heating equipment, the water is heated by exhaust steam that otherwise would be wasted. The saving in the employment of feedwater heating equipment is, then, brought about by using exhaust steam instead of steam from the boiler to heat the feedwater.

**3.** The saving in fuel with feedwater heating equipment and with the same weight and speed of train is due to the fact that heat is being returned to the boiler other than by way of the firebox, this requiring the burning of less fuel. The increase in the steam-generating capacity of the boiler is due to not taking steam from the boiler to heat the feedwater as with an injector, the saving in fuel being then equivalent to an increase in the capacity of the boiler to generate steam by an equal amount. Against the saving in fuel or the increase in the capacity of the boiler must, of course, be charged the greater cost of the feedwater apparatus, as well as the cost of its maintenance as compared with an injector.

The first type of heating system is referred to as an Elesco system as described below.

### ELESCO FEEDWATER HEATING EQUIPMENT

#### DESCRIPTION

**9. Arrangement.**—The arrangement of the various parts of the Elesco feedwater heating equipment is shown in Fig. 2, which shows the recommended positions of the parts. The steam-operated pump is mounted on brackets riveted to the boiler shell and the heater in which the feedwater is heated by exhaust steam from the cylinders is mounted in advance of the smokestack. The suction pipe supplies the pump with water from the tender, the pump discharge pipe conducts the water under pressure to the heater, and the heater discharge pipe discharges the water through the check-valve into the boiler. The condensate that is formed from the condensation of the exhaust steam in the heater is returned to the tender through a condensate pipe, and the oil skimmer serves to remove most of the lubricating oil from the condensed water. The pump is operated by a pump throttle in the cab, which controls the flow of steam through a pipe to the pump; a heater pipe is used to convey steam to the suction pipe for heating the water and preventing it from freezing in cold weather. Exhaust steam from the air compressors and the feedwater pump is conducted to the heater through the piping shown.

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FEEDWATER HEATERS (cont'd)

Here is a picture of the system's general arrangement.

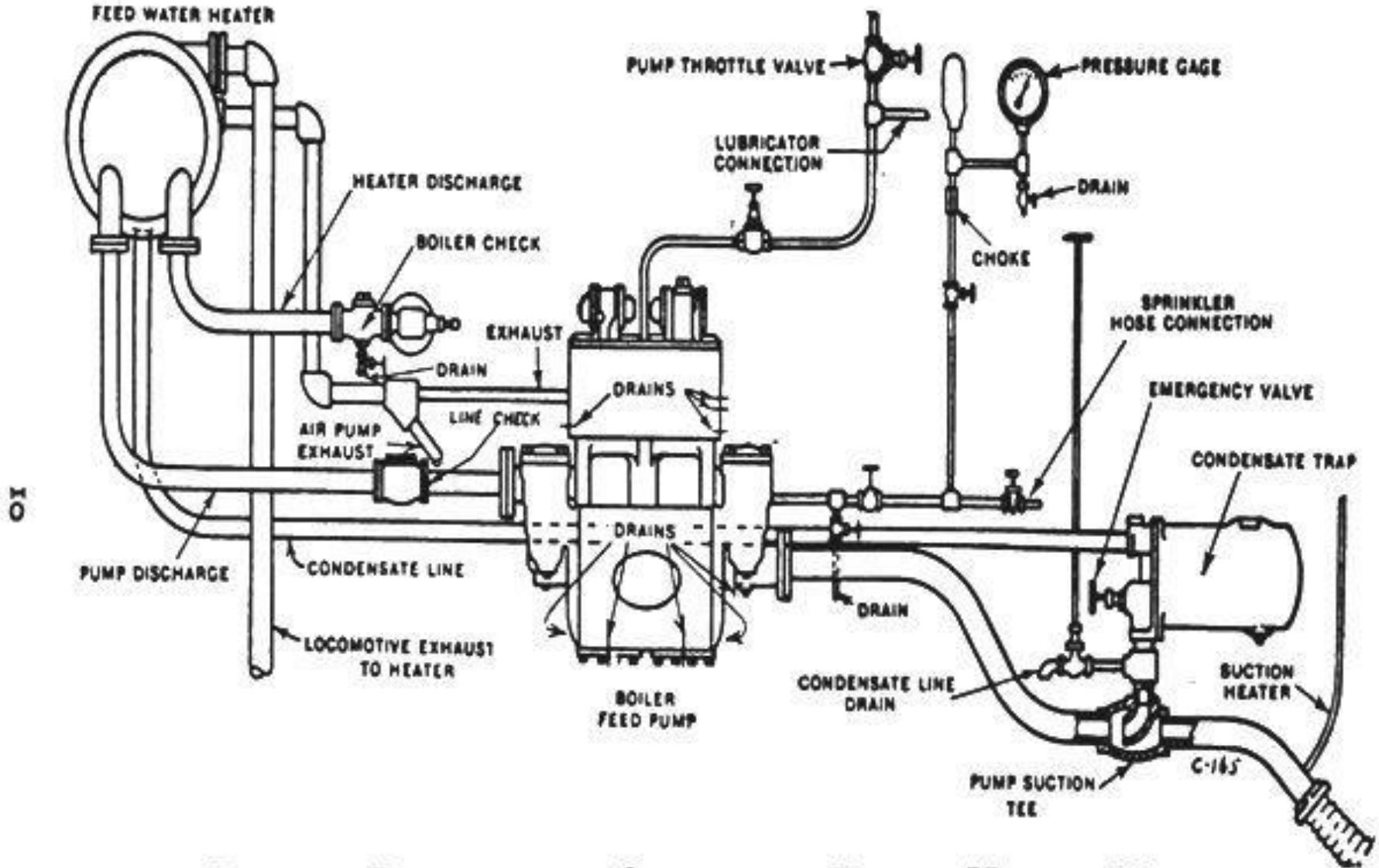


FIG. 4 DIAGRAMMATIC OUTLINE OF ELESKO HEATER WHEN RETURNING CONDENSATE TO SUCTION

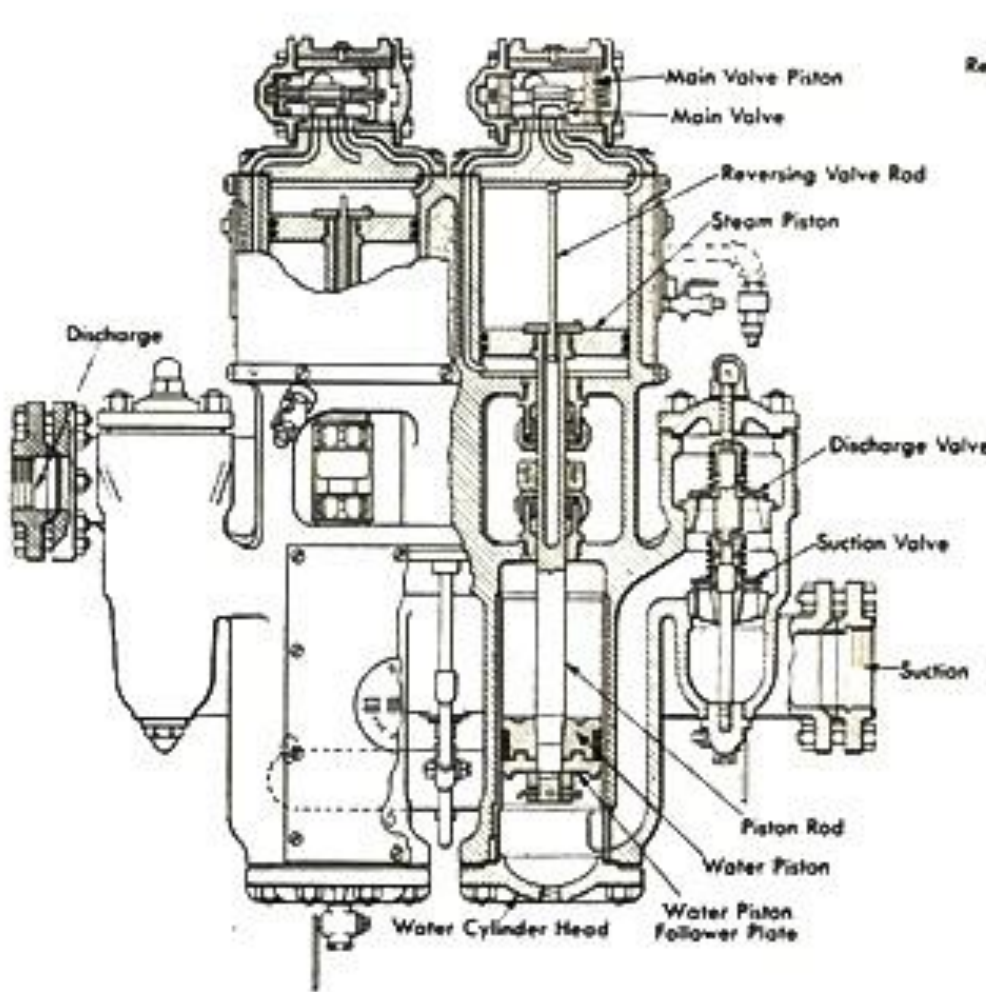
Showing the Heater, Pump, Trap and Piping Arrangement

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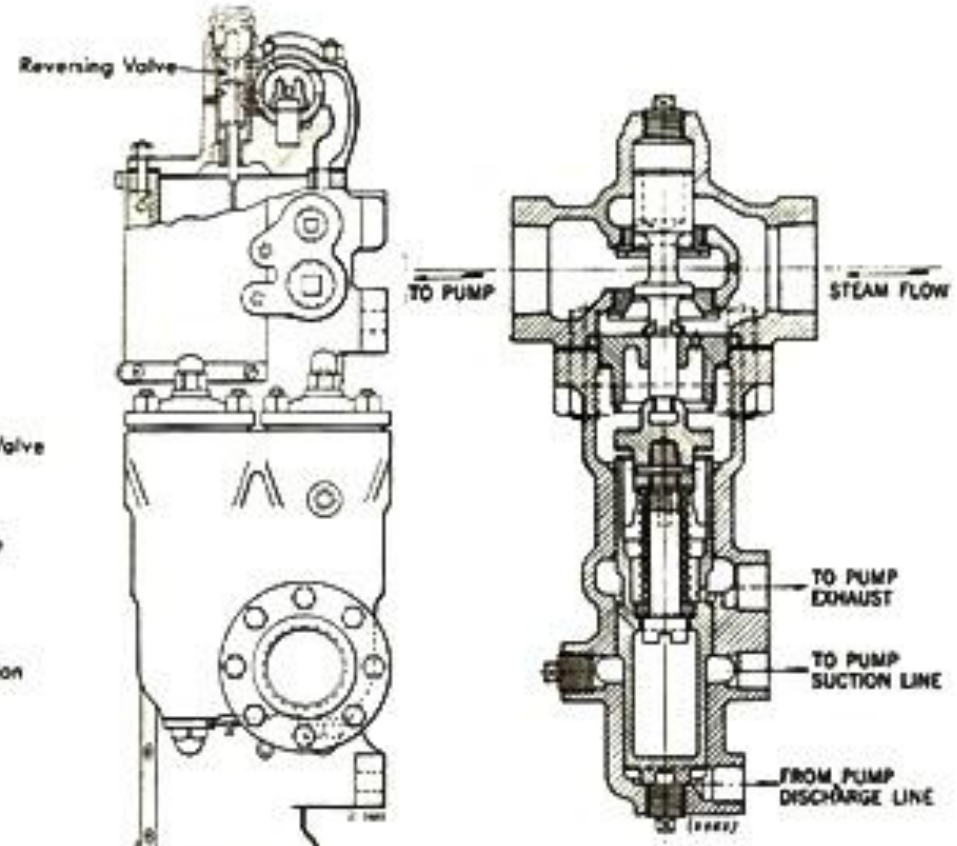


**FEEDWATER HEATERS** (cont'd)

Here is the pump in section view. Note that it uses two cylinders, but is not compound use of steam.



**Fig. 4.31—Elesco Reciprocating Locomotive Boiler Feed Pump, Type CF-1.**



**Fig. 4.32—Elesco Hydraulic Control Valve for Type DL Boiler Feed Pump, Fig. 4.30.**

**The Superheater Company**  
(See also Pages 374, 375)



FEEDWATER HEATERS (cont'd)

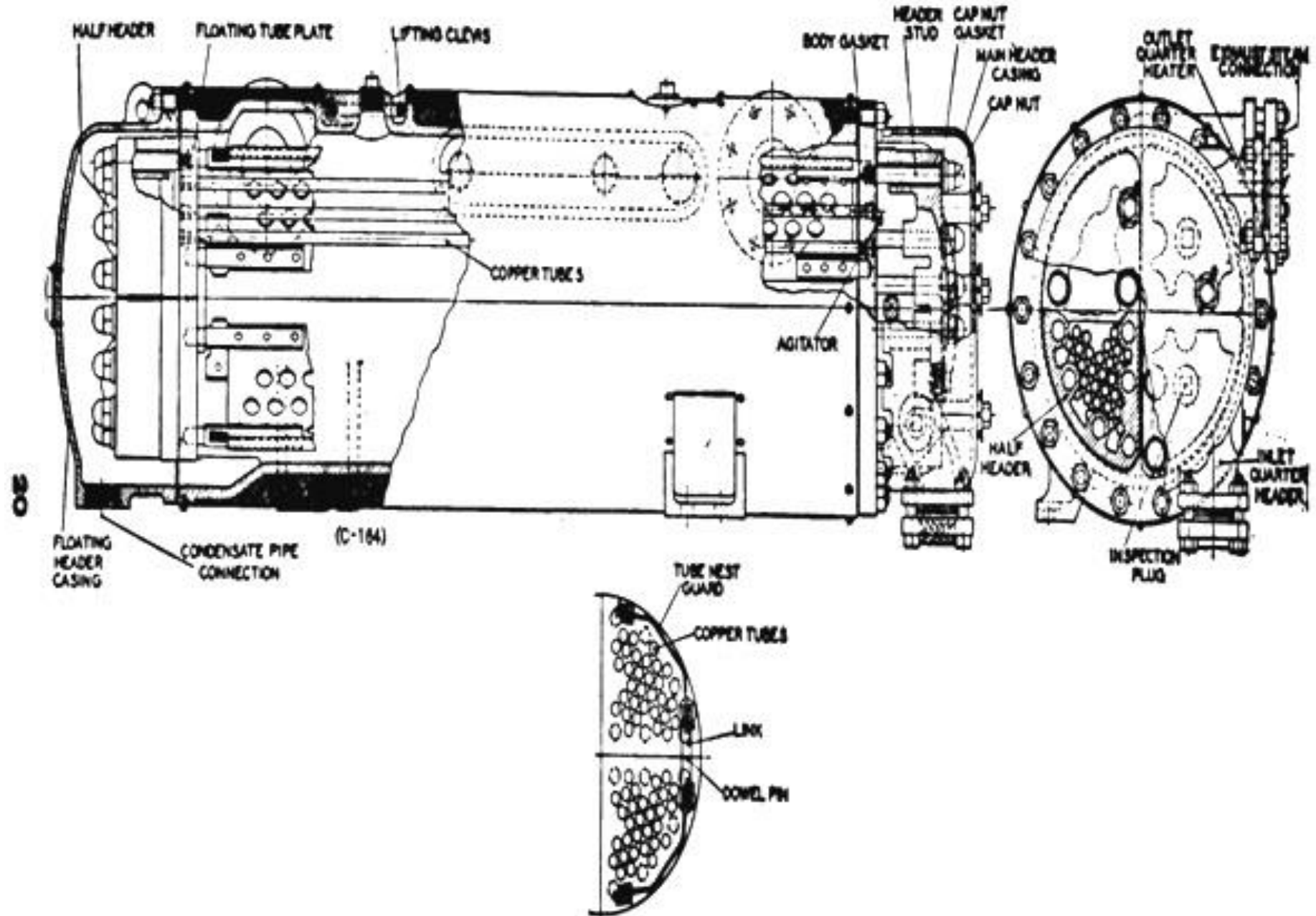
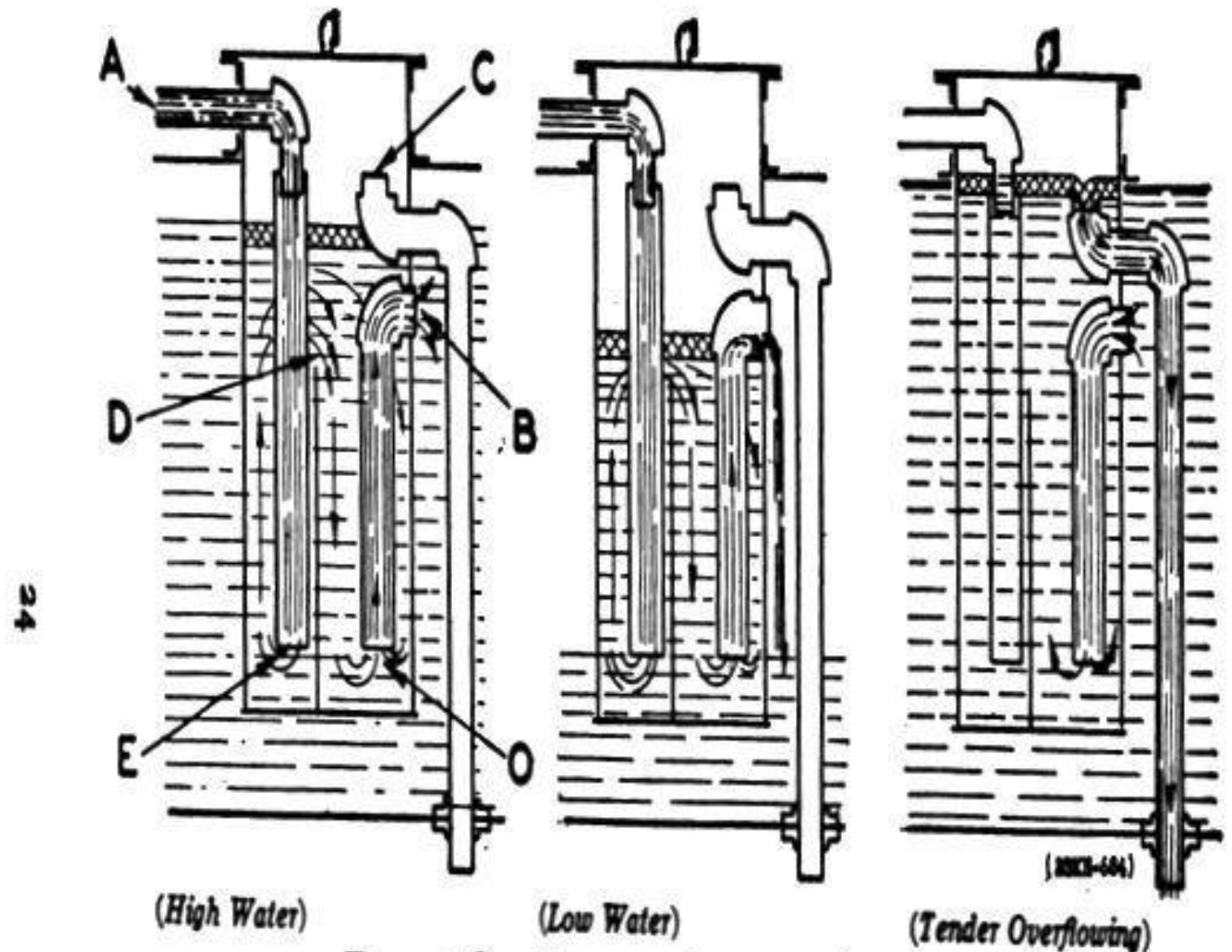


FIG. 10 ELESCO FEED WATER HEATER

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FEEDWATER HEATERS (cont'd)



(High Water)

(Low Water)

(Tender Overflowing)

FIG. 12 OIL SKIMMER SHOWING OPERATION

This Illustration Is Diagrammatic Only and Does Not Show Construction and Details of the Skimmer.



# The New York Times

11/10/1972

## T.C. & G.B. Spells Anachronism

by Mark Finston

43-mile TC&GB operated between 1916 and 1985.

LOCAL ARIZONA ABANDONED RAILWAY STORY –

contribution by Ken Giordano

While the nation's biggest passenger railways have for years been accused of hostility toward their customers, the Tucson, Cornelia & Gila Bend Rail Road Company, a freight line headquartered in Ajo, Arizona, continues to welcome into its caboose anyone who wants to ride across the dusty, arid plains.

The T. C. & G. B. (affectionately nicknamed the Tough Coming and Going Back) will, for 97 cents, take any adult over its entire route, the 43.3 miles of Arizona from Ajo to Gila Bend. Children aged 5 through 11 ride for 49 cents. The trip takes 1 hour, 30 minutes and, for another 97 cents, the T. C. & G. B. will take a passenger back, but that journey is scheduled at 5 minutes longer because it is uphill.

Richard E. Bigelow, cashier, rate clerk and the gentleman nominally in charge of the railroad's little depot-office in Ajo, has a ready explanation for why the T. C. & G. B. bothers to sell passenger tickets at all. "As long as we're running our freight train, it makes no difference to us if we carry some passengers in the caboose." When the train is too long and heavy for the line's one engine, the caboose is left behind, and the passengers ride up front with the engineer.

There is another practical reason for the railroad's faithfulness to its passengers, Bigelow says. "We used to connect at Gila Bend with a Southern Pacific train called the Argonaut. When the S.P. discontinued the Argonaut, we still had quite a supply of tickets on hand, and we wanted to use them all up. We still haven't used them all up." The Argonaut was discontinued in October, 1956.

### Monthly Average

An average of 36 passengers a month ride the T. C. & G. B. Bigelow, who has worked for the railroad since 1935, has not been among them since 1948. "It's awfully dusty in that caboose," he says. "And it takes just 45 minutes to drive between Ajo and Gila Bend on the highway." So much for sentiment.

But sentiment didn't build the railroad. The Phelps Dodge Corporation did, in 1916, and the copper giant still owns and runs it. Ajo, population 7,000, is a one-industry town, and that industry is copper. Most of the T. C. & G. B.'s freight consists of 730-pound slabs of copper called anodes. They are loaded onto flat cars at the Ajo smelter and carried to Gila Bend, where they are transferred to the Southern Pacific and eventually reach the Phelps Dodge refinery at El Paso, Texas.

Though it has little in common with the rest of the railroad industry, the T. C. & G. B. does share with other carriers a misleading name. Many railroad titles have scant correlation with the geography of the line. Some are guilty of understatement. The Illinois Central, for example, extends far out of central Illinois; the Baltimore & Ohio encompasses considerably more space than the line between Baltimore and Ohio. But most railroads are guilty of the most outrageous kinds of exaggeration. The Akron, Canton & Youngstown goes to neither Canton nor Youngstown. The New Jersey, Indiana and Illinois Railroad Company manages to make it the 11.4 miles from South Bend to Pine, Indiana, but no further. The St. Louis-San Francisco Railway, nicknamed the Frisco, gets no closer to San Francisco than Floydada, Texas. In the same manner, the name Tucson, Cornelia & Gila Bend is two-thirds inaccurate.

Originally, it was decided that the line should extend the 125 miles east from Gila Bend to Tucson, but since the Southern Pacific already went there, the idea was abandoned. And in the old days, civic boosters, unhappy with the "foreign" sound of Ajo (Spanish for garlic), wanted to change the town's name to Cornelia, possibly it is said, in honor of the name of the wife of some copper executive. That proposal also went nowhere.

The only people who ever take the T. C. & G. B. and really want to go somewhere are those who have missed the 6 A.M. bus from Ajo. Someone misses it about once every three months. The rest of the T. C. & G. B. ticket buyers are tourists who have heard about the unusual ride, local people taking their kids on excursions and folks who adore dust.

The train runs weekdays, and occasionally on Saturdays, if freight traffic warrants. The engineer when I rode the train was William C. Gibbs, who had served the railroad in that capacity from 1947 until his recent retirement. This day he was puttering around the valves of the little General Motors diesel engine which replaced the T. C. & G. B.'s steam engine in 1948. Gibbs felt no nostalgia for the steamer, which was sold for scrap, a fate that has befallen all but a handful of American steam locomotives: "I like a diesel much better. You never knew when a steam engine was going to blow up."

(continued next page)



## The Tucson, Cornelia & Gila Bend Railroad (cont'd)

The top speed on the line is 35 miles per hour. Would Gibbs prefer engineering on a big railroad, where he could really let out the throttle? "I'd like to go 90, and I hired out on the Santa Fe one time, but I like it here better," he said. "At least here you're home every night."

The caboose is in the charge of conductor Thomas E. Wiley, who has worked for the railroad for 17 of his 51 years. Passengers tend to come in bunches, and so on most of his trips Wiley is completely alone. "I like passengers," he said. "It passes the time much faster. When you get a bunch of cars between here and the engine, with no people on them, it gets lonesome back here."

There were no cars between engine and caboose on the morning that I rode; apparently no anodes were scheduled to be moved toward El Paso at the moment. The roomy caboose contained dusty benches with dusty red padding, a dusty jug filled with cold water, an old gas stove covered with dust and a little desk where the conductor does his paper work after whisking away the dust.

### Punctual Service

"We're not late very often, only when the engine derails, and that's not very often," said Wiley, whose verbal velocity isn't bound by the 35-mile-per-hour speed limit. "In 1961, we got snow for the first time in 36 years. We've had it four or five times since then, but we run anyway. The only thing that holds us up is a complete wash out."

At 7:02 A.M. the diesel horn honked, and the train started. The suburbs of Ajo were left behind, and in 13 minutes Childs was reached. Childs consisted of a few houses built by Phelps Dodge and rented to the track crew. Wiley tossed a chunk of ice at the crew, which was starting on the day's maintenance work. The ice cools their drinking water. This was to be the last disturbance before Gila Bend. The other "stations" — Rocky Point, Black Gap and Stout Spur — are stops in name only. Nobody has gotten off or on at those places in 10 years.

"At Midway we used to have a passing track," said Wiley. "But we tore it up. We haven't had more than one train on this railroad since 1946, so nobody ever has to pass anybody."

Nobody rides the train for scenery. The vistas are largely miles of fine yellow sand, shallow gullies and occasional black rocks. The sparse vegetation consists solely of a few stringy cactuses and creosote bushes with their tiny green leaves. In the far distance loom several low, craggy mountains.

Despite spells of loneliness Wiley is very enthusiastic about his job. Since he usually gets through work at 11:30 A.M., he has the rest of the day to devote to his numerous other vocations. He conducts a radio and TV repair service. As a landlord, he rents out three homes in Ajo. He and his wife run a laundering and dry cleaning establishment and also a feed store. He's doing well in all his business ventures except as landlord. Phelps Dodge leases its houses at such a low rental that he claims he cannot compete.

Somewhere near Midway, the train slowed down. The conductor peered out and explained, "It's because of those cattle on the right-hand side there. Sometimes they get on the track and you have to stop. You just blow your whistle and hope they get off. I remember seven, eight years ago a bull took a dislike to the engine. He kept butting it. But he finally took a notion to get disgusted, and he walked off."

Somewhere near Midway the train slowed down. The conductor peered out and explained: "It's because of those cattle on the right-hand side there. Sometimes they get on the track and you have to stop. You just blow your whistle and hope they get off. I remember seven, eight years ago, a bull took a dislike to the engine. He kept butting it. But he finally took a notion to get disgusted, and he walked off."

Outside of Gila Bend, population 1,700, there suddenly appears State Route 85, which more or less parallels the railroad from Ajo. An auto graveyard also appears and a bunch of small, poor houses with yards of yellow sand. The old yellow station with the green roof belongs to the Southern Pacific. The bulletin board declares that the Ajo train arrives at 9 A.M. and leaves at 10, which is inaccurate. "That was the schedule of our gasoline-powered rail car, and they just never changed the bulletin board," said Wiley. The gasoline-powered car, called the Galloping Goose, was discontinued in the mid-1940's.

After a 55-minute stop in Gila Bend, during which the engine shuffled freight cars, its whistle blew loudly at 9:20 A.M. and everyone scurried back to the train. For the return trip, engineer Gibbs had acquired six empty flatcars, three gondola cars of copper concentrate (a black powdery substance shipped from Tyrone, New Mexico) and one boxcar of fire brick all the way from Bradford, PA. For his own return trip, conductor Wiley had acquired peaches, nectarines, cheese, crackers and some diet cola.

We left on time at 9:25. Though the now-heavy train moved more slowly on its way to Ajo than it had on its run to Gila Bend, the dust still filtered in the windows and doors, adding to the thin layer earlier deposited on benches, floors, shirts, skin and hair.

*(continued next page)*



### The Tucson, Cornelia & Gila Bend Railroad (cont'd)

"It rained here a couple of days ago, so the dust isn't too bad today," observed Wiley. "Sometimes the dust is so bad I can't even see the engine." I looked out the window, and, sure enough, there was the engine, dimly visible. It was a good day.

The train arrived in Ajo eight minutes late, due to the weight of the 10 freight cars, which slowed the engine almost to a walk on the final hill. Leaving a trail of dust, I wandered through Ajo, where one is constantly reminded who's who and what's what in this company town. The cocktail bar in the square is called the Brass Knob. And there's the Copper Coffee Shop, where one may quietly read the latest copy of Ajo's weekly newspaper, *The Ajo Copper News*. The big story in *The Ajo Copper News* one recent day concerned a new program called Crime Stop, which featured a telephone number citizens could call anonymously to report crimes. "Advantage of the Crime Stop program is the immediacy of action. If someone smells a whiff of marijuana smoke coming from bushes down the alley, he can call 7-7567, tell where it is happening and what he suspects, and hang up. The deputy sheriffs can frequently be there within minutes."

#### Local Notices

There is a town bulletin board, mostly filled with typewritten notices from Phelps Dodge. There is also a sheaf of handwritten requests ("Want to purchase double or single beds. Tom Alley, Cornelia Billiard Parlor").

Gila Bend, at the other end of the tracks, gives a similar impression in many respects. I had wanted to buy film in a drug store during our stopover there, but it was closed. "The manager takes flying lessons every so often," conductor Wiley explained. The *Gila Bend Herald*, "the only newspaper in the universe that gives a hoot for Gila Bend," carried a story about a local woman who parked her car one evening, windows down, in front of her home. The next morning she saw a "strange horse standing next to the car with its head in the window, obviously engrossed by something. Approaching the car, she discovered a large portion of the straw upholstery stuffing gone from the front seat. Placidly the horse ambled away, looking contented and full."

Before leaving Ajo, I stopped in at the station to tell cashier-rate clerk-boss Bigelow how much I enjoyed the train ride. "Our biggest season is winter and — I don't know exactly why — our number of passengers is slowly increasing every year," said Bigelow. "But don't get the idea our passenger revenues amount to much. They still don't."

Were there any plans for the T. C. & G. B. to join Amtrak, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, which took over most non-commuter passenger train service on May 1, 1971, discontinuing half the nation's trains in the process. "There's no vague possibility," said Bigelow, emphatically. "There's no profit in it for us." He paused and looked out the window, and his voice softened a little. "And I'm sure Amtrak would discontinue our passenger service, too. Nobody around here wants that."



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