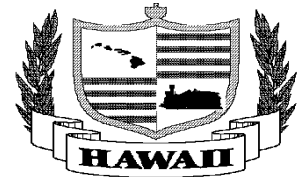


AKAHELE I KE KA`AAHI*

*Hawaiian, meaning:
“Look out for the fire wagon.”



THE 40 & 8 “PLUS EIGHT” (THEN NINE)

By Jeff Livingston, HRS Historian and 40 & 8 Project Manager

Restoration progress on the 40 & 8 Merci boxcar, now that its national significance and historic value to Hawaii are recognized, has been slow but steady over the past year. Two goals were established for this first year: complete the restoration of the “American side” boxcar door and complete the frame repairs, painting and floor installation. Except for a few minor details, the door is complete including decoration. It is on display so visitors can get a sense of what the boxcar will look like when finished. The frame and floor were another matter. The more we learned about the construction of the boxcar the more repairs were found necessary. Numerous weld repairs have been accomplished, bent metal parts straightened and re-positioned and the buffer assemblies on one end removed, repaired and reinstalled. All of these necessary efforts placed completion of the frame priming, painting and floor installation schedule in serious jeopardy.

AECOM

AECOM is an American multinational infrastructure consulting firm offering a multitude of services including Architecture & Design, Urban Planning, Asset Management, Construction Management, Decommissioning & Closure, Environmental Services, Risk Management & Resilience and Technical Services among many others. An AECOM team of Unexploded Ordnance Technicians was working a project on Oahu and I was fortunate to make the acquaintance of **Scott Bawcom**, Senior UXO Supervisor and team leader. Scott is a retired United States Marine Corps veteran and most of his team is former military. From my own military experience, I know what it's like to be on an unaccompanied tour of duty without your family. Weekends can be a real drag. I suggested to Scott that if anyone on his team was looking for something to do to pass the time on a weekend, I would be more than happy to invite them help with the 40 & 8 restoration. I did warn him that such help involved crawling around under the boxcar busting rust, scraping and priming all the difficult to get to bottom parts (the easy parts were already primed).

On Saturday, 11 February, **eight** AECOM UXO team members arrived *en masse* at the yard ready to work! They all knew what to do and after a quick briefing covering the significance of the boxcar and why it is being restored the team turned to with a will. Three and one-half hours later, dirty, sweaty and splattered with rusty metal primer, but still smiling, the team had completed priming the frame of the boxcar.

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AECOM Team Members (left to right)

Chuck Phillips, UXO Safety Officer. **Jack Kristensen**, UXO Quality Control Specialist. **Andrew Chandler**, UXO Tech I. **Scott Bawcom**, Senior UXO Supervisor. **Susie Bawcom**, UXO Tech II. **Levi Rouse**, UXO Tech I. **Frank Gaona**, UXO Tech II. Kneeling in the center is **Dave Guenther**, UXO Tech II. (Photo: Jeff Livingston)

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They were so efficient and made such great progress that at one point we were running low on primer and had to send out for more. Having completed the priming, the team was ready to start applying the black top coat but I had to stop them as we didn't have sufficient materials.

Following cleanup and some socialization, Scott and his crew indicated a willingness to return and "finish" the job, i.e. the black topcoat, if not during this trip, perhaps on a future trip. This unexpected gesture after all the team had accomplished in just one day was almost unbelievable and deeply appreciated.



Left: Dave said he was needle gun qualified. He proved it! This end of the frame interior had never been touched.

Photos on this page: Jeff Livingston

Right: Levi (left) and Andrew (right) went to work on the other end.



Left: Susie (back) and Frank (front) must have drawn the short straws. They started the undersides of the frame.

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Left: Jack got in the middle of things on the least restored end.

Scott Bawcom Photo

Right: Chuck tackled the other side.

Photo: Jeff Livingston



Left: Scott kept track of everything from the middle.

Photo: Jeff Livingston

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It's difficult to see from ground level how much was actually accomplished. In another fortunate happenstance, a Frenchman (no, I couldn't have made this up) came by the yard with a camera equipped drone. He recognized what we were working on and provided the following photograph that clearly shows the freshly painted frame members from above.



Left: Federic Iselin Photo

Below: Photo: Jeff Livingston

On 4 March, the team returned to, in their words, finish what they started. Two of the original crew could not return but three new faces arrived in their stead. Three and one-half hours (again) later, the Hawaii Merci boxcar frame was gleaming in a complete fresh coat of black semi-gloss paint.



Back row left to right, the familiar faces of Chuck and Andrew, **Derrick Blevins** UXO Technician, **Neeshell Bradley-Lewis**, Geophysicist and **Ryan Jensen** UXO Technician.

Front row, Jack, Dave, Scott and Susie

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Left: Early going, the transformation from primer to black begins.

Photos on this page: Jeff Livingston



Right: Andrew, middle between Dave and Chuck, tackled the humbug job of painting the coupling and safety chains with Scott on the right working on the brake rigging.



Left: Neeshell got going on the “French” side sill and door track while Ryan took over the middle. Derrick drew one of the short straws, this time working on the bottom of the sills.

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As an organization, the Hawaiian Railway Society, and myself as 40 & 8 Project Manager, are deeply and forever indebted to these individuals for giving up two Saturdays of their time to provide this major advance to the boxcar's restoration. There is now a real possibility that the first year's goals can be attained and the hopes of our late Director of Restoration **Glen Houlton's** dream being realized.

The team's time here in Hawaii is drawing to a close but they expect to return sometime in the future. They have offered their continued support to the Society's restoration efforts and we look forward to welcoming them back.

BZ

For those of you who don't know the meaning of BZ (bravo zulu), it's a very good thing!

Jeff Livingston
Historian
40 & 8 Project Manager

Editor's Note: I would like to add my gratitude as well. And I know I speak for every member of the Society when I say these wonderful volunteers have helped us realize a dream we feared might never come in time. Your efforts, so graciously and kindly given, are such a gift to the preservation of Hawaii's railroad history. As we say in Hawaii, mahalo nui loa. Thank you very much!

JOIN US AND SAVE HAWAII'S TRAINS

Your Hawaiian Railway Society membership includes:

- ◆ A membership card
- ◆ A subscription to *AKAHELE I KE KA`AAHI*, the HRS newsletter
- ◆ The right to attend monthly meetings, which includes business about operating a railroad and building a museum
- ◆ The opportunity to take part in railway restoration projects

The Hawaiian Railway Society is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization incorporated in the State of Hawaii as recognized by the Internal Revenue Service. Your contributions are tax-deductible. Your *KOKUA* is needed and appreciated.

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HOW TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE EDITOR OF THE NEWSLETTER

If you have news, questions or comments, you can reach me by email me at janlor6897590@yahoo.com; snail mail me at 310 S. Las Hamacas, Green Valley, AZ 85614, or call me at 520-399-2563.

END NOTES

Former Director of Restoration, **Zach Hamick**, moved back to the mainland, so on February 25th the Board of Directors appointed **Kevin Yamamoto** to the position. Kevin has been a member of the Society for quite a while and has spent time helping on the restoration work of Coach 57 as well as other projects. Jeff reports that Kevin is a really nice guy with a lot of energy who is doing a great job as the new Director of Restoration.

The Board also approved a change to the 2015 Bylaws. This change establishes residency requirements for specific Board of Directors members. The change specifies that the officers of President, Secretary, Director of Restoration, Director of Logistic and Historian must reside in the State of Hawaii, on the Island of Oahu.



HRS member **Mike McCurdy** emailed me after reading the article I wrote about a virtual tour of the yard and a virtual train ride in the last issue. Mike wrote: "I think you missed one of the best: the segment on **George Cabral Senior** operating WACo 6 in 1983." You can find it on YouTube.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=so7mv8_Fk2w

Mike goes on to say that he found out about it from **Ben Dela Cruz**. He adds: "There are also various snippets [of film] in HRS' collection that could be cobbled together." Would any tech savvy person care to take that on as a fun project?

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Address Correction Requested

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