

Arizona Railroad



Historical Society

The Desert DISPATCH

Timetable

Layout Work Sessions

Arizona Capitol Museum
1700 W. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ

Special Notice Regarding COVID-19

The safety and well-being of our staff, volunteers, and visitors are our highest priorities. The Arizona Capitol Museum is following the guidance distributed by the Governor's Office and Arizona Department of Health Services regarding the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). As a public health precaution, **the Museum will be closed to the public until further notice.**

More info at:

<https://azlibrary.gov/azcm>

ARHS Spring Swap Meet

Saturday, May 16, 2020

CANCELLED

More information, call:

Craig 623-340-3529

DeWayne 623-308-1574

Layout Work Continues at Home during Museum Closure



The scale model of the Arizona Capitol Building was recently completed by Wayne Wesolowski of Tucson. It will be the centerpiece of the Phoenix section of the layout.

President's Message

By Don Stewart, ARHS President

Well, here we are sitting at home keeping safe. What can we do to keep busy? If you have a building for the ARHS layout, now is a perfect time to finish it up for installation on the layout. I am building narrow gauge turnouts. I have completed 19 so far. I think we need more but will check with the designers of the modified Narrow Gauge line. I have a dual gauge turnout to build, so I got a jig. Who knew there was a toad involved? I guess it is the narrow-gauge frog. So, if you have buildings, accessories, scenery to work on or design, have at it. When we meet at the museum again, there should be lots of things to be added by members.

continued next page



The Desert Dispatch

ARHS Officers 2020

President - Don Stewart
Vice President - Craig Faris
Secretary - Dave Brown
Treasurer - Dan Kubarych
Director - Ken Nelson
Director - DeWayne Koltin
Past President - Jesse Poole

The Desert Dispatch is a publication of the Arizona Railroad Historical Society.

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Mission Statement

The **Arizona Railroad Historical Society** strives to create a world class railroad experience which includes history, education and railroad operations centered around the state of Arizona.

We are honored and excited by the opportunity to create an exciting experience in the Arizona State Capitol Museum in downtown Phoenix.

President's Message Continued

A few things to note as we continue to hunker down in our homes:

1. Plan and work on as much as you can while at home. Structures, city plans, trackwork, automobile roads, etc.
2. Anticipating a funding shortfall, the schedule has been redesigned to work with a lower financial support structure. It will delay the layout completion and thus our opening day by a few months.
3. Articles are being prepared by Jess for the NMRA on:
 - a. "Between the Rails to LCC" – Our selection of the LCC system for running the layout. Reviewed by Don Stewart.
 - b. "Become an Armchair Expert in LCC in 3 easy steps" – The basics of LCC, the components of the system, and its installation. Reviewed by Don.
 - c. How the ARHS installation has gone and lessons learned.
4. One member (John) has donated \$10,000.00 which will help the shortfall greatly.
5. I have installed the free version of Zoom on my computer. It will allow up to 40 minutes of meetings with video. I am being coached by the younger people in the house on its use.
6. The outside wall has been removed from our on-going schedule as it is dependent on funding and not labor. Dennis is working with Spellman Hardwoods for supplies while Jess has calculated the materials needed and set up a preliminary drawing.
7. We will push for completion of the North Face of the Grand Canyon wall system at Lane Awards. The visual computer display may be changed with the "Wall of Honor" area moved to provide Plaques of prestigious donors on permanent display rather than a transitioning screen. The screen near the Grand Canyon will be moved to another location to allow visitors to take a picture down the Grand Canyon without a computer monitor in the background.

continued next page



The Desert Dispatch

Presidents Message continued

8. A list of 13 Grants/Donations for which we intend to apply was sent to Dora (the Museum Guild President) in mid-May. She has responded back that she received the list and will review it with the guild officers.

Overall, this Quarantine will slow us down, but not stop us. We will use the time to plan and prepare the items we need to finish the layout. Keep the faith. We will work through this.

Don

Editors note: *If you are building a model at home, please take pictures and email them to me with caption information. I would like to post them to our Facebook page, website and use them in coming issues of the Desert Dispatch – Bob rkbridges611@gmail.com*

Arizona Railroad



Historical Society

Four Special Spikes

Arizona's contribution to the Transcontinental Railroad

Reprinted from [nps.gov](https://www.nps.gov)

<https://www.nps.gov/gosp/learn/historyculture/four-special-spikes.htm>



The Golden Spike

photo: nps

The Golden Spike Ceremony, which took place May 10, 1869, was held at Promontory Summit, Utah Territory. During that Ceremony, four special spikes were presented.

The Golden Spike

San Francisco contractor David Hewes, friend of Central Pacific President Leland Stanford, was disappointed to discover no one had prepared a commemorative item for the completion of the transcontinental railroad, which was scheduled to be finished on May 8, 1869. Unable to persuade anyone to finance the casting of a solid gold or silver section of rail, Hewes decided upon a more practical token. Using \$400 of his own gold, he had the William T. Garatt Foundry of San Francisco cast a golden spike. The spike was 5 5/8 inches long, weighed 14.03 ounces and was made of 17.6 carat gold. Only about \$350 worth of gold, however, was used to make the actual spike. The remainder was left attached to the



The Desert Dispatch

spike in a large sprue. After casting, the golden spike was engraved on all four sides and the top. Two sides bore the names of railroad officers and directors. Another side was engraved, “The Pacific Railroad ground broken Jan 8th, 1863 and completed May 8th

1869.” The fourth side was engraved, “May God continue the unity of our Country as this Railroad unites the two great Oceans of the world. Presented David Hewes San Francisco.” The top of the spike was simply engraved, “The Last Spike.”

Nevada's Silver Spike

Unlike the Golden Spike, Nevada’s silver spike was forged instead of cast. The spike was ordered on May 5, 1869 by Railroad Commissioner and candidate for Governor of the new State of Nevada, Mr. F.A. Trittle. Virginia City assayers E. Ruhling & Co. provided 25 ounces of silver which Robert Lodge of Dowling Blacksmith Shop forged into a rather rough, unpolished 6-inch long, 10 1/2 ounce spike bearing only the assayer’s stamp. The spike was rushed twenty miles to Reno, barely in time to be given to Stanford aboard his special train heading to Promontory Summit for the ceremony marking the completion of the transcontinental railroad.

Arizona's Gold and Silver Spike

The spike presented by the Arizona Territory was a composite made from plating an ordinary 6-inch iron spike with gold on the head and silver on the shaft. The territory’s newly appointed governor, Anson P.K. Safford, had the spike made, but when and by whom is unknown.

The highly polished spike was engraved, “Ribbed with iron clad in silver and crowned with gold

Arizona presents her offering to the enterprise that has banded a continent and dictated a pathway to commerce. Presented by Governor Safford.”



Arizona’s Gold & Silver Spike is on display at The Union Pacific Railroad Museum in Council Bluffs, IA.

photo: The Daily Nonpareil

A Second Golden Spike

A second golden spike was ordered by Frederick Marriott, proprietor of the San Francisco News Letter newspaper company. This 5-inch long, 9 1/2 ounce spike, made from about \$200 worth of gold, was inscribed, “With this spike the San Francisco News Letter offers its homage to the great work which has joined the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. This month-May 1869.”

A Special Hammer

L.W. Coe, president of San Francisco’s Pacific Express Company, had tool maker Conroy & O’Connor manufacture a special spike hammer, or maul, for the Golden Spike Ceremony. The maul was then taken to Vanderslice & Co. of San Francisco, where it was heavily plated with silver and stamped with the manufacturer’s name.

continued



The Desert Dispatch

The Laurelwood Tie

West Evans, tie contractor for the Central Pacific, had San Francisco billiard table manufacturer Strahle & Hughes prepare a highly polished tie made from California Laurelwood. The 7 1/2 foot long, 8x 6 inch tie bore a centered Silver plaque marked, “The last tie laid on completion of the Pacific Railroad, May 1869.” The plaque also listed the officers and directors of Central Pacific along with the names of the tie maker and donor. Four holes were drilled into the tie in order to accommodate the ceremonial spikes.

The Ceremony

Before the start of the Golden Spike Ceremony, workers brought the laurel wood tie from Stanford’s coach, placed it on the grade, and laid the last rail sections across it. The ceremony then commenced, emceed by wealthy Sacramento banker Edgar Mills. An invocation was offered by Reverend Dr. John Todd of Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Presentation of the spikes and ties followed.

After an ardously verbose speech, Dr. H.W. Harkness, a Sacramento newspaper publisher and editor, presented the two golden spikes to Leland Stanford. Union Pacific Vice-President Thomas Durant was then presented Nevada’s silver spike by Mr. Trittle and Arizona’s spike by Governor Safford. Stanford then offered a rousing speech. He was to have been followed by Durant, but due to Durant’s severe headache (most likely a hangover from the previous night’s party in Ogden) Union Pacific’s Chief Engineer, General Grenville Dodge, took Durant’s place and gave a

few short, but enthusiastic words. Mr. Coe then presented the silver plated maul, which Stanford and Durant used to gently tap the precious metal spikes, so as to leave no mark upon either the spikes, or the maul.

Immediately thereafter, the precious metal spikes and laurel wood tie were removed and replaced with a pine tie, into which three ordinary iron spikes were driven. A fourth iron spike, and a regular iron spike hammer, were both wired to the transcontinental telegraph line so that the Nation could “hear” the blows as the spike was driven.

Stanford took a mighty swing at the spike and struck the tie instead. Durant, still not feeling too well, took a feeble swing, and did not even hit the tie! Finally, a regular rail worker drove home the last spike, and the telegrapher, W.N. Shilling of Western Union, sent the long awaited message, “**D-O-N-E.**” The time was 12:47 p.m., Monday, May 10, 1869.

A Scattering of History

Following a brief time on display, the Golden Spike was returned to David Hewes. In 1892, Hewes donated his extensive rare art collection, including the Golden Spike, to the museum of newly built Leland Stanford Junior University in Palo Alto, California.

Nevada’s silver spike was temporarily returned to Virginia City jewelers Nye and Co., who polished the spike and engraved one side, “To Leland Stanford President of the Central Pacific railroad. To the iron of the East and the gold of the West Nevada adds her link of silver to span the continent and wed the oceans.”

continued



The Desert Dispatch

The spike was then delivered to Stanford and eventually placed along with the Golden Spike in the Stanford University museum.

It is unknown what happened to Arizona Territory's spike immediately following the Ceremony. Today, it is owned by the Museum of the City of New York and on loan to the Union Pacific Railroad Museum in Council Bluffs, IA.

The whereabouts of the second gold spike is unknown. It has been speculated that the spike was given to one of the Union Pacific dignitaries, but there is no mention of the spike in any memoirs. It is also possible that the spike was returned to the News Letter. If so, the fate may well have been the same as the newspaper company, when, in 1906, the San Francisco earthquake and subsequent fire destroyed the News Letter building.

The silver plated spike maul was also given to Leland Stanford and became part of the Stanford University Museum. The famous Laurelwood tie remained on display in Sacramento until 1890. By then, Central Pacific had been reorganized into Southern Pacific, and the tie was taken to the railroad's San Francisco offices in the Flood Building. Unfortunately, the building and tie also fell victim to the great earthquake and fire in 1906.

The large sprue attached to the Golden Spike was removed shortly before the Ceremony. David Hewes took the sprue, and had it made into four small rings and seven, one-inch long spike watch fobs. The rings were presented to Leland Stanford, Oakes Ames (Union Pacific President), President U.S. Grant, and Secretary of State William H. Seward. Several dignitaries and

Hewes' relatives were presented watch fobs, including nephew Tilden G. Abbot, whose fob is on display at Golden Spike National Historical Park.



Golden Spike National Historical Park

Photo: Bob Bridges

Workin' On the Railroad



Dave Brown lays track on the upper level.



Ray Rumble, Dave Brown and Ken Wolfe plan the Faller automated road system near Phoenix.



The Desert Dispatch



In early March, before the closing of the Museum due to the Covid-19 response, Arizona State Representative Richard Andrade, right, runs a train with ARHS Past President Jesse Poole on the Arizona Capitol Railroad layout. Richard is also a Certified Railroad Engineer with BNSF based in Phoenix.



A Southern Pacific Black Widow crosses the Colorado River at Yuma.



ARHS President Don Stewart is interviewed by Fox10 News about the Arizona Capitol Railroad.



The Arizona Capitol Railroad was featured on Fox10 News in February. ARHS members assist Fox 10 news photographer Dave Stermon as he records trains running on the layout.



Stephanie Mahan, Senior Museum Administrator speaks about the contributions of the ARHS exhibit to the Capitol Museum for the Fox10 News feature.



The Desert Dispatch



Ray goes under the layout to design the Faller road system in downtown Phoenix.



Dee Koltin is wrapped up in wiring work inside the helix.



Don Stewart and Ken Wolfe lay track on the upper level of the layout.



Dan Kubarych and Dave Brown describe the layout to a group touring the layout in early March



The smile on a young visitor's face as he runs a train is the reward for all the hard work by the ARHS construction crews.



Don, Jess, Ken Nelson review layout plans for the upper level.

photos by Bob Bridges