



Dear Mr. Durand,

Thank you for coming to our class and sharing your wealth of knowledge resources about the AKRR and the Engine 557 Restoration. Below you will find personal messages from our class.

I look forward to working with you again!

Many thanks,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Brumbaugh".

Amy Brumbaugh
AKRR Tour Guide Training Program ASD Instructor

Thank you Mr. Durand for coming in to speak to us about 557 and her history. It was an incredibly interesting topic and I really enjoyed getting to learn about how the restoration process works. I hope someday to see 557 up and running so I can take a tour. The information you gave us inspired me to learn more. I've already ordered a copy of Get Mears so I can learn about the railroad history. Thank you once again for speaking with us, it was one of the best topics I've ever heard. - Rowan

Thank you, Mr. Durand, for telling us about the 557 restoration project. It was very eye-opening to see the ins and outs of restoration projects. I always thought they were easy things to do. Through your presentation, I learned that restoration projects are super complicated. Thank you very much for your insightful information and I hope you have time to present to us again.- Lane Folmar

Mr. Durand thank you very much,

Thank you for sharing your knowledge that must have taken years to acquire. I enjoyed the facts you shared such as the timeline of what 557 has gone through. I learned that there are many aspects to working on 557 other than just mechanical knowledge, such as sales. I enjoy the advice you gave, and I hope to achieve it. To be outstanding or stand out.

Thank you again, Rae Grawe

Dear Mr. Durand, the history you shared was so cool. I was not aware of Mears' backstory, and it is definitely something I have researched since then and will continue to look into because it is really interesting. The connections and information you brought about not only the history of 557, but the restoration process currently. I have not been incredibly interested in engineering or working on the ins and outs of trains until you started talking about how the volunteers worked on it and the passion you all had for the work you were putting in. Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to us and sharing the passion you had for the project and how willing you are to train new people. It sounds so enjoyable and again, thank you for speaking with us. -Rachael F.

Mr. Durand, thank you so much for taking the time to tell us all about the Alaska Railroad steam locomotive 557. I wanted to express my gratitude for the insightful speech you provided. I have been looking over the alaskarail.org website and I find it very informative and interesting. Your detailed explanations helped me understand a very important and crucial part of the railroad's history. Additionally, I have the book Frederick Mears: Builder of the Alaska Railroad in my bookcase and I am about to start reading it, thank you for the book recommendation!! And thank you for taking the time to tell us what you do! -Taylor M.

Thank you for coming to talk to us about Engine 557 Mr. Durand. It really taught me a lot about something I really had no knowledge of and was very interesting. Learning about the process that you and the volunteers have to go through, and all the different things you have to do in order to restore the engine is really intriguing and makes me want to go and volunteer. I truly respect how much passion you have for this and all the time you put into the project. Hopefully one day I can ride Engine 577. Thank you so much. - Jude N.

Dear Mr Durand,

Thank you for taking the time out of your day to come and speak to our class. We are very grateful you decided to share your extensive knowledge with us. I can tell that you are very passionate about the history of The Alaska Railroad and especially engine 557. Your insight on engine 557 and the life of Frederick Mears enriched the experience for the whole class. We truly appreciate the time and effort you put into preparing such an engaging presentation.

Sincerely, Johanna Sims

Dear Mr. Durand,

Thank you for imparting your expertise on Engine 557 for our class! I feel like we are more in touch with the importance of history behind Engine 557. Specifically, thank you for providing your wise perspective and formative opinion on how much effort and time goes into restoring it. I hope to see you and your co-workers on the train this summer. We all hope to see Engine 557 on the railroad again! Whether that be for a dinner train or full blown excursions through the Alaska Railroad, I wish you and your team good luck and happy restorations.

Sincerely, Elias Bourdukofsky

Dear Mr. Durand,

I would like to sincerely thank you for taking time out of your day to come in and spread your knowledge to us all. I have found that learning about engine 557 and all of her sisters were an interesting topic to discuss, and found myself so intrigued that I have forgotten to take notes. I would also like to thank you for spreading awareness to the website concluding information about things railroad related, and just an overall thank you for coming. Have an amazing rest of your day! -Logan

Thank you so much, Mr. Durand, for talking to us about the 557 project. It's great to hear about this restoration from someone who's been working on it for more than a decade and really knows about what it's taken to get the project to where it is now. I also want to thank you for sharing your extensive knowledge of the Alaska Railroad with us; it's always interesting to hear about and be able to ask questions about the railroad who has an extensive knowledge of the history of it. I'm going to check out some of the books you recommended as well as they sounded like great reads, especially for someone who loves Alaskan history.

-Gavin M.

Hello Mr. Durand,

Thank you for talking to us about the 557 last week! It was very interesting learning about the 557 and its history. I find it very cool that you have the plans for the locomotive, and are able to provide them to the keepers of the other trains. I look forward to seeing the workers while riding the train, and I hope to see the train in working order soon!

Thank you!

-Reece Silknitter