

# SO YOU WANT TO PAINT A LOCOMOTIVE!

By David Dewey

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The following generous people have made cash donations to the FRRS:

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Please welcome the following new FRRS life members:

Gary Ashcraft  
from Fountain Valley, CA

Jim Marklinger  
from San Rafael, CA

David Conkling  
from Granite Bay, CA

Kevin P. Murphy  
from Northridge, CA

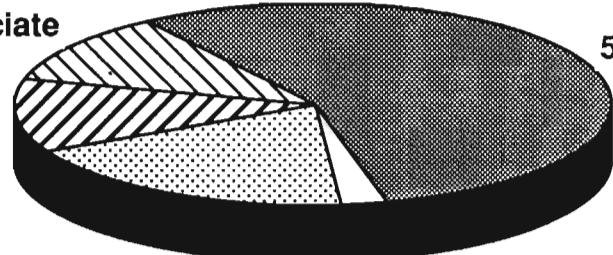
## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

*as of October 31, 1993*

**119 Associate**

**568 Active**

**118 Life**



*Total FRRS membership is 1,023.*

*Of these, 30 are Charter members.*

Let's put aside museum theory and practice for a bit, and take a look at how we give a locomotive a face-lift. First, we do a thorough cleansing from the inside out with the Hotsey steam cleaner. This will hopefully prevent gunk from inside the carbody seeping through the seams to the outside, ruining the new paint job. To prepare for this, you climb inside the car body and pick up all the loose parts and stuff that has accumulated from the past thirty or forty years -- wear gloves as there are often broken light bulb carcasses around! This can take almost a full day, and you'll find all sorts of nuts and bolts, light guards, reverser levers and other long forgotten tools. Around the sander boxes you usually find an accumulation of sand that is busy absorbing moisture and rusting out the metal around it. In the case of F-units, this means a two day job of vacuuming out the nose and under cab compartment. I have witnessed quarter-inch thick steel completely rusted away by sand-trapped moisture.

Next you don a "zoot suit," (coveralls,) fire up the Hotsey, and start cleaning from one end working towards the other, being careful not to get electrical compartments wet. After about four hours you emerge looking like a Cornish coal miner. (This is a perfect time to commit a criminal activity, as no one can recognize you and your fingerprints are full of grease too!) Two hours later you have transferred the grease to the shower drain, or walls, and are again some resemblance of your former self. Now you can inspect the work you just did. The floor is now two inches lower and looks like metal. (There's even some paint on it!) Closer inspection reveals that some repair in the past covered the outside frame sill drain holes on one side that need to be cut open so water and dirt, etc., can flow out. -- When do we get to do some painting stuff? Not until after we have another stint inside with the Hotsey -- there's still too much grease and dirt around!

Now we take the Hotsey and wash off the outside, starting with the roof and working down the sides -- where did all that "new" dirt come from? Then, using the air impact gun, you begin removing the stainless steel side grills so they can be stripped and polished. Another surprise -- the grills have little wooden spacer blocks that fall apart when you take the grills off. After all the pieces have been picked up and boxed and labeled, you go back to the roof and inspect for loose bolts to be tightened and holes to be filled. Remove the cooling fan grills so they can be sandblasted and painted later.

It is very important now to document the existing paint striping and lettering information that is still visible by making notes and full size paper patterns of painted arcs, like those on the nose of WP F's. Next, you safety rope yourself to some of the roof hatch lifting hooks so if you slip you won't fall off the engine. (Hey, these roofs are not flat!) Then, using your trusty old DA sander, attack the rust and loose paint, and feather out all the chips and smooth out the old paint. Two days later and many, many sanding disks, the roof is ready for paint -- except we want to sand the sides near the roof so any over spray will be well bonded to the old paint. Next column: Can we paint yet??