

The 805A Report by Larry Hanlon

Hello everyone! Yes, it has indeed again been a long time, in fact this edition will cover most of the work done in 1993. Enough additional progress was made on mechanical items to put us within striking distance of calling that job "done," while cosmetic restoration was restarted and also achieved good results. The primary challenge has been finding enough time to get to the museum, as my work/travel schedule has done a good job of evaporating available weekends. To illustrate, instead of the usual 11-12 museum trips, last year I was only able to squeeze in 3. Luckily, the bulk of the heavy mechanical work seems to be done, and David Dewey has picked up the cosmetic restoration.

Recent Results

In mid-May, Dave McClain and John Ryczkowski changed out the head gasket and water seals on #16 cylinder, the one that had been trickling water into the airbox. They ran out of time to test it, so that was the first order of business on May 30. After filling the cooling system, evaluating a lower liner seal water leak on #13, and allowing ample time for prelubing, we fired her up. It was incredibly satisfying to hear the engine crank vigorously and spring to life immediately, as if it had just been shut down the previous day rather than 7 months earlier. Thanks go to Gordy Wollesen for keeping the batteries charged over the winter. Since we were still in the shop we ran only for a short time, but it was quickly apparent that the operation had been a success as both stacks now ran clean and the engine, already smooth, ran audibly smoother. The final bit of good news was to see no water leaking anywhere after the engine was shut down.

After Railroad Days, Steve Habeck and the switch crew left the 805 spotted over the recovery pan on 3 Rail. I spent the 24th and 25th of August cleaning out the interior and planning restoration and painting strategies with Dave Dewey. On the 24th I organized the numerous external parts occupying the interior space, stored others, and threw out trash. After helping David Dewey remove the grilles from the B unit, I fixed the Shop-Vac and began vacuuming out the interior of the nose. This was slow going as the fine iron oxide dust quickly plugged the filter, and frequent stops for filter shaking were necessary. While this was going on, I also had the engine running in order to give the seals more opportunity to seat themselves. This was the longest single stretch the engine had run since we started the mechanical

work, and it just purred for 6 hours. Best of all, there were no water leaks when it was shut down. A tight engine at last!!

On the 25th, I hot pressure washed the entire interior. In the contest for "dirtiest job," this probably exceeded even the replacement of traction motor brushes. Even though the Hotsy would not feed the cleaning solution properly and the engine room therefore needs to be done again, this still made a dramatic improvement in the overall cleanliness and is a first step towards painting the interior. Since I was already soaked and filthy, I did the entire exterior as well.

During September and October, David Dewey worked steadily on the restoration of the stainless side panels where they had been crudely sanded to remove the WP roadname at some time in the past. This was a very tedious process requiring many passes over the same areas with increasingly fine grit, but the outcome makes it worthwhile. He also welded a plate over the rusted-out spot on the nose below the engineer's windows, and blended it in to the rest of the nose contour. The pitted areas on the cab sides behind the cab access ladder kick plates were also repaired, and broken grab iron mounting bolts were removed or drilled out. He also cleaned out the cab and took the seats to Oroville for reupholstery. While cleaning up the nose interior for painting, David discovered a pocket of old, caked sand which had to be cleaned out, and rusted metal beneath which required attention. After another Hotsy cleaning session inside the nose, and just before the cold weather shut down painting for the year, David was able to get a coat of gray on the nose interior. What an improvement!! The additional primer he put on the nose exterior, along with a splash of leftover orange from the B unit painting, are a harbinger of good things to come this spring....

Dave McClain, John Ryczkowski, and I had planned to converge on Portola on Feb. 19 and 20 to attend to a number of 805 tasks such as the insulating sleeves on the #3 traction motor, swapping the original governor back in, and swapping in a working brake stand (the original blew an internal gasket during Railroad Days last August). However, the weather intervened and we were forced to scrub the trip.....which is why I had time to do this report. We'll try again in March.

See you next time!

