

Southern Pacific Steam Switchers

By Norman W. Holmes

Southern Pacific's first 0-6-0's were in use before the turn of the century with 77 engines of this wheel arrangement working on the SP's Pacific lines. During the next 26 years SP added 151 six wheel switchers to its roster.

Our 1215 was built by Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia in May, 1913 with builders number 39832. It was first placed in service on September 24, 1913. She was one of 27 built by Baldwin between 1913 and 1918 and numbered 1210-1221, 1232-1246 and 1298-1299. Boiler pressure was raised from 175 to 190 pounds in 1918. The only repairs we have on record are a change from 3 inch to 2 1/2 inch safety valves installed in 1934, new tires along with a new number 2 driving axle in 1939 and in 1942 a 22 x 13 inch patch plate applied to the boiler.

Every yard had switchers that usually were working around the clock, taking time out only to replenish fuel and water and the monthly inspection and boiler wash required by the ICC. For example during the mid 1940's San Jose yard had 24 engines and San Francisco, including Bayshore had 48 engines. Diesel switchers came on the scene during WW II and completely replaced steam switchers in 1957.

Information from Tom Mougovan has the 1215 assigned to the Sacramento Division from 1937 to 1949, then on the Tucson Division until 6-30-54 and on the Coast Division until 8-31-57.

I became interested in obtaining the 1215 for our museum in April, 1987, after visiting some friends in the area. I was impressed with its good overall condition. Inquiries were made over the next several years to obtain the engine and finally on March 22, 1995, a letter was sent to the Kings County Public Works Department Park Manager with a request to obtain the engine. The Department evaluated our request and considered the option of asbestos removal, track rehabilitation and painting and decided a new home for the 1215 would be in its best interest.

On July 6, 1995, David Dewey and Hank Stiles made an inspection of the 1215 and brought back a favorable report. Our Board of Directors OK'd the acquisition and on July 21, we made a formal request for the engine. Finally on August 20, 1996, the Kings County Board of Supervisors approved the agreement to sell the 1215 to our organization. Movement of the engine became a priority and this was accomplished in October with the 1215 arriving on museum track-age October 7, 1996.

Southern Pacific was very generous in donating steam locomotives to cities and counties that wanted a memento of the age of steam. Over 50 SP steam engines have thus survived. Several have now been returned to service, most notably 4-8-4 No. 4449 in Portland. Others are 1233, 0-6-0 in Woodland, 1269 0-6-0 in Richmond, 2353 4-6-0 in Campo, 2472 4-6-2 in San Francisco, 3420 2-8-0 in El Paso and 786 2-8-2 in Austin TX. A number of others have been removed from their original display sites and are under restoration.

The 1215 was donated to Kings County (Hanford) and delivered on September 30, 1958. It was placed in Burris Park. Hanford is on SP's Coalinga branch where it is doubtful 0-6-0's ever operated. Whenever a community requested a steam locomotive for display more often than not a switcher was selected. They were small enough to be relatively easy to move and the scrap value was not as high as with a larger locomotive.

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You Can't Get Here From There...

The Great Locomotive Move

By David Dewey

Ever since the departure of the Feather River #8, we've been quietly looking for a steam engine that will fit the museum's site. On one of his trips down the Central Valley, Norm stopped and looked at the locomotive on display in the King County park near Kingsburg. Discreet inquiries over three years ago determined that it might be available. An inspection team (David Dewey and Hank Stiles) was sent to the park in June of 1995 to determine if it might be restorable. They removed the cylinder heads, boiler plugs and opened the smokebox door. The cylinders were in excellent condition. The areas of the boiler that could be inspected looked sound. The running gear appeared to be in good condition. It was decided to go forward with purchase negotiations.

It took over another year for Kings County to complete the sale. One local person wanted to restore the engine "in place," but could not come up with a financially sound plan. We were finally given title to the engine in September of this year. Now how to get it here!

The engine had sat unmoved for 38 years; exposed bearing surfaces were covered with surface rust. Fortunately, the area's dry climate did not promote heavy rusting; unfortunately, the grass watering system did! The locomotive's massive weight (engine only, 140,000 pounds!) would have required large cranes to lift it onto a truck, however, with some preparation it could be rolled on its own wheels onto the trucks.

Our "Locomotive Rescue Crew" was formed with the task of preparing the locomotive for movement so the bearing surfaces wouldn't be damaged by cleaning, derusting, and lubricating all the moving surfaces. We had six people, Clyde Lippincott, Ken Iverson, Ken Hitch, Dr. Peter Lyman, Norm Holmes, Doug Morgan, and David Dewey; each lent valuable experience to the group. A large assortment of tools, greases, cleaning supplies, and anything else we thought might be useful was loaded into Clyde's trailer and Norm's truck.

We raided our pile of track supplies. Twelve track gauge rods were cleaned, straightened, and re-threaded by Meg Evans & David Dewey. These and six lengths of rail were loaded onto Doug Morgan's truck. We made arrangements to borrow ties from a landscape firm in the area.

The team left on September 17, and spent the following four days cleaning, sanding, polishing, and lubricating the engine. Our first job was to dig out the engine; it had settled about 6 inches over the years! Norm cleaned and oiled all the tender axles. Mike Rypczynski (park caretaker), and Joe Singh (Parks Superintendent), helped by supplying tractors and a crew to remove the concrete steps and curbing. Clyde Lippincott and Ken Iverson worked to free the tender from the steps. When the steps were removed, the tender sunk another inch! Peter was busy lubricating the side rods, a difficult job without the special grease gun originally used on steam engines. Doug and David spent the days under the locomotive preparing the axle bearings. Ken Hitch, our local contact person, was kept busy getting parts, tools, ties, and food!

The first major hurdle was pulling the drawbar pin that connects the engine and tender, as they were to be loaded on separate trucks. Kroil penetrating oil was liberally applied

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Conclusion of The Great Locomotive Move

By David Dewey

and a 30 ton jack was used to push. After some effort, and many different "techniques" (hammering to set up loosening vibrations), the pin went "BANG," the whole locomotive shuddered, and the pin MOVED--not much, but it was a start!

With the tender connections all removed, it was time to see if 38 years of rest could be disturbed. The park tractor was chained to the tender. The chain tightened, and then the tractor wheels spun--no movement. A car moving lever (one of those wood-handled tools that normally resides on the depot cart as part of our tool display) was applied to the rear tender truck. The chain tightened again, Doug pushed on the lever; and GROAN, the tender eased away from the engine!

Now it was time to move the engine. We knew the tractor couldn't handle it, so Mike arranged for the county's big loader to come help. Meanwhile we rolled the tender back to the engine and coupled them together. Ken cleaned and polished the cylinders (and removed the one rat carcass we found inside). The crosshead guides were stripped of paint and rust sanded down. We finished the time-honored engineer's task of "oiling around" the running gear.

The big loader arrived and was chained to the tender. The chain tightened and nothing! Once again, with a little more gusto--BANG, BANG--and the wheels started to turn! The banging was likely the piston rings releasing their rust-grip on the cylinders. We cleaned the now-exposed bearing surfaces, then pushed the engine forward; no banging noise this time. Again, clean the bearings. Now the big test: a 15-foot length of track was added to the rear, and the tractor hooked on again. This time the engine was rolled back a full revolution of the wheels--no problems! We were now ready for the trucks. The fence was temporarily replaced and we all headed home for some rest.???

Norm was looking for truckers, and found Taylor Heavy Haulin' from Sacramento. They had just moved a steam engine, still had the rails and ramps on their truck, and were available October 1. We hurriedly arranged for a "Moving Team" to prepare the site for the trucker. Monday, September 30 found us in the park removing fencing, tender hand-rails and loose parts still on the locomotive. David touched up the cab numbers and tender lettering. At 1 PM that day the trucks pulled in.

These trucks are loaded from their front end. The big "gooseneck" that couples to their cab unhooks from the flatbed section and then the cab drives away. We used the county's big loader to push the flatbed section into place. Then we laid rails from the locomotive up to the trailer's rails and bolted them together.

The big tractor was then used to pull the tender onto the trailer. It was chained down and the temporary rails pulled up. The big tractor then dragged the trailer to one side so the truck cab could hook up again. By nightfall the tender was loaded and parked in the park's paved lot.

Early Tuesday morning the nine-axle truck backed into the loading site. There was really not enough room; but after much jostling around, the trailer was lined up and the truck cab pulled away. Back to track laying! The tractor was chained to the engine, and it smoothly rolled up the track. All that preparation work had paid off. After a brief stop to center the rails on the trailer so the locomotive would clear the trailer's side frames, the locomotive was pulled and pushed onto the trailer.

Now to get the truck cab coupled on again. The tracks were pulled up, and the big tractor was used to build a road where the display track had been. It was afternoon by now. Finally the truck could back up and connect. It's a complicated operation using ramps and hydraulics to lift the trailer onto the truck's fifth wheel. There was so much weight on the trailer that it had only three inches of road clearance!

After much discussion with the park management, it was decided we could drive over the lawn to get back to pavement. There were so many tires on the rig, that despite its overall weight of 218,000 pounds, Joe noted it didn't make as much of an imprint in the grass as the cement trucks they use. It was now 6 PM and both trucks were loaded and setting on paved road!

Wednesday morning we left the park in a cloud of dust, and started on the route Kings county had given us. At the second corner, we found a power pole & a mail box. The mailbox now has a dent in it and the power pole is smooth on one side! Two farmers watching said, "You ain't gonna make the next corner!" They were almost right. We stopped and called the county highway department, who sent someone to look at our predicament. After an hour of discussion, the truckers decided to "go for it" as anything else was going to take lots of time and expense (the other option they gave us was to back the truck up for two miles!). The county did give us permission to go straight to the state highway instead of down some more impossible roads. They "gunned it," swung wide, scraped the pavement, and just cleared the corner! On towards I-5 and Bakersfield (and no more narrow county roads!).

The next hurdle was to weigh the trucks to insure that we were "legal." Finding a scale that could take the weight proved to be a problem. The first place we stopped, the manager wanted to know if we were hauling it to SCRAP! Finally we found Bolthouse Farms, one of the world's largest carrot processors, in Bakersfield. Their scales could handle 120,000 pounds, just enough for us to weigh each end of the truck. We found out that we were 2,000 pounds overweight on the front, so the locomotive would have to be moved backwards 18 inches.

The next morning Bolthouse's crews lent us a forklift and torch so we could remove the air tank under the cab and some brake valving. This would give us just enough room to clear the rear gooseneck. After the move, and some adjustments to the front gooseneck, we just made "legal weight." Time to challenge the Tehachapi grade! Going back onto the freeway, the overpass was about an inch too low, and we scraped the top of the engine. We had lunch in Mojave and continued on almost making Lone Pine that night. On flat ground we could do 52 mph, above that the locomotive truck would bounce and hit the pavement! Up the grades, we would travel at a walking speed. Friday night, just past dusk, the locomotive pulled into Gardnerville, Nevada.

Overweight loads are not allowed to run on the weekends, so 1215's homecoming would have to wait until Monday. The crews met in Carson City early Monday morning, finalized arrangements and headed for the trucks. We pulled through Carson City around 10 AM, Reno around 11. Arrival at Portola was 1 PM. After making certain the route was clear through town (the city was digging up the road in front of the museum's entrance!) and showing the truckers the "tight spots," we rolled through town with the 1215's bell ringing. The tender was unloaded first, going through the gate about 3 PM. The large, gravel, flat area outside the museum entrance made easy work of the unloading. The engine entered the museum at 4 PM. Home at last on solid footing (Though we did break a rail on the temporary ramp!).

We are now planning the restoration program and organizing a restoration team; you're welcome to volunteer! We will also soon begin a fund-raising campaign for this project. Your ideas, suggestions and donations are welcome. We know we will have to remove the boiler jacket and insulating material as a first step. This does require some specialized knowledge. If you know of someone who is licensed to do this work, and might be interested in our project, please contact David Dewey (916-534-3676) or leave a message at the museum!

WPRRHS Southern California Regional Meet

By Steve Habeck

The 7th annual Southern California Regional Meet, now under the banner of the WPRRHS, was held on a fine, sunny October 12, 1996 in La Habra, CA, at the La Habra Clubhouse. Several rows of tables were covered with all sorts of WP artifacts and memorabilia, as well as hundreds of simply outstanding models. In addition, presentations were given by Mike Hopkin on contemporary detail oriented diesel modeling; Joe D'Elia on prototype modeling; David Casdorff, Editor/Publisher of "Freight Car Journal;" and "Diesel" Dave Smith, UP LA Subdivision engineer, on running trains over Cajon Pass. Ken Hitch did good business at the FRRS sales tables set up in the lobby, and new WPRRHS hats and shirts were sold by Mike Mucklin.

At least two dozen raffle prizes were handed out, as well as the awards for best models in several categories (details are expected to appear in a future issue of the "Headlight"). Pete Solyom and his crew are to be congratulated for staging another successful, well-attended event.

Motorcar 23

The Model T Ford motorcar, 23, is now on the property. This car is a representative example of the typical light transportation vehicles used on logging railroads. They were used to take staples or "the boss" to the logging camps, and for track inspection. The Sierra Railroad used a similar car, which they still have.

Our car is built from a 1923 roadster. The trunk has been removed and replaced with an era wooden pick-up bed. The front and rear axles have been adapted with Fairmont 20" wheels. The car was assembled and restored by Tom Sharpsteen of Orland. The body sheet metal was donated by Mort and Ole Lindahl of Durham, the fenders by Bill Thomas of Oroville. The adapters were built by Jim Tangeman of Orland, and the windshield glass was donated by Butte Glass of Oroville. The rest of the parts were donated by Tom. The upholstery was purchased by the museum and installed by David Dewey.

While it is in operating condition, we still have some work to do on it. David is rebuilding a starter and generator to avoid that typical Model T malady, the Ford Fracture (caused by the hand crank kicking back). Also an exhaust whistle (for a warning device) is being added. A turntable arrangement so the car can be easily put on & off the tracks and turned around is being fabricated.

The 23 was very popular at Railfan day, making one trip with 6 people on board! We hope it may be used in the future as a traveling display piece for large rail events where it's impractical to take regular railroad equipment.

FRRS Member Benefit

All FRRS members in good standing receive a 10% discount on all items purchased in person or by mail from the FRRS Gift Shop.

FRRS Life Members

Everyone who was a Life Member prior to October 1, 1995 may upgrade to Family Life AT NO CHARGE and AT ANY TIME simply by writing a letter to the Society requesting the upgrade.

Conclusion of SP Steam Switchers By Norman W. Holmes

It is not known how the 1215 arrived at Burriss Park. Kingsburg, on the SP main line is about 5 miles from the park, while Hanford is about 10 miles away.

It was probably trucked from one of these locations and we were told it was under steam when moved onto its display track. It would be interesting to hear what the 1215 could say about the move. While on display the engine and tender were coupled up with all three drawbar pins in place. The water, oil and air connections were connected, just as it would have been when in service.

As with several park engines 1215 was set up as a playground jungle gym. The hand rails on the top of the tender were extended to keep children from falling off and concrete steps were set to allow easy access to the cab. Soon after it was placed on display a child fell off the engine and was injured. The park department then put a fence around the engine to prevent any further accidents.

(This also discouraged further vandalism to the engine.) Thus the 1215 remained except for a quickie paint job until sold to our organization.

A listing of saved SP 0-6-0's is as follows:

- 1215 Hanford (1)
- 1221 Deming NM
- 1227 Alameda
- 1229 Roseburg OR
- 1233 Woodland (2)
- 1237 Salinas
- 1238 Fresno
- 1251 Stockton (3)
- 1258 Martinez
- 1269 Richmond (4)
- 1273 Los Angeles
- 1285 Monterey
- 1293 Tracy
- 1294 San Francisco (5)
- 1297 Ogden UT
- 1298 Santa Cruz (6)

Notes:

- (1) Sold to FRRS 8-96 moved to Portola 10-96, under restoration.
- (2) Transferred to Sacramento Valley Historic Railways, restored and leased to Yolo Short Line. In service 5-96.
- (3) Sold to V&T Ry., moved to Virginia City NV, under restoration.
- (4) Donated to Pacific Locomotive Assn., moved to Castro Point and restored to operation. Leased to California State Railroad Museum, 1981. Returned to PLA, Niles Canyon Ry., 1995.
- (5) Scrapped due to deteriorated condition. Some parts saved by PLA.
- (6) Tender donated to Eccles & Eastern.

Comparison statistics:

	WP 165	SP 1215
Wheel arrangement	0-6-0	0-6-0
Builder	American	Baldwin
Date	1919	1915
Driver dia.	51	51
Cyl. dia./stroke	21x26	19x26
Wt.	160,000	154,600
Tender loaded	102,500	133,600
Boiler pressure	180	190
Tractive Effort	34,000	29,720
Tender water	4,500	7,000
Oil capy.	2,155	2,940
Eng. length	31'9"	29'9"
Eng. + tender	60'	60'8"
Wheel base	11'6"	11'0"
Tender length	26'	28'3"
Boiler ID	72"	65"
Overall ht.	173"	164"