

Mechanical Report

- Hank Stiles, Chief Mechanical Officer

A lot is going on at the museum and I am not speaking only of the the many of things that need to be done just to keep the doors open, for that it's hats off to John Walker and the many other people that help him. I make reference to the trip to the museum at Rio Vista, our trip to the McCloud Railway and the stop at Dunsmuir on our way back. Also this summer myself and my wife Janis along with John Walker were on the Trains Unlimited trip from Emeryville to Portland for the National Railway Historical Society convention and the trip from Eugene to Coos bay and back with Rails Northwest. Janis and I sold drinks and snacks to the passengers while John worked in the gift shop car. We handed out a lot of brochures and told a lot of people about our museum, some had never heard of our operation. This is more work than you can imagine. By the time you get there in the morning and set up, work while the train is running and do the cleanup and restocking and get to the motel it turns into a 20 hour day. The good news is that we made a substantial amount of money for the museum and had a great time while we were at it. We had no trouble falling asleep at night that is for sure, but I would do it again in a second.

A lot of us were kept pretty busy this summer. With getting the locomotives ready for these trips, (Rio Vista and McCloud/Dunsmuir) the Mechanical Department had its hands full and this took up much of our time and effort. That being said a lot of what I hoped to get done this summer just didn't get done. It's first things first and things get done as manpower, money and time permitting. Money being the most limiting factor followed by manpower.

The WP 917 has been put in service, it took about 10 hours of work inspecting, making small repairs and adjustments to the engine so the first start would not be the last. The fuel pump was gummed up and had to be taken apart and cleaned. After prelubing, barring the engine over to put oil in the cylinders and running the fuel pump for about 10 min. to lube the injectors, the engine started. When it started 5 injectors stuck, so it was running on 11 cylinders. The air came up nicely and after it come up I decided to see if it would load. This got me nowhere, after some investigation I found that the relays were picking up but the power contactors were not. After some Kroil (the best penetrating oil

product I have ever seen) was applied they picked up and the unit loaded. After two warm up and cool down cycles all but two of the injectors started working and we changed both out a couple of days latter and the engine then ran fine. After the change out of the independent brake valve, the engine went in service in our rental fleet. Some problems have popped up but this was something I expected. The blower on the left bank has started leaking oil into the air box, bad seals being the problem, the braking transfer switch has stuck and one of the parallel contactors has an air leak, but not bad for an engine that had not run in about 10 years. Parts are on order and repairs and more servicing will be done after the rental season is over.

The WP 2001 and the WP 707 had work done in preparation for their adventures out the gate. Things like shutters, sanders, fan controls and the like were serviced and or repaired. This work allowed them both to perform like the troopers they are and shows the UP that they don't have to worry that our trains will cause delays on their railroad.

Then the WP 707 got back from the Rio Vista trip Rod McClure reported that the engine was not tracking properly. It was discovered that the center bowl liner had reached the end of it's useful life. A new one was ordered and with the help of Doug Morgan, it was jacked up with my jacks and the bowl changed out. In the process of rolling the front truck forward to change out the center bowl liner the sanding hose on R1 wheel just pulled apart, the hose was rotten on the inside, this and the R2 hose that was to short were replaced. After we replace some bolts on the rear pilot sheet she will be ready to join the battle once again.

We are looking at putting the operation to bed for the winter and then starting another season in the spring. Please come up to the museum and help out as your time permits. Also we need help raising the money we need to do the work of the Feather River Rail Society, so if you have any ideas or can afford to make a donation, please do it's tax deductible. My wish is that I win the lottery (or one of you with a generous heart do) and I can retire and work on refurbishing our entire collection. One can always hope.

I look forward to seeing you at Portola.