

MUSEUM MECHANICAL WORK

-Work continues on WP 917-D and begins on Quincy Railroad #3

In February of this year, work began on replacing the Roots blowers on the engine in WP 917-D, one of our F7A streamlined freight locomotives. Excessive amounts of lube oil were turning up in the engine's air boxes when it was operated, and the cause was deemed to be leaking seals in the blowers.

Removal and replacement of these components was an involved process. Initial work involved disassembly and removal of air intake components attached to each blower. This included removal of a portion of a water pipe coming off of the left side of the engine. The blowers, each weighing several hundred pounds, then had to be unbolted from the engine and lowered onto dollies, after which they were rolled to the rear of the engine room and muscled through a door onto pallets carried by a waiting forklift. The reverse of these processes was required in installing the replacement blowers.

This work occurred over several weekends and was delayed when it was discovered that the replacement blowers received were both for the left-hand side of the engine. Once the proper blower for the right-hand side of the engine arrived, the replacement was completed in late July.

Unfortunately, when the engine was fired off to test the success of the blower replacements, it was discovered that a water pipe inside the engine oil cooler had cracked and was pouring cooling water into the engine lube oil. This necessitated keeping the locomotive in "out of service status" pending repair of the oil cooler. Repair of this latest issue will also be a labor-intensive project that will involve using our WPMW 37 derrick to remove the roof hatch from this locomotive and lift the oil cooler from the engine room. The cooler will then be transported for repair at a radiator shop in Reno, after which it will be replaced into the locomotive. Plans are afoot to work on this project over the winter so that the 917-D will

again be available for service next season.

In additional Mechanical Department news, the FRRS Board of Directors at its September meeting agreed to a request that the Mechanical Department evaluate repairs needed to return Quincy Railroad locomotive 3 to service and formulate a list of necessary work, along with a deadline for completion of repairs so that this locomotive will be available for service during the 2008 season. Early input suggests that the work needed is relatively minor.

By using this small, 44-ton GE industrial locomotive for our light switching and for caboose trains when visitor counts are light, the Society expects to achieve a reduction in our expenses related to our consumption of fuel. With the recent significant rises in fuel costs, the Society, like other organizations who are large consumers of fuel, must look for ways to reduce this expense. The planned future use of this locomotive will be a big step in responding to this issue. This locomotive recently spent some time in the shop where, through the efforts of Norm Holmes, it received a fresh coat of the silver and blue paint the unit wore during its service on the Quincy Railroad.



Quincy Railroad 3, a General Electric built 44-ton locomotive, shows off its new paint in the WPRM Diesel Shop. The locomotive is currently undergoing a mechanical evaluation with a goal toward returning it to operation.

- photo by Matt Parker