

STEAM DEPARTMENT

- Chris Allan, Steam CMO

The Steam Department Summer 2007 work week at Portola was productive to say the least. Tons (literally) of parts were removed from the 165 in preparation for ultrasound testing. Dana Greeley and I arrived Friday evening, July the 27th, to find our hero Charlie Spikes removing nuts from the smokebox front. After settling into the Edenwold, we joined him in the attempt to remove the curved handrail on the smokebox front. The bolts holding the handrail stanchions were also holding the front on, so I grabbed the trusty pneumatic hammer and laid into them with little success. We grabbed some Chinese food and called it a night.

Saturday the 28th, we awoke to a fresh pot of coffee in the Silver Shower brewed by Charlie, which automatically got him the Hero Award for the day. By the time Dana and I suited up and got into the shop, Charlie had the pesky handrail off, and all but a few of the nuts were dealt with. Off came the front. By this time, Roger Stabler had made it up from Woodland, and he began removing the exhaust nozzle and the 24 super-heater units using his array of air tools. True to character, he stuck with it until they were removed, including a few that were still full of water! At that point, Roger began the task of cutting out the 2-inch diameter boiler tubes, which were full of greasy soot left over from the 165's final use as a stationary boiler. Roger

earned his hero badge over the next 2 days cutting out roughly half of the 2" tubes. The carbon left in the tubes tends to blow back on you when cutting the tubes, which is bad enough, however the flame from the torch ignites the soot and you get the upper part of your body covered with tiny flaming specks. The Finnegans, Paul and Kenneth, were up early on Saturday and removed all of the firebrick in the firebox, thanks to them for seeing the job through. Kenneth spent the rest of the day wire brushing the boiler shell exterior. Dana took turns needle scaling the side sheets and taking some pics, and Eugene Vicknair wire brushed for a few hours after he finished up in the Silver Hostel. The ever-dependable Eddie Chase began cleanup on the left side cylinder casting. Charlie and I removed the throttle valve using the air hoist. Charlie was the first inside the boiler; he performed some initial hammer testing on the stays while he was in there. We had a total of 8 workers on Saturday, which kicked off the week nicely and got the momentum started.

Sunday was a repeat of Saturday, except that the shop and the workers were getting increasingly carboned up. When we smiled all you could see were teeth. The floor around the rear damper was as black as night. Of course, this stuff was tracked all through the shop courtesy of the Steam Dept. Boiler tubes were flying out at a frightening rate. John Walker claimed a pile to use as fence posts. Roger departed our

2008 WP STEAM WORK PARTIES

Dates have been set for planned 2008 work parties to continue restoration on WP 165. The dates for these 2008 work parties are:

April 10 - 12
July 30 - August 2
October 23 - 25

Boiler work will be the focus of ongoing efforts this year. This work will include removal of the remaining tubes and flues as well as additional cleanup of the boiler shell interior and exterior. There are many other tasks that can be attacked at any time. Facilities Manager Charlie Spikes is aware of these tasks and can be contacted by anyone interested in working on the 165 at any time. "Jobs at every skill level are available!"

We would like to request that those planning to be at the museum during any of these work parties RSVP at wpssteam@wplives.org so that we have an idea of how much help to expect. We are also willing to arrange reservations for overnight accommodation in the Edenwold for anyone planning on participating.

WP 165 lapel pins and 2008 Steam calendars are available through the WPRM Gift Shop, with profits from sales of these items going to the 165 restoration fund. It's a great way to show your support for the Steam Program.

We have also started a blog that will include stories of our restoration efforts as another way to keep FRRS members and others interested apprised of our progress. The blog can be viewed at <http://wprrsteam.blogspot.com>.

company Sunday night after leaving us another generous monetary donation. Thanks again, Roger!

On Monday, Charlie and Dana removed the air reservoirs from each side to gain access to the boiler shell. The riveted tanks don't hold much hope (or air) so we will have to find or purchase replacements. I took my turn at cutting out tubes, a frustrating task. This was our third straight day of soot. Not much took it off in the shower at night except for that orange cleaner, which also managed to take off a layer of skin as well. I vowed that Tuesday would be a soot-free day for us.

Tuesday was storage boxcar day. The three of us, Charlie, Dana and I, stacked all the removed parts on pallets and moved them into the steam boxcar. Charlie and Don Borden previously cleaned out the car; it took them three days and several dumpsters. As luck would have it Norm was moving out one of his vintage trucks parked right next to the car, which made forklift logistics interesting while we both jockeyed for space. In the end everything made it in. Roger came into town on an empty coal train and joined us for dinner at the Pizza place. We all opted for the salad bar as well, since we had been craving roughage all week. Roger took the van home, and we retired to the Silver Shower's deck and sat, full of pizza, and watched the stars come out.

Our final work day, Wednesday, started again with Charlie's heady brew of coffee. Dana opted to take a turn at tube removal, and managed to get another 20 or so out. We were hoping to save the 5 3/8" superheater flues, but upon further inspection it doesn't look like we will be able to due to their condition. They have already been safe-ended twice and other indications of condition don't make me feel too confident about them. These will be expensive to replace, but we will be happy we did in the end. Our beloved President showed up in the afternoon and inspected our progress. He seemed happy with what we had accomplished. We certainly have a lot to be proud of; we stuck with the program and got the ball rolling. No unrepairable conditions were discovered in the boiler shell or sheets during tube removal. We will continue the work in the spring- April 10-12, 2008. Until then Charlie has his work cut out for him!

Eugene Vicknair has designed a stunning WP 165 lapel pin, which has been produced by Sundance Marketing. They are available for \$5 each in the Museum gift shop or online. A link for online purchase is available on the WPRM Steam Department page. And please don't forget that the 2008 WPRM Steam Department Calendar is available on Cafepress right now: <http://www.cafepress.com/wprsteam>

Please consider a tax-deductible donation in any amount to the 165 Steam Fund, every dollar gets us closer to our goal of bringing steam back to Portola!

PROMPT ACTION KEEPS LOCOMOTIVE RUNNING

On a recent October afternoon, Sierra Pacific Industries (former SP) locomotive 1100, a key piece of the Museum's operational fleet, was in use when an unknown problem caused it to stop loading out on the balloon track.

Another locomotive was used to rescue 1100 and place it inside the diesel shop. Members Doug Morgan and Hank Stiles soon went to work troubleshooting the problem. They found a burned wire and a loose terminal post in the unit's load regulator. The wire was replaced and the terminal post tightened, thereby resolving the problem.

The prompt action of these two capable members helped keep an important piece of Museum equipment ready for service.



Quincy Railroad 1100 is one of our workhorse engines in Portola. A rare TR6A switcher built by EMD, she served the Quincy for many years. Shown here in Susanville, CA in 1991.

- photo by Ed Gibson