

the balloon. The rear three cars (the CZ cars) were then cut off at Malfunction Junction, and the Amtrak units pulled the rest of the train in the clear on the balloon, allowing 608 to back down to the rear cars, couple up, and take them out to the West Pass. Once 608 cleared, we shoved three more cars past the Junction, cut off, and pulled ahead again. The 608 came back, got those three cars, and took them out to the West Pass, building the train three cars at a time. This process was repeated until the rear 12 cars were on the West Pass. While we were working on this, I worked with Bill Parker and Cody "Noodle" Wilson to cut WP 2001 away from the 707, after the special RAL's. This occurred at the east end of the yard, so as not to interfere with building the outbound train. I then brought 2001 around the balloon and coupled to the lead Amtrak unit.

Connections were made, air brakes were tested, and all was in order. Amtrak Mike and I then took 2001, the two Amtrak units, and the two head cars out to the West Pass, coupled up to the 12 cars already there, and we were done! We shoved the train east a few car lengths for good access to most of the cars for loading in the morning, and tied it down. Mike and the Amtrak mechanic then went about connecting all the HEP cables, and getting the HEP up and running. I shut down the 2001, and locked it up for the night.

It turned out that it was a good idea to build the train on Saturday night, because with all the work involved, it took over 4 hours to complete (about twice what we had estimated). By the time we restored the yard to normal for Sunday's caboose trains, it was well after 10 PM. This would have definitely delayed our departure in the morning significantly.

On a humorous note, two ladies, passengers on the train, who obviously had been partying in town, stumbled into the Museum some time after 10:30 PM, looking for their car. Finding only empty track, they displayed a combination of anger, fear, and confusion. Fortunately, I was just leaving the Museum, and was able to direct these ladies to the train out on the West Pass via our little-used personnel gate on the north side of the property. I made sure they found their car and were safely aboard before I headed home for a short nap, and to prepare for what would surely be a grand day for the FRRS (and me, too).

*continued in the next issue....*

## WP 165 SPRING PROGRESS

- Chris Allan, Steam CMO

Spring has sprung, an unusually long, wet winter is over, and we are ready to get back to work on the WP 165. Leaving Los Angeles for a few days seldom requires an excuse, but in this case the cabin fever made it imperative. I arrived in Portola on Wednesday, April 27th ready to get something accomplished. Upon arrival we met up with Steve Lee, recently retired from the Union Pacific Steam Department. Steve came out from Cheyenne to help out for the week, and we were very happy to see him on the property. In anticipation for the "big pick" the following Saturday, Rod McClure, Steve Habeck and Cody Wilson were adjusting the drum brakes in derrick 37, a beastly machine. Built for the WP as a steam derrick, it was converted to internal combustion sometime in the 1970's. We ordered pizza in, and called it a night.

Thursday morning dawned clear, cold and windy. Breakfast at the Station Café with Charlie Spikes is always a good way to start the day. Charlie, Bill and Duane had spent the previous week getting our parts cleaning tank cleared away and functional so we could start degreasing locomotive parts. A 55 gallon drum of the cleaning solvent only gave us a few inches in the bottom due to the tanks enormous size, more is on order.



*Steve Lee helps move a big lathe donated to us by the Union Pacific.*

*- Debra Baer photo*

The big task facing us on Thursday was getting the pedestal binders ready to come off. This proved to be another colossal task given the amount of crud clogging the holes, damaged studs, etc. Luckily by this time our friends from the Golden Gate Railroad Museum in San

Francisco were starting to arrive. Dave Roth, Dave Varley, Jim Prettyleaf, and Severen Edmonds were ready to get dirty, so they were put to work. By Friday Roger Stabler and Dave Wallace also took turns in the pit "persuading" the heavy binders to move, which eventually did. Everything does, in time, bend to our will, some things just not that easily. Bruce Hilliard serenaded us with the needlescaler. Charlie had to run back to Reno to refill the O2 bottles. David Hensarling, president of GGRM, arrived on Friday to check things out, and was put to work reassembling the left side brake cylinder with Jim P. and Nathan Osborn. James Cowdery, "Burr" Wilson and Nathan applied red primer to the first two boiler courses and the dome, which was nice to see, much better than rust colored metal. Doyle McCormack came down from Portland, Oregon to check out his sleeper car, the "Magnolia Grove", and visit with Steve Lee. Doyle is a steam veteran and has a lot of good advice for us. Thus started the "Fog of War" period when things were happening so fast that it's hard to recount everything, so forgive me if I omit any details.



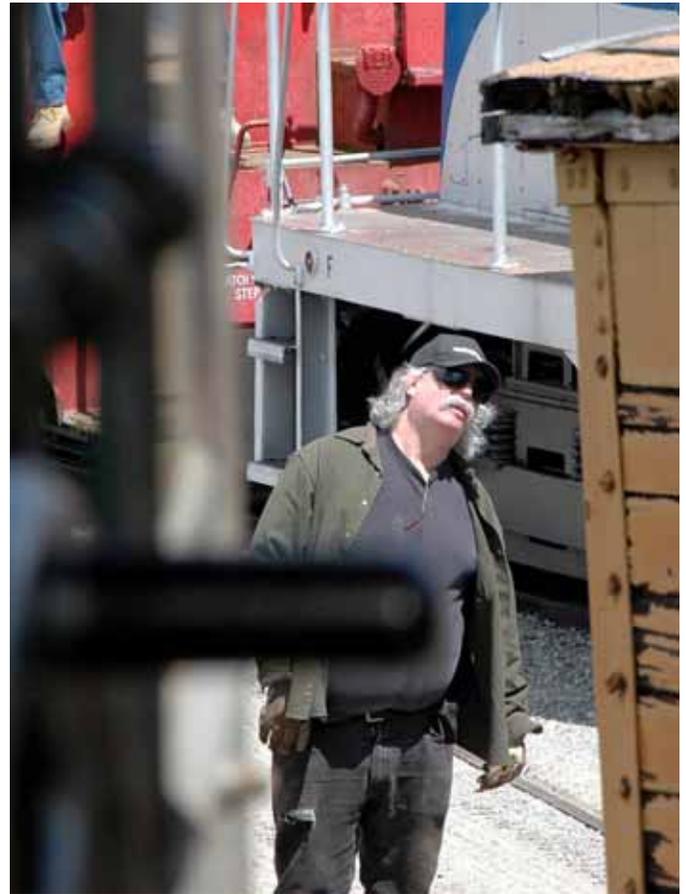
*Jim Prettyleaf, GGRM welder, removes a wasted section of the 165's wrapper sheet.*

*- Debra Baer photo*

Friday also saw the Brehm family up from Phoenix to re-roof the Steam Department's tool car, the former Denver & Rio Grande boxcar donated to us by the Western Railway Museum in Rio Vista, CA. The three of them set to removing the mostly rotted T&G and recovering with plywood and rubberized roofing. This is a temporary measure until we can mill up the proper wood roofing, but at least the interior can stay dry for the time being. Thanks to you guys for making the trip and getting the job done!

Friday night dinner at the Roadhouse was

enjoyable, at least until the Karaoke started. At that point we were ready to get back to our bunks to rest up for Saturday, which proved to be eventful.



*Phil Schmierer checks the rigging on Tidewater Southern bunk car / depot 0565-H prior to lifting.*

*- Debra Baer photo*

Saturday morning the derrick crew, guided by rigging foreman Phil Schmierer had the Tidewater Southern bunk car back up on trucks for the first time in a long time. The plan was to pick the 165 off its drivers and place the boiler and chassis in the spot previously occupied the TS car. With the binder nuts loose, and the engine back down on the axles and lubricated with some STP (Doyle's suggestion) it left the confines of the shop for the first time in several years and was back out in the light of day. The move went slowly due to having to pull it out with a chain, before the switch crew could run around and use the coupler on the front.

Finally spotted next to the derrick, Steve Lee and Phil rigged the cables, and derrick operator Rod eased the engine skyward, just a bit. Of course the 165 didn't give up that easy, as Severen, Dave Varley and Dave Wallace had to beat on a couple of the binders before they finally gave in (the

binders, not the Severen, Dave and Dave). Once Phil was confident that the rigging was sound, up went the boiler and frame, and as according to plan, the driver sets stayed on the ground, thankfully. With two taglines and numerous holders-on, the engine spinning around 180 degrees to its resting spot resembled a Macy's Thanksgiving Parade balloon, albeit an incredibly ungainly one.

After some careful negotiation through the air, the chassis and frame were set down on cribbing. Sandblasting can now commence later in the season on the boiler interior, the drivers and other parts. Roger Stabler has offered to get quotes on the four leaf springs that need renewal. The plan calls for re-wheeling the locomotive this time next year, barring any "unforeseen" events or disclosures once we get the numerous layers of paint and grime off.

Thanks to all for a great deal of time, effort, and professionalism during this process. It is my hope that this is as far as we need to go for disassembly, and we can now begin putting it all back together. Erin Swain has been making good progress on restoring the power reverse cylinder at his home shop in Flagstaff, AZ. This is one example of how things are always happening on the 165 project, little by little. In time lots of "littles" add up to a whole lot.

Our next work session is coming up July 21st-23rd, 2011. By then we hope to have the sandblasting done, including the cab. Erin is going to lead the project to repair the cancer around the base, and renew the wood headliner. Cleaning of parts continues, thanks to Charlie

and his son Eric. Thanks go to Rod McClure especially for all the prep work getting the derrick back into fighting shape. Big thanks also to James Mason, our Treasurer, behind the scenes directing all of the steam funds in the right direction. The amount of work left is staggering, but if we have a few more sessions like this last one, some real progress will be apparent real soon.



*FRRS President Rod McClure works the controls of 200 ton derrick WP MW37, one of our many historic items that still does its original job at the museum.*

*- Debra Baer photo*

WP 165 needs your help. Steam engines run on 4 things: fuel, water, rails and money. We've got 3 of those in abundance, but your help is needed for the last one. To donate to the 165, you can post mail a check to Steam Department - FRRS, P O Box 608, Portola, CA 96122. Or go on-line to the WP Store: [giftshop.wplives.org](http://giftshop.wplives.org). Click on Monetary Donations and select 165 Donation to support the return of steam to Portola.

## HOW TO MAKE ADDRESS and MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

In our efforts to inform and keep in touch with our members, one of the difficulties we often face are members who have moved or changed their contact information without sharing the changes with us. If you move, get a new email or phone number, or need to make other changes to your contact information, there are several easy ways to let us know.

By postal mail: FRRS - Membership, P O Box 608, Portola, CA 96122

By email: [memberships@wplives.org](mailto:memberships@wplives.org) or [info@wplives.org](mailto:info@wplives.org)

Or you can call the museum directly at 530.832.4131

When sending new contact info, please include your full name, member number, former contact information (and mark it as your old information) and your new contact information. Also, if you have an email address, please consider adding it to your membership information so we have multiple ways to contact you. This will help us keep in touch with you in case other methods do not work.