

Steam Department 2014 Year-End Update

—J. Chris Allan, Steam CMO

The past year has seen significant progress on the Western Pacific 165 restoration project. A hydro-test of the boiler is closer than ever, thanks to the continued efforts of our devoted volunteers, donors and close friends of the project who continue to offer us advice and counseling.

Having the boiler and frame back on its driving wheels allowed us to get the project back inside this year. Along with setting up the shoes and wedges, grease packs were renewed and reinstalled. Pins and rods are being polished in preparation for putting up the rods. Boiler work continues apace, with our sights on rolling in of the tubes and flues in the Spring of 2015.

Recently, at our Fall work session, the boiler passed its initial FRA internal inspection, which is a big milestone. A good deal needs to be done to finish up the patches on the firebox wrapper sheet, followed by the renewal of around 50 new staybolts. Another big deal is the completion of the FRA Form 4 calculations by Dave Varley. This 60 page document is required so as to ascertain a safe working pressure for the locomotive, and

its completion is a giant leap forward for the project. The last day of work saw the cab reinstalled, as well as the restored air compressor mounted. The locomotive is beginning to look like her old self again!

Of course all this would not be possible without the support of the membership and our donors, who we appreciate a great deal. The Superheater Flue fundraiser was a great success! All twenty-four of them arrived in good shape thanks to Eugene Vicknair and Chris Kaprielian going north and bringing them back to Portola in what amounted to a week-long hell-drive. Thanks also to our major donors: Bob Sims, Steve Lee, Roger Stabler, and James Mason.

Without our volunteers we would be nowhere, so thanks to you all! Our friends from the Golden Gate Railroad Museum also deserve hearty thanks for coming up and pitching in time and again. These Willing Steam People really know how to get it done!

Please consider a year end donation to the WP 165 Steam Fund. Let's keep the momentum up, and see it through all the way to the end; which in fact, will only be the beginning of the return of WP steam to Portola!

From the Steam Dept. Blog:



The cab of the 165 is lowered onto the boiler and frame, using the coordinated efforts of two forklifts, directed by Chris Allan from inside the shop.