

805-A Runs Again

By Dave McClain (as told by the crew)

With fond thoughts the next morning April 15th, of running the SP rails to Sparks, we began the day with a very leisurely morning, with breakfast and conversation. Steve's family had tailed us out on the Black Rock the day before and apparently blew a tire. He had the task of running his Excursion to a tire shop to have a new tire installed this morning. One hour, and some \$690.00 later, he had **FOUR** new shoes! Decision was made that he had better change them all. And thanks to him and his family, we had transportation to and from the rail yard.

After breakfast, we trundled down to the yard, Rod went into the yard office, and Steve and I opened up all the units. We started the 3, again leaving 8 0 5 D I T .

After checking all systems, we waited for orders to start moving. Rod and Steve exchanged orders, and then jumped up into their seats. Again my responsibility was to help the 2001 make transition. Chooch from the UP was at the head end throwing the siding switch. Then we backed up to the crossover at WESO.

A call to the dispatcher, the switch was thrown, and we were on our way west towards Lovelock and Sparks. A couple of miles west, we had a red over yellow to the first siding of the day. It was the local making its rounds in Winnemucca. A wave from them, a green dwarf, we again were running the main.

Out of town, and with 707 and 2001 running well, I went back into the B-unit to see if I could troubleshoot the problem. I would put it on line and watch the electrical contactors, but to no avail. I have learned one thing working on these elders; it takes 10 times the repair time to find an electrical problem, and vice versa for a mechanical problem. So most likely for me, I was not able to fix her. The engine would run up along with the others, but with no current to the

traction motors. Heavenly sound from that 567-C, though.

In the middle of the day we took the siding at (MILL), my notes do not have the name of the siding — Rod will know of course....

We were in the hole waiting for both east and west-bound Zee trains. And Rod was asked by the dispatcher if we could pick up the dozen loaded auto racks and take them to Sparks. Because the B was still not loading, he declined the offer. After those trains passed us, we were on our way again.

Again, the 2001 needed help through transition each time we slowed and then increased our speed. One thing Rod was concerned about was the color of the smoke. Idling so much at the museum causes the engine and stack to load up with carbon. And then under load, fire can start up in the exhaust. But she was clean, and the smoke was only a bit gray when the throttle was increased.

Out west of Lovelock, we met a train at Parron siding, and the crew took notice at us. Word was out that we were special, and yes, even our call sign on the orders and from the dispatcher was WP 707.

Rolling through Hazen, we whizzed by Vic Neves whistling both 707 and 2001.

The chase was on but we had the advantage at least to Fernley, where we entered the Truckee River Canyon. At Mustang, we rolled into the siding, (again I forgot the name of this one) where we waited for #6. After a two hour wait in that siding, we finally got the green to head into Sparks. When we arrived onto the

double track, the Zephyr with the 806-A was on the wye along the main-line being turned. Then the whistles started, even I got into the act. Hearing 3 WP whistles all at once saluting each send chills down my spine. Phil Gosney, the engineer of the 806 paused on the ground to get pictures of us approaching. And with the setting sun, timing was everything.

Rod then received clearance to pull us onto the spur at the old roundhouse, where we let them cool off

for an hour. Admiring these beautiful locomotives, and remembering that this was a great undertaking by everyone involved. We made it to Sparks without any major problems and Hats off to both Rod and Steve for working out the logistics and being responsible for such a great challenge!

