

Continuation of Larry Hanlon's 805A Report.

Meanwhile, Dave McClain and I started on the B unit. A reasonable amount of oil showed on the dipstick, but upon starting it there was an excessive amount of noise from the valve train and no circulating oil visible. Just before we shut it down, Bruce Cooper pulled the dipstick and discovered the real problem -- no oil!! We added the remaining 2 barrels of oil on hand, and it now ran normally, although it was still a barrel low. Bruce placed a rush order for more oil, which was delivered and added on July 1. The B unit had been vandalized over the winter, and we obviously lost more lube oil than it initially appeared. 921 was next, where we replaced the left side water pump using a spare from the parts boxcar. Finally, 805. After checking the governor cable and cleaning a number of relay contacts, we got normal operation back. Next, we reinstalled the Mars light and checked it out. We moved her outside for a few quick photos, then Dave Dewey started painting the trucks silver. Three units-- F units--returned to service in one day! We celebrated the hat trick all the way back to Colfax.

By July 1, Dave Dewey had painted the remaining porthole and assorted grabirons and installed them. I coupled 805 to the B and set up the MU connections; to my great surprise, all worked well, although the control air regulator leak had gotten worse. Two new members (sorry, guys -- I lost your names!) washed all 4 F units and installed the nose medallion on 805. Dave and I also installed the number board frames, then it was time for pageant practice. After the practice run, we installed the remaining porthole glass.

I had intended to park our A-B-A set of Fs at Malfunction Junction for a meet with the UP Es on the excursion train. We learned that the Es were making much better time up the Canyon than expected, and therefore gulped down a few bites of "dinner" and scrambled to make up the set. The 913 (thanks, CSRM!) was facing the right way and matched the orange color better than 921, so we used it in the consist. Gordy Wollesen and the new guys helped with the switch move, and we made it to Malfunction with about 30 seconds to spare. Gordy laid on the horn while we scrambled down for some pictures, and poof, that was it! I've seen one video taken from the train, and it looked pretty good!!

By Sunday, the control air regulator leak had gotten to be pretty bad. This, plus people turning valves without our knowledge, caused a problem that almost delayed the pageant. However, we were able to scramble and work around it. After the pageant, it was back to work all too quickly.

Since then, Hank Stiles has changed out the old oil and filters and cleaned out the bottom of the crankcase as well. By Railfan Day, as you know, Dave had finished painting the roof and rear end and gotten the windshields reinstalled, and he also replaced the leaking diaphragm on the control air regulator. I've been tied up with work and business trips, and haven't actually seen the completed paint job yet. We'll fix that by the end of the year.

There is a sizable number of people that directly contributed to the rebirth of the 805, and whom I'd like to thank for their help. Dave McClain, Dan Ogle, Bill Evans, David Dewey, Ken Roller, and John Ryczkowski were part of the core group that contributed sizable, in some cases massive, amounts of time. It wouldn't have happened without their talents. When you look at the pristine nose contours, think of Bill; when you see the paint, think of Ken and Dave D., and when you hear the throaty exhaust, think of Dave M., Dan, Ski, and me. In addition, Bob Blanch, Brian Challenger, Bruce Cooper, Steve Habeck, Lynn Hanlon, Norm Holmes, Mardi & Pete Langdon, Odie Lorimer, Hap Manit, Gayle McClain, Glen Monhardt, Jack Palmer, Mary Ryczkowski, Hank Stiles, Jack Wheelihan, and Gordy Wollesen all contributed directly to the project. We also give special thanks to the Union Pacific. If I've overlooked someone, it is truly unintentional and I apologize. You all have been part of a special event in railroad history.

And Hap, I know she's not a steamer, but, this one's for you.

The B Unit, 925C

In my mind, the B unit was a part of the larger 805 project. At my own expense, I shoehorned a trip to Montreal onto an east coast business trip, overcame immigration problems (that was the week Canada required passports for US citizens because of the Indian unrest!), chose our unit from several because of the excellent body condition, did an air-box and crankcase inspection and found a good C engine inside along with new wiring, got a commitment for D77 traction motors and interchange-legal wheels in the reassembled trucks, and secured an agreement for a price that was half the going rate for a running unit, and lower than the value of the engine and trucks alone. And then there was the mad dash to the airport, and making the plane with only a few minutes to spare. I then presented the information to the Board. If memory serves, this was the first significant purchase the FRRS made, and there was some significant discussion before the decision was made to go ahead. In fact, one of the Board members accosted me afterwards for threatening the acquisition of "his Baldwins."

In any event, many of the people mentioned above were also involved in restoring the 925C. In particular, Dave McClain and Pete Solyom traveled to Montreal to work in sub-zero weather to retruck the unit, get it running, and prepare it for shipment; Pete provided the airline tickets. Norm worked tirelessly with the CN, GT, C&NW, and UP to obtain free transportation. Dan Ogle quickly tracked down the minor electrical problem that had kept the unit from loading, and Dave Dewey handled the body work and the painting. And thanks are also due to Gilly Schwager for agreeing to the deal because he wanted to see a B unit saved.

Summary

I have written this series in order to provide people with more insight into the process of a restoration, so that there might be a broader appreciation of the challenges to be overcome along the way. The vast majority of the restoration literature I'd seen concentrated on verification of historical authenticity or the proper finishing techniques, etc., but skipped lightly over what it actually took to accomplish the job. Hopefully these articles have helped to fill a gap, and provide some additional measure of understanding for why Group A is taking so long to finish Project B. So what did it take? Counting travel time, I have well in excess of 1000 hours in this project, and have spent easily a thousand dollars beyond the original share of the purchase price. Dave McClain has to be over 1000 hours also, as we did much of the mechanical work together. Counting the rest of the folks, I'd estimate there are 5000 - 6000 hours in the 805 and the 925C. Whew!

There is work yet to be done to finish the job completely. The cab interior, cab seats, and cab floor have to be finished, the engine room still needs a final cleaning and painting, and there are a few small mechanical and electrical tasks to complete. We still need to find cab side windows and windshield wipers, the 5-chime needs to be tuned, and we need a permanent solution for the Mars light power. If any of you come across a 72 volt, 3/4 KW dynamotor or DC motor generator set that puts out 50A at 12V, that is what we need for the Mars light. Failing that, I plan to install a 12V battery and automotive alternator driven off of the auxiliary generator drive belts. Dave Dewey is going to take over reporting on the 805 as part of the larger set of restoration projects, so I turn the word processor over to him.

See ya.....