



Age of Steam Roundhouse Report - March 2012

It is difficult to imagine that March 2012 is well underway already, but we have had the good fortune of a mild winter to allow construction crews to continue with little delay. Construction of the storehouse is moving along nicely with the recent installation of windows and a concrete loading dock. Roofing is partially completed and the next item on the list will be installation of the wooden doors. Electrical and heating contractors have started their crafts as well. The track work for this facility is being constructed and surfaced in order to acquire the proper height and distance as the rails and ties pass beside the loading dock.

With the storehouse now so close to completion, the sorting of spare parts and other materials has commenced so they will be ready for stocking. Pallet racking and shelving is being acquired, as are water-tight containers for the housing of specialty parts. This storehouse will be arranged to provide full use of all available floor and vertical spaces, thus allowing many stock items to be stacked high for easy accessibility by fork-lift trucks. The floor space also has areas designated for the storage of large items, such as boiler flues, tubes and super heater units.

The back shop is full of activity at this time. Currently, several Poage-type water columns are being rebuilt for eventual delivery of water to thirsty locomotives out by our wood water tank. Also, refurbishing is underway of the 80-ton, Whiting Corporation dual drop tables for removal of steam locomotive drivers and diesel locomotive wheel sets. Now that the machine shop is fully functional, a steady quantity of quality work is being produced by our own machinists to make the in-house reconditioning of these support items easier and less expensive.

Now that we have received the all-important Occupancy Permit from our local government, we have begun making steam locomotive maintenance and repairs inside the shop. So that we can operate steam later on this year, our ex-Canadian Pacific 4-6-2 #1293 is undergoing its 5-year inspection and any necessary repairs as required by the Federal Railroad Administration. As previously announced, the acquisitions of ex-Brooklyn Eastern District Terminal 0-6-0T #13 and ex-Morehead & North Fork 0-6-0 #12 are great additions to the Age of Steam stable. Both engines are now safely stored inside the roundhouse, and are being discussed and evaluated for restoration. At present our heavy workload still is allowing some time for us to consider the next move toward these two restoration projects.

Recent construction of 12 exterior tracks radiating off the turntable pit—that are located exactly opposite the tracks in the corresponding roundhouse stalls—will allow the storage of additional rolling stock. Roundhouses generally had spare wheel sets, trucks, locomotive tenders and other equipment stored on tracks surrounding the turntable pit, so we figured that we'd do the same. This will create the ambience of a real, roundhouse working environment.

Another winter project has been the evaluation of the diesel locomotive fleet and preventive measures to maintain these units. All of their batteries have been recharged as needed or even removed if they were deemed too old or defective. This will expedite work on those diesels that have been selected for operation or leasing. One other goal is to get several of the unique or historic diesel units back into serviceable condition so that they may operate from time-to-time.

Exterior landscaping continues at the roundhouse site, with some of the final topsoil grading having been completed for the new storehouse track where it passes the unloading dock. The area where the construction materials are being stored will be vacated shortly, and final grading will allow for a good base where grass will be grown. The installation of gates at both entrances to the roundhouse site and a full perimeter fence around the property completes the latest work.

As mentioned before, we extend a big, "Thank you!" for the numerous positive compliments that we continue receiving through the Age of Steam Roundhouse website. This massive project has received worldwide accolades from several construction company trade organizations, magazine articles and industry awards. The Age of Steam Roundhouse was selected as the **Commercial Project of the Year by Masonry Construction Magazine**, with this award having been presented at the World of Concrete trade show in Las Vegas during February 2012.

Please continue to stay in touch with us through our website, and we will enjoy supplying you with updates as the need or demand requires. All of us at Age of Steam Roundhouse wish you well, and look forward to sharing more dreams and goals during 2012.