

ON TRACK!

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THE *Return* OF SIERRA NO. 3



THE PAPARAZZI WERE WAITING WITH THEIR CAMERAS, *the crowds of fans were holding their breath... the "movie star" locomotive was arriving at any moment. Then they all heard it! That sweet sound as she peeked around the bend and passed through the trees.*

With clouds of steam she grandly entered the station under an archway of water. After a 14-year absence and a \$1.5 million dollar makeover, the famous locomotive was ready to greet her adoring fans. With flags waving, and crowds cheering, the spectacular Sierra No. 3 was finally here... and she was ready for her close up.

The celebration to honor the return of the famous Sierra No. 3 began quietly Thursday evening, July 1, when the restored locomotive made a test run down the track with television news crews and photographers on board. It was an emotional moment for all the key members of the crew who were present. It is quite

something to see big burly men dressed in greasy denim overalls, getting misty-eyed over a steam locomotive.

But the Sierra No. 3 is something truly special. Chief Mechanical Officer George Sapp has worked with No. 3 since he started at Railtown in 1989 - the engine

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Preserving the Past for the Future



Before I began working at Railtown in the fall of 2008, my knowledge of American steam locomotives was limited to what I learned from my 10 year-old son. Even after working with this restoration project for almost two years, I really did not have an emotional attachment to the locomotive itself. It was a job to get done. But that all changed

when I had the privilege of riding in the cab on the very first run of the restored Sierra No. 3.

As we rolled down the tracks through the beautiful countryside of Jamestown and Tuolumne County, it was then that the full emotional impact of this locomotive finally struck me. The Sierra No. 3 is truly a very special locomotive. It feels, sounds, and rides differently than our other locomotives. If a machine ever had a personality, this one does. I don't quite know how to describe it other than to invite you to come out and see for yourself.

This restoration of Sierra No. 3 has put Railtown and Tuolumne County in the national limelight. So many people have been following this project online, that the Railtown blog (railtown1897.wordpress.com) had over 50,000 visitors last year, rivaling the actual visitation at our small rural park. Since its completion, our visitation has increased dramatically. It has also taught a new generation of workers elements of a trade that is quickly disappearing, and provided valuable data for future restoration projects.

But most importantly, this restoration project provides us an opportunity to make a connection with generations of people to come. Through movies and television, Sierra No. 3 truly has an iconic impact on an international audience as being *the* steam locomotive most people are familiar with. Now that the restoration is finally complete, Sierra No. 3 is commercially viable for future filming. She really is waiting for her next close-up. ■

Kimberly Baker
Superintendent, Railtown 1897 State Historic Park



A STAR IS REBORN *from page 1*

was just shy of 100 years old then. "It had to be somebody's favorite to survive all these years. It rides like a baby carriage. There's not a mean bone anywhere," said Sapp.

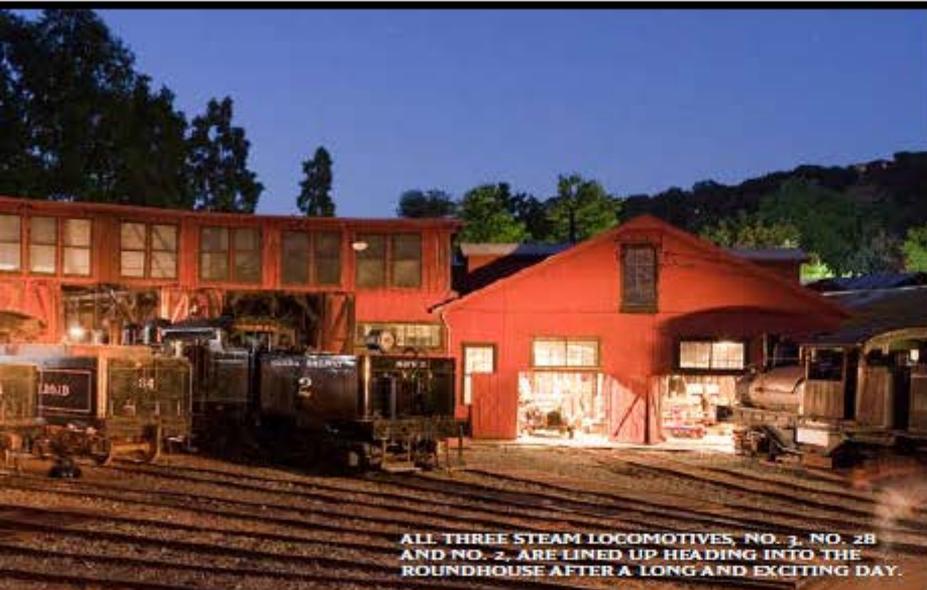
On Friday, it was time to share the "movie star" with all those who have been a part of the restoration throughout the past three years. Railtown 1897 State Historic Park and the California State Railroad Museum Foundation hosted a barbeque lunch to recognize the volunteer and paid staff from Railtown and Sacramento who were key

to the restoration. Whether it was a simple act of cleaning parts, ordering materials, raising funds, or picking up a wrench, every effort was appreciated. State Parks Capital District Superintendent Cathy Taylor, along with California State Railroad Museum Foundation Director Kathy Daigle, thanked the entire group for all their hard work and dedication to this important project.

After lunch, it was time to get ready for the next celebration - thanking the major donors and community partners who helped to support this project over the past several years with publicity, promotion and donations. Over 100 people attended the evening reception, celebrating with a champagne toast and a ride behind Sierra No. 3. Railtown was honored with special proclamations from the offices of Congressman George Radonovich, State Senator Dave Cogdill and State Assemblymember Tom Berryhill. California State Parks Director Ruth Coleman and CSRMF Board Chairman Robert Slobe were special guests, congratulating Railtown and the project



CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS DIRECTOR RUTH COLEMAN AND CSRMF CHAIRMAN ROBERT SLOBE.



ALL THREE STEAM LOCOMOTIVES, NO. 1, NO. 28 AND NO. 2, ARE LINED UP HEADING INTO THE ROUNDHOUSE AFTER A LONG AND EXCITING DAY.

team for a job well done and thanking the many supporters and donors.

The evening was not without "opening night jitters." After the first run of the evening, the crew discovered a problem with the check valve in one of the locomotive's injectors. This required shutting the engine down, blowing off steam so that the engine could be repaired overnight and be ready to run the next day. But the show must go on and the Railtown crew did not disappoint! They quickly brought in an equally talented understudy. Shay locomotive No. 2 came out of the roundhouse, and guests enjoyed a delightful twilight ride through the Gold Country behind this unique logging engine.

It had been an exciting day for everyone involved, but we still had one final celebration - the much anticipated public debut. At 9 a.m. on Saturday, July 3rd, the engine once again pulled into the

station, broke through a banner and was heralded with an archway of water hand pumped through antique fire rigs by members of the Columbia Volunteer Fire Department and the Eureka Engine & Independent Hose Company of Sonora. And within the hour Nos. 599 and 2901 were filled with passengers. The first public run of Sierra No. 3 was on its way!

In addition to train rides, the weekend's festivities included live music on the lawn, musicians in the cars, barbeque and beverages, shop demonstrations, track car rides, movie clips, railroad art and mingling with look-alike celebrities such as "Clint Eastwood" and "Harpo Marx." Parents and kids alike were costumed, directed and filmed by "Cecil B. De Millions" in make-believe movie scenes. And of course, everyone had the opportunity to "ooh" and "ahh" over the real star of the weekend each and every time she pulled into the station.

If you did not have the opportunity to celebrate with us for the opening weekend, you still can. Sierra No. 3 will ride the rails the first weekend of each month through October. Advance tickets may be purchased on-line at www.railtown1897.org or call (209) 984-3953 to purchase by phone. ■

THE NEWLY RESTORED, RED WOODEN CABOOSE NO. 7 ALSO MADE ITS DEBUT.



THE SIERRA NO. 3 RESTORATION TEAM

A project is only as successful as the team that sees it through, from beginning to end. Whether it was a simple act of cleaning parts, ordering materials, raising funds, or picking up a wrench, every effort has helped this project to the finish line.

Thank you team for your collective effort in completing this incredible restoration!

Marc Abbott	Dan Maher
Blair Abbott	Jay McAusland
Ward Allen	Russ McGuire
Gary Anderson	Joseph Nemmer
Kurt Anderson	John Nichols
Robert Anzar	Greg Petersen
Kim Baker	Dennis Ponder
Jim Bays	Dave Rainwater
Karl Bittermann	Michael Rainwater
Carl Bradley	John Rand
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Rob Buchanan	Traci Rockefeller-Cusak
Don Chakerian	Warren Rogan
Norm Comer	George Sapp
LaVerne Coon	Don Shapiro
Sandy Coots	Joseph Siemons
Joe Cover	Brendan Siminuci
David Creech	Sue Simpkins
Kathy Daigle	Ron Sloan
David Deutsch	Gary Smith
Al Di Paolo	Warren Smith
Stanley Eggink	Lisa Smithson
David Ethier	Robert Staggs
Marty Gerbasi	John Stier
Judy Grossman	Tony Stroud
Mark Hada	David Tadlock
Paul Hammond	Jerry Tannhauser
Pete Hanchett	Danny Taylor
Phil Hard	Catherine Taylor
Pamela Horan	Steve Verver
Gary Hosman	Michael Warzee
Clifford Hughes	Bob West
Marc Johnston	Ronald White
Leonard Jones	Eric Willson
James Judnich	Kyle Wyatt
Greg Kelsch	Erik Young
Tom Keyes	Kevin Zimmerman
Allen Lehr	

MAJOR DONORS

The Sierra no. 3 Restoration Project has relied on over 1,500 donors who helped make this tremendous effort possible. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this restoration. Without your support, and that of the local community, this feat would never have been accomplished. Listed below are the donors who gave



WE DID IT!



“THE No. 3 IS QUITE SIMPLY AN AMAZING LOCOMOTIVE. IT’S POWERFUL. IT RIDES GREAT. IT’S SEXY.”

I had been caring for the Sierra No. 3 since I took the job at Jamestown as the Chief Mechanical Officer in June of 1989. Through the years I had been on numerous runs with No. 3 – movie shoots, fan specials and photo runs.



When the locomotive was steamed for the last time on May 10th, 1996, none of us knew if or when it would ever be available again to appear in another movie or to thrill a photo line. With the new Federal Railroad Administration Part 230 Steam Locomotive Inspection and Maintenance regulations looming, the future of No. 3 was cloudy at best.

So for me, seeing the project come to an amazing finish marked by a grand “coming out” celebration was the moment I had been waiting for.

The celebration of the return of Sierra No. 3 to steam was the culmination of the efforts of many, many people. There were countless discussions, challenges, negotiations, meetings, flow charts, estimates, measurements, drawings, calculations, arguments, headaches, heartaches, skinned knuckles, sore muscles, triumphs, frustrations, milestones, coffee refills, doughnuts, notes on three by five cards, phone calls and e-mails. Followed by restless nights, beer, cigarettes, anxiety, more aches, more phone calls and more e-mails.

But it was worth all of it. This iconic locomotive is now ready for 100 more

years of silver screen appearances. It will continue to be admired by countless fans worldwide in the many years to come. It was only through the dedication, hard work, perseverance and skill of the volunteer and paid staff of CSRM, Railtown and the Foundation that made this happen. The Sierra No. 3 is a wonderful project that we all can be very proud of.

During this project, I was usually too close to the forest to see the trees. I never really thought about the grand moment, about the cheering crowds, the media coverage, the global buzz on the Internet. It was always about the next task, what I could cross off of my list today and remembering to add something else to that list for tomorrow or the next week. One part at a time.



RAILTOWN'S CHIEF MECHANICAL OFFICER GEORGE SAPP IN THE CAB OF SIERRA NO. 3 PREPARING FOR THE LOCOMOTIVE'S FIRST RUN OF THE DAY.

The moment finally arrived for on me the morning of Sunday, July 4th, the second day of the big celebration. I was at the throttle of the 3 on the first trip, departing Jamestown at 9:30 a.m. I had seen many old faces come around during the weekend, photographers, former volunteers and employees, long time railfans, everyone coming out of the woodwork intent on seeing if the news was true.

Returning to Jamestown in the last big sweeping curve, we were hauling the 2901 and the mountain observation car for the consist, about 140 tons, a good load for this locomotive on these grades. I was listening to the engine work. The valves were set nice and square so I was able to hook it up more than I anticipated. Everything was perfect, just like I remembered it was in the early 1990s, and just like it must have been 100 years ago. Working the throttle to keep up the speed, looking into the sun rising in the east, the moment finally came over me. All of the past – the battles and the triumphs – everything we had done since that day back in May of 1996 when we killed the fire and put the No. 3 to bed. I thought to myself, “We did it... **WE REALLY DID IT!**” That was the defining moment for me, one that I will never forget. ■

George E. Sapp
Chief Mechanical Officer, Railtown 1897
State Historic Park



RAILTOWN 1897 STATE HISTORIC PARK EVENTS

SIERRA NO. 3 WEEKEND

Saturday & Sunday, October 2 & 3

Ride the recently restored “movie star locomotive” through the beautiful Gold Country. Choose observation lounge car No. 2901 or open-air car No. 599. Trains depart at 3 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. and include a photo stop and run-by. Refreshments served on board. Tickets are \$24 Adults and \$12 Youth; Members are \$21 Adults and \$9 Youth. Tickets can be purchased in advance on-line at www.railtown1897.org or call (209) 984-3953.

AUTUMN FESTIVAL AND HARVEST HAUNT EXPRESS

Weekends, October 9 & 10, 16 & 17, 23 & 24, 30 & 31

Join the “skeleton crew” on the train hourly from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Enjoy a special Holiday Boutique of handmade crafts and gifts inside the baggage car. October 9 is **Member Appreciation Day** – ride the beautifully restored red caboose for free! **Member Appreciation Day** is open to all Railtown members and CSRM members with reciprocal benefits (Conductor and above).

SANTA EXPRESS

Friday – Sunday, November 26-28; Saturday & Sunday, December 18 & 19

Ride the train with the jolly old elf himself on board! Trains depart hourly from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tickets are \$15 Adults/\$6 Youth. Railtown members and CSRM members with reciprocal benefits (Conductor and above) ride free.

SANTA'S STARLIGHT EXPRESS — A LIGHTED CHRISTMAS TRAIN

Friday & Saturday, November 26 & 27

5:30 p.m. & 7 p.m.

Bundle up and sing along with friends on our most magical excursion of the year. Railtown's cars, locomotives and depot are lighted and decorated for the holiday season. Travel under the stars on the roundtrip ride to



rendezvous with Santa on his caboose. Santa will then climb aboard to greet all of the children before he heads out for the North Pole. First Class tickets are \$30 Adults/\$12 Youth age 2-17. Coach Tickets are \$24 Adults/\$12 Youth age 2-17. For Railtown members and CSRM members with reciprocal benefits (Conductor and above), First Class tickets are \$24 Adults/\$15 Youth age 2-17. Coach Tickets are \$21 Adults/\$12 Youth age 2-17. All children under 2 years ride free on an adults lap. Tickets can be purchased in advance on-line at www.railtown1897.org or call (209) 984-3953. ■