

THE MANIFEST

March-April 2020



Greetings!

Well this COVID pandemic has drastically changed all of our lives in more ways than one. I sincerely hope that each and every one of you receiving this newsletter, as well as your family and friends are all well. I look forward to seeing you all again soon.

I have been quite ill, I had pneumonia (not COVID) thank God, but nonetheless very ill and so I have been remiss in my duties and I apologize for that.

So far we have no date as to if and when we can open the park or resume our board meetings, but we will let everyone know as soon as we know.

Our article this month is from one of our members, Kyle Stockman. I hope you enjoy it and stay well.

Rebirth of Holmes Eureka Climax No.4

By Kyle Stockman

The Climax locomotive came into being by Charles Scott a Pennsylvania lumberman who ran a logging railroad near Spartansburg. Scott had designed a new breed of logging locomotive and brought his design to the nearby Climax Manufacturing Company in Corry, PA who at the time built

farming equipment. Climax liked his design and the first four class A climax locomotives which were nothing more than a flatcar with a wooden boxcar-like body were delivered in 1888.

Three classes of Climax's were built A, B, and C. The A mentioned above like many early logging locomotives were very crude and lacked the amenities of other locomotives. The Climax locomotive was designed to be powerful, agile, cheap and even disposable. The Class A featured a steam engine unit with two vertical cylinders mounted in the center of the locomotive. The front half of the locomotive, in front of the engine unit, contained the boiler. In smaller locomotives this may have been a vertical boiler, or in larger ones a T boiler. The Class B and C were similar to a conventional locomotive in appearance and like other geared loco's rode on trucks like a freight car. The only major difference in the B and C was the B had two trucks while the C had three.

The main focus of this story however is the Class B Climax and one in particular. Like a conventional steam locomotive, the Class B Climax had the cylinders on either side of the boiler, permitting it to be longer and larger than the Class A. On early Class B climaxes, the cylinders were horizontal and pointing forwards, while later ones had the cylinders angled down at about 30 degrees. Class B Climaxes weighed approximately 17 tons at minimum to a maximum of approximately 60 tons.

Holmes Eureka Lumber number 4 began its life in October of 1922, it carries builders number 1621 and weighs 60 tons. Her early life was spent in Humboldt County hauling logs for her owner with 2 other Climax's 3, and 5. At some point in her very early life I can only assume she had a tree, or other large object fall on her as she sustained damage to the engineer side of her cab and has since had a sag in her frame all of which is still very visible today. She was sold in 1937 to the Pacific Lumber Company in Scotia and became number 38 where she worked another many years before being retired in 1954.

In 1955 Mr. Bert Rudolph purchased the 38 and moved her to his home in Willits where she lived for 35 years until being acquired by Roots Of Motive Power. The locomotive was rebuilt and repainted as Holmes Eureka Lumber No.4. Due to leaky flues she only operated at 50 psi, and last ran in the early 2000's. She had called the shed in the middle of the Roots loop her home ever since.



Those of you who know me know that I'm originally from Vermont, and in the neighboring state of New Hampshire is an operation called the White Mountain Central Railroad. This railroad is part of Clark's Trading Post and is famous for their trained bear show and other family friendly attractions. The real star of the show however is wood burning two truck climax number 6, which has worked on almost the same rails her entire life. Once I was old enough to venture out on my own I spent many days here and got to know the crew and family behind the operations and very quickly grew a love for the rare climax as all of my time there was spent on or around her. I left Vermont for a two year adventure as a mechanic and the Assistant Trainmaster on one of the trains operated by Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey Circus. It was an amazing adventure but wanting a more permanent lifestyle I relocated to California in early 2014. Upon visiting roots for the first time in December of that year my love and fascination for the climax was rekindled when I saw the No.4.

Fast forward to the beginning of this year. I had been asking around about No.4 for some time and decided to submit a proposal to the board members asking for permission to do an inspection on the locomotive to see if a return to service was possible. It was very enthusiastically approved and on February 1st we had our first work day. The ultimate goal of the first phase of the project is to pull the tubes out of the boiler and to then ultrasound it, and if favorable results are found then recent permission was given to move forward with an operational restoration. However if the boiler is not suitable for use then No.4 will be put back together as she was for continued display status. New member and good friend Jelani Hall and myself made the trek from Santa Rosa in the early morning hours and began by removing the petticoat pipe and brackets from the smoke box. Then the smoke box and firebox doors, throttle valve and a few other items were removed and set aside. It became very quickly obvious that the folks at Climax never intended these to last forever and are only meant for very small individuals to work on. The access hold down the steam dome into the boiler can only accommodate someone half my size. We ended our day with a feeling of accomplishment the this may finally happen someday.



I returned again a few weeks later with Eli Mosher who I was hoping could fit in the boiler.....and he DID! It was certainly a relief and the process of tube removal began. With

Eli hard at work cutting tubes off at the firebox end and myself un-bending the rolled ends in the smoke box we made decent headway and managed to remove 38 tubes also with the help of new member Joe Cooke by early afternoon. As far as we can both tell at this point the boiler was well taken care of and hopefully will be found to be in good shape.



In talking with some of the older members of Roots who have longed to see the Climax run it was mentioned that we should focus our efforts of the mechanical restoration of No.4 and then as time permits we will focus on the cosmetic side. My ultimate goal is to gather a good crew for the project and have the locomotive ready to roll out for her 100th birthday at the September steam up in 2022. We have a long way to go but we are all very hopeful and I'd like to thank the members who have helped so much already and the supporters of what has been called "Team Climax".



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UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

At this point, we are still closed due to the COVID pandemic, so there are no scheduled meetings.

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