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“Steam Locomotive #100 to Return Home”

Locomotive to Leave for Florida This Month.

Connersville, IN – Having left Century, Florida from a display track in 1974, #100 will soon be back. The Whitewater Valley Railroad was initially contacted in September of 2003 by the Alger-Sullivan Historical Society of Century to discuss the possibility of acquiring Baldwin Locomotive #100 for the town’s J. Houston Jones historical park. The society was formed to preserve the sawmill town’s history and historic structures. Further information about this organization can be found on their website: www.algersullivan.org .

While the Whitewater Valley did not consider the locomotive for sale at the time, the restoration of the locomotive had run into a considerable number of obstacles since 1989 when it was last used. A project to replace the boiler with a new welded design was approved at that time with a contractor indicating a delivery date in one year. The contractor fell behind schedule and the changing regulatory climate both at the State and Federal levels created a number of challenges in the construction of a new boiler for the locomotive. The death of the contractor hired to design and oversee the construction of this new boiler created new delays the project forcing a new relationship with the boiler subcontractor and the Whitewater Valley. The essentially complete new boiler finally arrived from Iowa in April of 1997. The volunteers involved in the original project to remove and reinstall the boiler were for the most part no longer involved in the organization and it was decided that a re-evaluation of the entire project should take place. With additional funding burdens facing the railroad ranging from track work and washout repairs, the project was put on hold pending a new project plan and funding.

The board looked seriously at idea of how the locomotive could be made available to the Alger-Sullivan Historical Society. It was understood that should we decide not to continue to pursue the restoration, the locomotive was not important to this region as an artifact and didn’t fit into the collection. The board also agreed that the best home for the engine would be in the state where it spent most of its working life. The engine was purchased by the Whitewater Valley Railroad in August of 1977 with its first run on the WVRR in September. An agreement was made with the Alger-Sullivan Historical Society by April of 2004 that would allow them to further explore the idea and begin fundraising for the project with the understanding that they would be given the sole “option” on the engine until they were either successful or determined the project to be beyond their scope. They were successful in raising the funds needed and plan to have the locomotive back in Florida on a newly laid display track. The locomotive and tender left Connersville on three trucks on May 14th, 2007.

Engine #100 was built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works in September of 1919. It is a 2-6-2 type locomotive with a weight of 48 tons. Because it was to be used in the lumber

industry it was designed to burn wood. The engine was ordered by the Florala Saw Mill Company in Florala, Alabama. In 1923 it went to the Alger-Sullivan Lumber Company in Century, Florida for use on its subsidiary common carrier railroad Escambia Railway until 1954. It remained on display in Century until 1974 when it was purchased by three rail fans who restored the engine to operation in Alabama.

The non-profit Whitewater Valley Railroad is an operating railroad museum dedicated to the preservation of a historic branch line railroad, to the restoration of railroad equipment, and to the conduct of railroad educational programs.

Coming up in June, Thomas the Tank Engine will roll into Connersville for the ***Day Out With Thomas 2007: All Aboard Tour***. The event, will take place **June 15-17 and June 22-24**. More information about our organization and this fundraising event can be found on the railroad's website: www.whitewatervalleyrr.org .



Cab and Tender loaded up and on the way to Florida



#100's boiler loaded up for trip to Florida