

F3 B-unit and other ARHS equipment



The “museum” line of equipment in Winslow Jct., NJ



It's been a couple months since the last update and you haven't heard as much exciting updates because it is cooler weather and there aren't any regular work sessions scheduled. But there has been quite a bit of activity taking place in small groups and behind the scenes stuff that isn't visible to the public.

A couple months ago we had our initial mechanical inspection performed by Conrail Shared Assets on two of the ARHS's locomotives that are to move out of south Jersey. This is when we found the EMD B-unit would not be accepted by NS in regular train service since it doesn't have the NS required alignment control couplers. Further investigation all the way up to upper level mechanical dept. people in Atlanta confirmed this policy and there are no waivers. Also found is that there are no alignment control couplers available to purchase that will fit the existing F-unit draft gear without a great deal of modifications being made. So yes, even though NS has their own F-units their new policy is that F-units and other locomotives lacking alignment control couplers can only be moved in special train service.

Update as of this week is that NS is offering us a discount on the special train service but it is still a 4 digit figure per unit. So as it stands now our EMD B-unit and the Alco FA2 will move in special train service. The C420 and boxcar will move in regular train service.

Air brake systems and vital lubrication have been addressed since the first inspection. Good oil in the axle support bearings is very important. The photos on the left show one of the eight oil drain plugs for these bearings (two per traction motor) located on the bottom of the B-unit. They needed to be drained to check for water and oil quality then each one refilled to proper level. Good dirty job to do in limited space under a locomotive when you don't have a shop and a pit to work in. Luckily all the plugs on both the B unit and the FA2 were not too difficult to get out. Each locomotive took several gallons of journal oil to refill the reservoirs to proper levels.



The FA2 was fun to work on also - each of the traction motor support bearing reservoirs has a very large wick in it which transfers the oil to the axle thru a hole in the bearing. It is a rather neat system. The vandals of a few years ago may have actually helped us in order to move the FA. You can see in the middle photo what is left of the traction motor cables. Yes, the copper thieves cut them all off. To put a positive spin on it, the inspectors don't have to worry about any dragging equipment issues. Finally, when we get this locomotive to Scranton we will be able to give it some much needed TLC. It does certainly need quite a lot both inside and outside.

Just like the F3 painting project from earlier this year, the FA body is made up of metal panels although they are longer than those on the F3's. These panels are actually replacement ones put on by the ARHS more than 10 years ago. The surface rust issues need to be addressed but we believe they are still mostly in good shape. The eventual replacement of the missing copper cable and aluminum parts is going to take time and money to replace. By the way, the "temporary" NYC paint was for a photo event done more than a decade ago on the SRNJ. It was an easy black paint job. In Scranton this will eventually be replaced Cornell red and this unit will become LV #596.



Above photo shows partially out of the traction motor support bearing reservoir and the cut TM cables on the left. In the photo below you can see the brass bearing with the hole in it so you can see a small portion of the axle itself. The oil level is below. In the photo on the right you can see what the wick assembly looks like. These need to be soaked with oil in to provide proper lubrication for the axle





Boxcar work session: Above - Jeanette Jahn, Bob Bahrs, Walt Hoffmann and Ed White (upper level) were part of the crew that put in an entire day organizing and securing the various supplies the ARHS has stored in the 50 ft ex-LV boxcar. Above left - Changing a gasket and applying grease on the brake cylinder piston.



Fortunately, our boxcar has roller bearings. It is a 50' plug door ex-LV #8221 before it was Conrail. Part of the preparations for it was to update the brakes so a set of ABD brake valves was obtained from Multi-Service Co. and other parts of the system were inspected and lubricated. The other issue was all the "stuff" we put into this car was not

Photo on left shows what the #414 looked like when purchased in 1987. Temporary wreck repairs were being made at the D&H shops. Further repairs and repainting was done later in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. This is what it looked like in 1991.

secured or organized. We had a work session in October to address these issues. This car will be our base of operation in Steamtown to support the operation of the F3's in 2011 and beyond. It will also be returned to its LV paint as time and funds allow.



This brings us to our C420 #414. This locomotive was purchased from DMV Corp. in 1987 after they had purchased the entire group of D&H C420's from Guilford. It and two others #404 and #408 were located in Albany at the D&H shops and for various reasons these three were never going to Arkansas with the others.



#414 jacked up and the front truck removed. #1 axle is the first problem



#1 axle combo preparing to separate the wheel/axle from the traction motor. Below: Bearing caps removed revealing the brass axle support bearings. These are the old style with a large window opening with the axle visible in the "window". Below right: New wheel (rusty one) being prepped for installation and old wheel in background.



#414's issue was it had been involved in a wreck and when purchased the DMV/ A&M folks had started taking it a part and plans were to ship the usable parts to Arkansas and scrap the rest where it was. ARHS members with the significant financial help of Joe Pettaccio were successful to get it moved to Pennsylvania and eventually put it all back together. Joe would take this locomotive under his "wing" to care for and he eventually bought a railroad (SRNJ) so that #414 would have a place to run. Under Joe's watch #414 put in several years of regular service on the SRNJ. It was a good deal for the ARHS as the railroad got free use of the locomotive and we got free storage for our equipment. This nice arrangement ended last year with Joe's death which accelerated our desire to move out of South Jersey. Having all of our equipment in Scranton will be a good thing. The initial Conrail inspection revealed wheel issues on the C420. Years of use on the SRNJ resulted in the condemnation of two wheel-sets. So for all the concern about the B-units it turns out that the C420 has the biggest problem which needs to be fixed before it can be on its way to Scranton. Working with the assistance of the Delaware Lackawanna RR, #414 is having the wheel issues taken care of currently.

All of this work and shipping costs will involve a significant expense so donations are most welcome and fund raising in 2011 will be a top priority. The ARHS gets quite a bit of work done for very little money compared to other project we are aware of. We appreciate your support.

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