



611's Restoration on schedule

The 611 moves -- to inside the roundhouse!



Will Sadler, 611 mechanical volunteer, works inside the boiler, vacuuming debris left from the bead blasting.



The 611 sits on the turntable waiting to roll into the roundhouse at the North Carolina Transportation Museum.

Photo by Preston Claytor.

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After the 611 shed her cover, the crew prepared the 611 to move inside the roundhouse where the more detailed work of the restoration could begin. She barely fit through the door!

The first step was to bead blast the boiler. Bead blasting is a high-pressure cleaning system that "blasts" small particles on the boiler's surface to dislodge buildup that accumulated due to water scale buildup. It took the mechanical volunteers several days to remove the hundreds of pounds of small particles and residue from the bead blasting.

On July 11, Scott Lindsay, chief mechanical officer, and crew hooked up the stoker to a compressed air system. After sitting idly for 20 years, it turned on air -- more evidence that the motor was not frozen. With the tender and locomotive separated, the rebuild crew will continue to inspect the drive shaft, universal joints and auger system that deliver the coal from the tender to the firebox.

On July 12th, the locomotive and tender were separated. The crew used a hydraulic ram assembly to compress and remove the buffer springs. The safety and service drawbar pins were then removed and the locomotive was pulled away from the tender. The locomotive was then moved into the roundhouse.

"Moving the locomotive into the restoration bay was a major milestone," said Preston Claytor, project director and Fire Up 611! Committee Chariman. "The roundhouse (at the North Carolina Transportation Museum) allows for a controlled environment for our work to continue. It also gets our team out of the weather."

Having a great shop to work in allows us to understand what a fully equipped mechanical facility can mean to the long term care of 611, he added. ([The Virginia Museum of Transportation is still raising funds](#) to build the preservation and maintenance facility.)

The Boiler Inspection



Gridlines on the boiler guide the ultrasound. Photo by Scott Lindsay.



Dennis Donovan of Steam Operations Corporation and a Level 3 Inspector, is preparing to ultrasound the 611's boiler. Photo by Preston Claytor.

Also on July 12th, the crew measured and marked a grid on all pressure bearing surfaces.

Ultrasonic testing of the boiler was conducted over a period of two days. Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) regulations require this testing as a part of the 1,472 day inspection and it is an important stage in the restoration process. Boilers are designed to withstand extremely high pressure steam - 300 psi in 611's case - and the ultrasonic testing ensures that there are no weak or thin spots in the metal. Data gathered during the inspection has been transferred to other members of the Steam Operations Corporation team for further analysis and Form 4 preparation.

Work will continue over the coming weeks to test superheater units and perform flexible staybolt inspections.

The tender has undergone significant work as well. Volunteers have carefully cleaned the coal bunker and water tank, finding a few interesting items along the way, such as a pair of safety goggles that went missing in the 1990s.

All of this has taken an incredible amount of dedication from crew and volunteers. "In Spencer we are most pleased with the support from volunteers who travel from near and far," says Claytor. To date, volunteers have already put in 1,860 hours of service on the locomotive. We are grateful to all the volunteers for the Virginia Museum of Transportation and the North Carolina Transportation Museum for all their hard work.

-- *written by Trey Davis, member of the Fire Up 611! Committee.*

Protect. Preserve. Sustain. **Join the 611 Society**

Help us protect, preserve and sustain the Class J 611 for future generations!

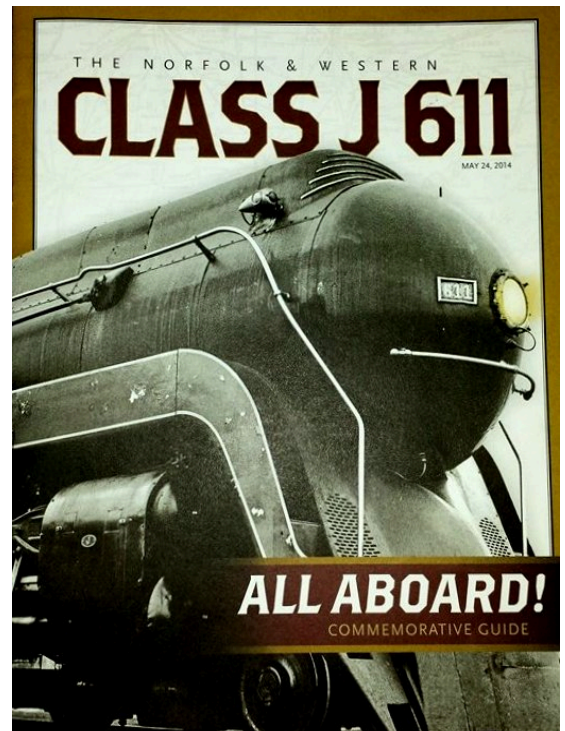
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Members of the 611 Society will receive the ***611 Magazine***, a celebration of the history, design, power and beauty of the Class J 611 Steam Passenger Locomotive.

Every issue blends rich articles and amazing photography with the expertise of the historians of the Virginia Museum of Transportation, the Norfolk & Western Historical Society and the National Railway Historical Society. The ***611 Magazine*** will be published four times per year.

The first issue of the *611 Magazine* will be published in September!

Join today and receive a FREE copy of the All Aboard Commemorative Guide!



Fundraising continues for the Preservation Facility

Like what you see happening in the roundhouse at the North Carolina Transportation Museum? Then help us build the Preservation Facility at the Virginia Museum of Transportation so we can preserve, maintain and sustain the 611 for generations to come. The Preservation Facility will house the 611 and allow us to keep her in top operating form. Our goal is to protect the donations that rail fans worldwide have invested in 611's restoration.

Any donation to the Fire Up 611! Capital Campaign places your name on the Wall of Honor in the preservation and education facility. A donation of \$611 and above will allow you to purchase advance tickets. Click [here](#) for a complete list of donor benefits.

Donate securely online, or mail your donation to:

Virginia Museum of Transportation
Fire Up 611!
303 Norfolk Avenue SW
Roanoke, VA 24016

Thank you for your support!



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