

2010 GOVERNOR'S HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

Restoration of Sierra No. 3, the "Movie Star" Locomotive



Sierra No. 3 steam locomotive at Railtown 1897 State Historic Park

Sierra No. 3 Locomotive, built in 1891, is one of only four locomotives still in operation built by the Rogers Locomotive Works. Besides its early career as a working locomotive for the Sierra Railway Company of California, Sierra No. 3 also gained notice as the "Movie Star" locomotive, appearing in over one hundred movies and television shows. California State Parks, along with the California State Railroad Museum Foundation, recognized the need to preserve Sierra No. 3. The Foundation committed to a major fundraising drive to raise the 1.5 million dollars needed for the restoration effort.

The restoration process, which took almost three years to complete, adhered to the Secretary of the Interior Standards, retaining as much of the locomotive's historic fabric as possible. As the locomotive was restored, a new generation of workers learned skills that had been almost lost to history, but henceforth would be applied to preserve the legacy of steam engines. The majority of the restoration work took place in the historic shops of Railtown 1897 State Historic Park, in Jamestown, Tuolumne County. The Railtown shops are one of only two preserved steam-era short line railroad roundhouse complexes in the nation.

The public was able to watch the work in-progress, and ask the workers questions about the restoration effort, providing a valuable interpretive opportunity. The successful restoration of Sierra No. 3 ensures that this steam-driven link to California's past will continue to attract and inspire visitors from around the world.

Learn more about Sierra No. 3 and Railtown 1897: <http://railtown1897.org/>