

News Release



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A Star is Reborn: “Movie Star Locomotive” Sierra No. 3 Returns to Service at Railtown 1897 *Following its Extensive Restoration, North America’s Most Famous Steam Locomotive to be Officially Unveiled on July 3 & 4, 2010*

JAMESTOWN, Calif. – Widely known as the “movie star locomotive,” the famed Sierra No. 3 is set to ride the rails again at Railtown 1897 State Historic Park (SHP) in Jamestown on the upcoming Fourth of July weekend. The 1891 vintage steam locomotive is returning to service following an extensive restoration effort costing one and a half million dollars—and the public is invited to its debut! A special celebration is planned for Saturday, July 3, and Sunday, July 4, featuring memorable steam train rides through the scenic Gold Country along with live entertainment from the Black Irish Band, Music First, Cactus Bob & Prairie Flower; costumed characters; food booths; movie highlights featuring Sierra No. 3; and much more.

Tapping into America’s love affair with Westerns, the iconic Sierra No. 3 became known as the “movie star locomotive” after starring in more than 100 Hollywood movies and television productions alongside world-famous celebrities beginning in the early 1900s. In addition to numerous television programs, Sierra No. 3 has appeared in movies such as *The Virginian* with Gary Cooper in 1929 (the first sound movie filmed outside a sound stage), *High Noon* with Gary Cooper and Grace Kelley in 1952, *The Great Race* with Jack Lemmon in 1966, *Finian’s Rainbow* with Fred Astaire and Petula Clark in 1968, *Back to the Future III* with Michael J. Fox in 1990 and *Unforgiven* with Clint Eastwood in 1992, to name just a few.

In addition to its impressive Hollywood film credentials, Sierra No. 3 is one of the oldest operating steam locomotives in the United States. After its official debut, Sierra No. 3 will resume its rightful place as the starring attraction at Railtown 1897 SHP, a unique attraction which combines industrial heritage, railroad history and the lore of Hollywood. In fact, Railtown 1897 SHP in Jamestown is home to one of just two remaining, fully intact and still functioning steam-era shortline railroad roundhouse complexes in the United States.

In July 2010, the “movie star locomotive” will have completed an extensive restoration which included overhauling its boiler to meet current Federal Railroad Administration standards.

No. 3’s restoration process took approximately three years to complete, and cost one and one-half million dollars. The locomotive’s restoration was achieved through a partnership between the California State Railroad Museum Foundation and California State Parks, and was generously supported by a California Cultural and Historical Endowment (CCHE) grant, the Irving J. Symons Foundation for Tuolumne County, the Sonora Area Foundation, a California State Parks Foundation grant, the Teichert Foundation, the DuPont Corporation, and numerous contributions from members of the California State Railroad Museum and many other community supporters.

Over the weekend of July 3 and 4, special 45-minute excursion steam train rides will be available behind “movie star locomotive” Sierra No. 3. These rides will cost \$30 for adults and \$15 for youths ages 2-17 (children under age 2 are free if they do not occupy a seat). Sierra No. 3 train rides will depart at 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:00 p.m., 3:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. these two days only. Due to expected high demand, advance tickets to ride behind Sierra No. 3 are strongly suggested and go on sale beginning June 4 online at www.railtown1897.org.

Railtown 1897 SHP will also offer its regular steam-powered excursion train rides this weekend. Standard ticket prices apply (please note that tickets may only be purchased onsite each day at the Park), and departure times for regular trains this weekend only will be 10:15 a.m., 11:45 a.m., 1:15 p.m., 2:45 p.m. and 4:15 p.m.

Special excursion trains pulled by Sierra No. 3 will continue through October 2010 only on the first weekend of each month; the same special prices will apply (\$30 for adults and \$15 for youths). Railtown 1897 SHP is located at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Reservoir Road in Jamestown, near Sonora. For more information, please call 209-984-3953 or visit www.railtown1897.org.

For updates on the final stages of the restoration of Sierra No. 3, enthusiasts are encouraged to follow the blog at www.railtown1897.org.

About Railtown 1897 State Historic Park

Operated by California State Parks with assistance from the nonprofit California State Railroad Museum Foundation, Railtown 1897 State Historic Park offers year-round tours plus train rides weekends April-October (selected dates only November-December). Known as “The Movie Railroad,” the Park and its trains have been featured in hundreds of feature films, TV shows, and commercials. The Park is located at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Reservoir Road in Jamestown, reached by highways 49/108. Open Tuesday-Sunday except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day, the Park’s operating hours vary by season: April-October, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; November-March, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. For more information, call Railtown 1897 State Historic Park at (209) 984-3953, or visit our Web site at www.railtown1897.org

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