

Over the years, since the baggage cart was left outside it had deteriorated into a pile of junk.



A few years ago, Tom Walker joined the HVRRS and one of the projects he wanted to do was to restore the cart to its original condition. Earlier this year he was finally ready to start on this project.

The first thing he did was to turn the cart over and try to measure its original dimensions. He then collected what remained of the cart and brought it to his house.



The first step to restoring the cart was to remove and measure the wheel's diameter. Now that he had the dimensions, he contacted Handsome Wheel and Wagon shop in Letcher, South Dakota to purchase new wheels. Handsome has a line of superior quality wagons, wheels, and equipment.

The next thing Tom did was to disassemble and clean up the remaining metal pieces. This was not an easy task. All of the bolts had over a hundred years of rust and paint and he needed to use a hammer and chisel to get a lot of them out of the frame.

Then came the process of recreating the wooded pieces that would be used on the cart. Red oak was rough cut and sanded down for the deck. Also, several pieces of white oak were cut to match the braces. By accident the red oak ended up being painted green, while the white oak pieces were painted red.



Since Tom wanted to keep at least one piece of the original wood, he decided to save the wooden handle. To do this he needed to come up with some novel solutions to ensure the wooden handle remained serviceable.

Since he also wanted to use prototypical hardware, this meant using square nuts and bolts instead of the standard hex nuts and bolts. This forced him to special order much of the hardware used on the cart.



After all most everything was painted either red or green it was time to reassemble the cart. The first item that Tom assembled was the center beam brace. He clamped the floor boards together and used 6 inch long, 3/8-inch carriage bolts for the assembly. Unfortunately, it turned out that the thread size of the carriage bolts did not match the thread size of the square nuts. This required Tom to special order square bolts with the correct thread size.



Once everything was assembled Tom painted all of the fasteners and after the paint dried, he installed and painted the tension rods. Finally, Tom recruited several of his friends and they helped him flip the cart right side up.

Once the cart was right side up, Tom was able to install the side bumpers that keep the luggage from sliding off the side of the cart. He then jacked up and installed the turning armature and wheels.



Finally, it was time to move the cart to the Hyde Park station without damaging it. The first attempt to load the cart using Tom's box trailer failed because the cart would not fit. However, with some adjustments, the second attempt using an open trailer worked and the cart was successfully delivered to the Hyde Park station.



For a more complete story on Tom's restoration, go to his video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwGMGyetmzE.