

COAL CAR HISTORIC RECONSTRUCTION

The Deconstruction of the Coal Car

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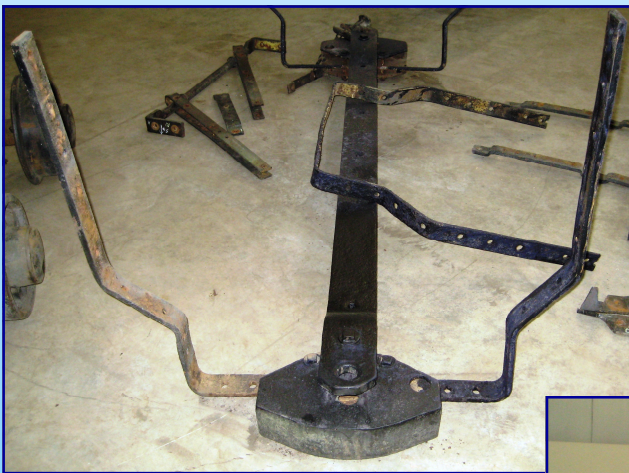
The historic reconstruction of Renton History Museum's coal mine car has begun and the coal car is already changing for the better. With the impending delivery of the new, historically accurate Douglas Fir wood, Collection Care Manager Bill Hall removed the deteriorating old wood and began to treat the metal frame and wheelbase (or "truck") of the coal car.

Taking apart all of the pieces has yielded more interesting information about the coal car. The removal of the wood



revealed a yellow coating on the underside of parts of the metal frame. Bill Hall identified this yellow coating as zinc chromate, an industrial primer historically used to coat the surfaces of metal in order to prevent corrosion.

The treatment of the metal frame and truck of the coal car involves brushing off the current coating of rust and applying a new primer. This new primer is black and chemically changes the surface of



the metal so that it will no longer be susceptible to corrosion. After the metal has been coated with the primer, a new coating of black paint will be applied. The photo at left shows a portion of the metal frame undergoing treatment. The vertical bar on the left has not yet been treated and is still covered in rust. The center portion and right vertical bar have had the rust removed and primer applied.

Docents and volunteers from the Renton History Museum enjoyed a field trip to the Conservation and Restoration Center (CRC) to learn about the historic reconstruction of the coal mine car. Bill Hall led the tour which also included information about the other exciting projects going on at the CRC.



The metal frame and wheelbase of the coal car. The old damaged wood has been removed.

