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Big Boy Will Travel Through Dexter on Saturday; Come Out to the Watch Party

AUGUST 26TH 2021 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Dexter, MO - Union Pacific Railroad's Big Boy #4014 will steam through Dexter on Saturday morning between 8 a.m. - 9 a.m. as it travels to St. Louis, Missouri later that afternoon. Please come out to the Dexter Depot located

It is said to be the largest and most powerful steam locomotive in the world weighing in at a little over 1 million pounds. It is set to leave Poplar Bluff around 8 a.m. and travel through Dexter shortly after.

The steam locomotive's month-long tour will consist of 10 states; Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wyoming.

The locomotive was one of 25 "Big Boys" built between 1941 and 1944 by American Locomotive Co. They had a "4-8-8-4" wheel arrangement, meaning they had four wheels on the leading set of "pilot" wheels guiding the engine, two sets of eight "drive" wheels, each nearly 6-feet in diameter, and four additional wheels supporting the rear of the locomotive. With a length of 132 feet, Big Boy frames had to be "hinged" to allow them to navigate curves.

The Big Boy locomotives had a 25,000-gallon water capacity and could carry up to 56,000 pounds of coal, although Big Boy No. 4014 was eventually converted to burn No. 5 fuel oil. They had a top speed of 80 mph and could produce as much as 6,290 horsepower.

Big Boy No. 4014 was delivered to Union Pacific in December 1941 and traveled 1,031,205 miles, mostly between Ogden, Utah, and Cheyenne, Wyoming, before it was retired in 1961. Union Pacific reacquired it in 2013 from a railroad museum in Pomona, California, and spent several years restoring it, completing the process in 2019 in time to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Transcontinental Railroad.

Today, it is the only Big Boy locomotive in operational condition, with seven others housed in railroad museums, including one at the National Museum of Transportation in Kirkwood, Missouri.

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