

THE RLS CHRONICLE

News of the Riverside Live Steamers



August 2011



Track Laying
Gravel Shoveling
Ballast Tamping
(and some other important stuff...)



Tracks at Iowa Station!

Just over a year has passed since Hunter Park was embargoed and RLS was relegated to our short loop. It has been a long journey on this bumpy siding. Soon, it will be well worth the wait, as a big group of dedicated RLS folks finish the initial install-phase of the four tracks that run through our new Iowa Station.



PLEASE READ:

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT OPERATING ANNOUNCEMENT!

We have been able to negotiate with the City and the Contractor the ability to continue working on the track and operating our railroad during work days and run days throughout the many weeks it will take for the hydro-seeded grass to establish a turf lawn in Hunter Park. This permission carries a hefty responsibility that EACH member of the Riverside Live Steamers cannot take advantage of, thus ruining our ability to continue to enjoy (and work on) our railroad during this period.

FOLLOW THESE RULES:

1. No public operations will be permitted by the City during this period.
2. Once outside our compound, you **MUST** remain on our track right-of-way! **DO NOT WALK** off our right-of-way into the dirt, grass or any planted surface.

We are responsible for our own member's activities in the park. If members or your guests walk into the park and leave footprints in the dirt, grass, or planted areas, the City **will completely close the park** access to RLS until the grass lawn has been established. We can and will lose the ability to enjoy our facility and be far behind the task of getting our railroad ready for the Grand Opening of the New Hunter Railroad Park.

**IT IS UP TO EACH ONE OF US TO MONITOR OUR
ACTIVITIES AND MAKE SURE WE ALL STAY WITHIN THE
TRACK RIGHT-OF-WAY DURING THIS TIME.**



Glenn Maness' Word O' Wisdom (as interpreted by Dave Bunts)



Our fair and wonderful President Maness has had knee surgery, so I've been asked to stand up (mainly 'cause he can't) and write something for the Presidential Words of Wisdom as the "stand-in" President. Well, dear Mr. Editor – You asked for it, so here it is.

It seems like it will never end. We have been tearing up, putting back and tearing up yet again whacking great portions of our Railroad. This time we only had to tear out over 1,000 feet of track for the Hunter park remodel, and this time it did not include the engine lead. So - we have been able to run the public trains on a reduced run, and still play trains for ourselves. With the park getting closer and closer to being done, the contractor is beginning to water using the new irrigation system that we have all watched being installed. If you are unsure of what I am talking about, it's the mounds of dirt all over, especially next to out tracks that look like they were produced by a gopher on a massive overdose of steroids (I wonder if HE will have to testify in front of Congress like the sports figures we've seen lately?). Occasionally the irrigation contractor took great delight in opening a hole large enough to park a bus in right next to the tracks, and then leaving it open to catch the unsuspecting train operator. Those holes are the reason we finally had to give up public operations for safety reasons. We would have been forced into closing down public runs soon in any event, based on the contractor beginning to water the park.

With the watering come the weeds, which is the intended outcome in this phase. The contractor is going to kill all those little buggers, then amend the soil, then hydro-seed for the grass. Somewhere in there, he also has to plant some trees. You may be wondering why I'm mentioning all this, seeing as it doesn't really impact our running trains. Actually, it really and truly does. We have been able to talk the contractor, and the City, into letting us remain in private operation for the duration, with the proviso that we stay off the ground that has been hydro seeded. Because of the way that the system works, ANY footprint, tire track, or mark being made by anything will remain in the grass. The contractor and the City wanted us off the property for the 14 weeks or so that this whole process would take. We managed to convince them that we could be good little boys and girls and stay off the grass. If we don't, they will shut us down. Keep that in mind. You definitely don't want to be the one who walks up to the shelter at Panorama Point to see the trains and is the cause of all of us not being able to come out, fire up an engine, and steam off into the sunshine. You might even have your picture placed in the RLS Hall of Shame, and people may end up spitting on the ground like in an old gypsy movie when they mention your name. Remember: STAY OFF THE GRASS!

I would like to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to all the members who have been showing up on the work Saturdays to help put the railroad back in the ground. The work is hot, dusty, back breaking and thankless, but you all keep showing up. We have made tremendous strides towards being "complete" again, but there is still more to go. Please, keep coming out and donating your time to YOUR club. Everyone appreciates it, and with large numbers of folks in place, frequent breaks can be taken and no-one ends up needing a bottle of Ben-Gay the next day just to get out of bed.

I will close this missive with the fervent wish for Glenn to recover quickly. I don't want to write this anymore. Bunts



Elegy to an Old Friend (photo by Brook Adams)

I remember the waiting. Sometimes it would seem like time had stopped and each passing minute became an eternity. Other times, the wait would be over in mere seconds. Then, I'd have to decide, "Do I want to take this one.... Or wait for the one pulled by that big engine?" It seems trivial now, but to a 5 year old, that was important stuff. The wait took place under the shade of a canopy built many years before that five year old stood there contemplating which train to ride (the prize locomotive was either riding behind Barney Root's 4-8-4 or the Hunter). But, the last thing on the mind of that young child, eagerly peering between the rod-iron fencing at the passing trains, was the station structure he stood under. Times have changed... and so have the perceptions of what's important.

Fast forward nearly thirty years, to the late 1990's: Standing in line at the Columbia Station again, both of my hands tightly gripped by two equally excited little boys; one 6 and the other 5. As the trains came and went, picking up the next batch of riders, and as we got closer and closer to "our turn", it suddenly dawned on me: Looking down at my boys, watching their excited little eyes at the passing trains through the rod iron fence... everything was the same. Granted, life had heaped generous helpings of responsibilities on my wife and I. But, Hunter Park was pretty much the same.... The sound of the locomotives was the same... the smells were the same... even the announcement prior to each train's departure was the same. And with it all was a sentinel; standing over each child and adult, through each passing generation, year after year, decade after decade. Though it wasn't much to look at, the Columbia Station became a symbol of an unchanged stability.... a direct link to my past.

A friend is defined as someone who gives assistance to another; a supporter, and is on good terms with another. Columbia Station, though an inanimate object, was good to me as a young child and as an adult. It was good to everyone who stood under its shade, walked its pathway, and waited for the next train. It was home to much excitement, awe, and delight. It was a beginning... and an end.

A year ago, in August 2010, I couldn't help but feel a withering, timeless pain rifle through me when I saw the original green canopy in a splintered heap. That same pain visited once more on July 24, 2011: The last remnant of Columbia Station, the pathway that carried the weight of the child who became what I am today... and the weight of my small children who are now young men... was gone.



Yes, times have indeed changed... and so have my perceptions. Goodbye, Old Friend.



July 10th Run Day (reported by Brook Adams, photos by Joan Adams)

A good group of RLSer's made their way to the park this warm day. The orders from the top stated we couldn't pull public (again) due to the irrigation trench-work alongside our right-of-way. However, neither the heat nor the trenches deterred fourteen members from enjoying our short loop behind the pull of a steam locomotive.

Making tracks to the club were Brook, Joan & Dana Adams; Scott Horgan; Tommy Bunts; Bill Mac with his 4-6-0; Richard Miller; Rich and Greg Casford with their 4-8-4; Ron Wilkerson with his 4-6-0 and both of his 2-6-0's (these became the community locomotives); Jim Kreider; Bob Smith; Dave Moore with his Challenger; and Josh Klaske (a.k.a. Josh Klenski, Josh Klanski, Josh Klipski, Josh "I-Can-Ski", and Josh "that-guy-with-the-cool-Hudson-ski").

Within the compound, during steam-up, Jim Kreider brought down his newly cast, 5-chime whistle and attached it to Ron' ten-wheeler for a trial "toot". Once the pressure settings were dialed in, folks said it sounded very nice! Also, Dave Moore diligently worked on his giant Challenger, adjusting the brake rigging and firing mechanisms.

Overall, it was another good day for steam!





July 24 Run Day

“T’was the night before Christmas and all through the land, cool air was blowing, and the steam trains were looking grand.”

Well... it was July. There were steam locomotives. But, it was far from “cool” (Maybe Bill Mac looked cool running his spiffy ten-wheeler, but the weather was definitely not cool at 101 degrees). On the morning of the 24th, at 9:00am, RLS folks were greeted with a temperature of 90 degrees and climbing. But, being relatively hearty people, several

locomotives came under steam and the tracks at RLS were, once again, polished clean.

In all, five locomotives came under steam: Ron Wilkerson’s ten-wheeler and mogul, Bill Mac’s ten-wheeler, and the Parrott’s Shay. However, due to a blow-down valve that wouldn’t seat correctly, Dean Willoughby’s Invicta didn’t make it out of the compound. Also out, but not under steam, was Bill Phillips with his Pacific (by the by, that locomotive is really looking good!).

A couple other moments to make mention of: Ted Johnson graciously rebuilt the carburetor to the club’s riding lawn-mower/tractor/gravel-hauler/ice-cream truck (yes... it could happen...). He reassembled it, cranked over the engine, and now it purrs like a kitten. He even took it for a spin around the new Hunter Park Raceway (err... “Pathway System”) and it ran like a charm!

Also, Rich Casford continued the testing and tweaking of his ballast blower/track cleaner. It’s an ingenious device that sits on a modified flat car, using a generator and two high-power leaf-blowers. What once took about an hour to sweep, Rich’s “Big Blow” can cover the same distance in less than twenty minutes. Does this qualify Rich for the RLS “Blow Hard” Award during the Annual Dinner?

Besides all the above mentioned folks, several other RLS members made sure this run day didn’t go to waste: George Bartlow, Casey Farwick, Scott Horgan, Bob Smith, Dave Bunts, Tommy Bunts, Don Bunts, Ken Casford, Nathan Parrott, Bob Beard, Jonathan Chase, Bill Phillips, and the Adams Family (snap, snap).



The Bunts’ Survey Team (Dave, Don and Tommy) get laser accurate readings of the north lead into the new Iowa Yard and Station.



July Work Days

The month of July had a number of extra workdays over and above our usual one. Beginning on July 9th, RLS crews continued working on the recently installed straight-of-way and made final tweaks to Summit Siding. On July 16, work focused on our new Iowa Station. Crews placed and ballasted tracks 3 & 4 from the four-track pathway crossing to the point where the first set of switches will be placed. And, finally, on July 30, two crews headed out onto the right-of-way: One going to the Iowa Station and the other heading out to Summit Siding. At Iowa, tracks 1 & 2 were laid in place, and the initial layers of ballast put down. Up at Summit, crews completed the final tamping from the Summit crossing all the way to the straight-of-way. This area is now ready to feel the weight of a locomotive!

Speaking of locomotive: You should see the Hunter! Larry Jongerious is doing a fantastic job with her restoration. We look forward to seeing her steam again.

There is still MUCH to do before we can open the outer loop. Unfortunately, time is running out. Once the contractor hydro-seeds the park, it will become extremely difficult to complete the large main-line projects. As such, jobs that need to be finished include leveling and tamping the entire straight-of-way; finish track-laying in the Iowa yards; level and tamp the Iowa yards; connect the outer loop to Iowa Yard; level the bottom of Vandenberg; and all the tweaking that takes place once each of these jobs have been completed. Expect a work day to be scheduled each Saturday through the month of August (watch the web site for announcements).

We need all of the local members to attend AT LEAST one extra work day this month in order to stay ahead of the contractor. If we can attack the jobs on several fronts with several small groups, RLS will be in good shape to finish the outer loop before the grand re-opening of the new Hunter Railroad Park. See you at the Park!



You know you're addicted to live-steaming when...

Your daily workout routine includes 1000 reps of ballast tamping, spreading 250 shovels full of gravel, and bench-pressing two track panels at a time.



One year ago in August 2010, the contractor surveyed the location for our new Iowa Station and yard. The code at the top of the marker (IOXIO) stands for, "I Kiss, Hug, & I Kiss" again the ground for the "Building Corridor of our Train Station". The previous day, Brook Adams was seen at this site with a black marking pen and dirt on his lips...

COMING RLS EVENTS:

Aug. 6: Extra Work Day? (check website)	Sept. 3 & 10: Work Days? (check website)
Aug. 13: Extra Work Day? (check website)	Sept. 11: Run Day (no public)
Aug. 14: Run Day (no public)	Sept. 17: Work Day and Monthly Board Meeting
Aug. 20: Work Day and Monthly Board Meeting	Sept. 25: Run Day (no public)
Aug. 27: Extra Work Day? (check website)	
Aug. 28: Run Day (no public)	

For info on extra work days and park updates, visit the RLS Website:

www.steamonly.org

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