

THE RLS CHRONICLE

News of the Riverside Live Steamers



February 2013

Staddling Tradition
Annual Dinner Wrap-up
January Run Days/Work Day
A Time to Reflect and Remember
and so much more....



Lining Up For the New Year

What a great and unique way to celebrate the New Year! About 35 RLS members made it out for our traditional New Year's Day Run. With six locomotives steamed up, everyone was able to enjoy several trips around the park. At the end of the day, Gus Farwick snapped this picture-perfect, New Year's line-up in front of the Hunter Station. From left to right: Bob Cumming's 2-8-2, Mel and Mike Hitchcock's 4-4-0, Rich Casford's 4-6-2 and Ron Wilkerson's 2-8-2.



View from the Right Hand Seat Box – President Rich Casford



Everyone had a good time at the RLS Annual Dinner on Saturday, January 23rd. We clean up really well when we are not on the Railroad! Big thanks to Glenn Maness for his efforts to make our Annual Dinner such a success every year. Also another thank you goes to all the members who donated items to the raffle. Best of all, congratulations to all the award winners that were honored for their service to the Riverside Live Steamers.

We have been busy on the Railroad since I last wrote to you all. Our work days are an important part of the Railroad operations.

Our track and facilities are just like any other full size railroad, there are always items to be repaired, replaced or improved. Everyone likes to see the trains run on Run Days. Work Days make it possible for us to have successful Run Days with smooth track and facilities that make our Railroad great!

Make sure to mark your calendar for all the opportunities to enjoy your Railroad not only on Run Days but on Work (FUN) Days the third Saturday of each month.

Ever wonder who opens the gates, fuel boxes, turns on the air compressors, makes the coffee and puts up the American Flag on run days? It is the Operating Superintendent. The OS is the Board Member in charge on every Run Day of the Riverside Live Steamers. The OS is responsible for making sure the Railroad is open and ready to run. He is also responsible for the security of the compound, finding relief conductors and station helper during public operation hours.

However, that does NOT mean that the OS has to do it all by himself. You can be a part of the crew who can help open, operate and close down the railroad. This is your Railroad and we all have an obligation to lend a hand to help so everyone can have a good time. Offer to walk the Railroad for track inspection. At the end of the day, help close doors, gates, fuel boxes, and store cars in the storage buildings. We have a large physical plant and many hands makes easy work.

On the February 16th work day, we will have a Boy Scout troop painting the steaming bays. At the close of Run Day, February 10th the Steaming Bays and Compound will be closed for any engine or car movements as we will have the bays steamed cleaned during the week for the painting project on Saturday, February 16th. We will be hosting the scouts for lunch and our regular meeting will be at 1:00PM.

News has reached us that Gary Mocko and Dave Moore are recovering well from recent medical events. If you hear of a member under the weather please let Glenn Maness know.

Highball!

Rich Casford, President/Roadmaster



Annual Dinner Wrap-up

One of the many great attributes within our hobby is the people who gravitate to it: First and foremost, they like trains... Steam trains! Secondly is their love for the craft of scale-locomotive construction. But thirdly, and maybe most important, are the bonds that form between the people who gravitate into our beloved hobby. These bonds have been described as a fellowship, camaraderie and even becoming as endearing as a family. RLS is no stranger to these bonds of friendship and family, and with the passing of each New Year, comes our family celebration of the hobby... the RLS Annual Dinner.



As with the last few dinners, the setting is high in the hills overlooking the cities of Norco and Corona, within the clubhouse of the Hidden Valley Golf Course. About 80 RLS folks, donning some of their finer “threads”, came together for a festive evening of good conversation, food, prizes, laughter, membership awards and well-done entertainment.

Among the many awards, a special recognition was given to Paul Quick for his unwavering dedication to training the many new engineers of our club. Though Paul’s locomotive and train is out nearly every run-day, Paul rarely is at the throttle. Instead, his locomotive becomes “school” for many of our newest members. Also awarded was Bob Smith as our “Hogger of the Year” (the most miles accumulated while running a locomotive), Bill Gardener as our dedicated “City Liaison” (a.k.a., the City Lizard), Dave Bunts for his outstanding dedication as our Superintendent of Motive Power, Brook Adams for his over-the-top dedication to the maintenance of our club cars (no small feat!), and the Claybrooks (our Camp Cooks) for the many tasty lunches they provide during our work days. The evening wrapped up with a premier showing of a professionally produced documentary of the Sage Brush Short Line. Unfortunately, about 20 minutes into the video, the lamp of the projector burned out (to be continued on the January 23rd run day report.)

At the end of the dinner, RLS members left with smiling faces and full bellies. Each of us took home the gratifying feeling that our “extended family” is a much tighter-knit group of dear individuals who all share the same love for steam.



Straddling Traditions by Dave Bunts

RLS has been plagued by an inability to actually move passengers waiting in line efficiently for as long as the organization has been pulling the public. One of our members, Mac McLaughlin, decided that we needed to start using straddle seat type cars rather than the seats-in-gondolas that have been in use since the clubs inception. He produced a sample straddle seat car, and the club put it into service. After a period of use, like all things that are prototypes, possible improvements were noted, and design of the current cars was undertaken. After a whole bunch of investigation (that means that the design team and others who were interested looked at every straddle car that could be found on any railroad they visited, and paged through all the magazines popular in the hobby for ideas that could easily be stolen for incorporation into our design) the design work was begun. The first thing that needed to be established was the truck selection, because the weight-carrying capabilities of the trucks would dictate the limits of the car. Rail Rider trucks were selected because of the 1000 pound limit on each of the trucks, AND they were capable of having brakes.

A list of needs (those things that had to be on each car) and wants (the nice-to-have stuff) was developed and worked out about as follows: The car couldn't weigh more than the existing gondolas; it needed to seat 4 adult sized people; it had to have a straight pull draw tube (meaning the car body carried none of the loads involved in pulling or stopping the cars); it had to be very difficult to turn over; it had to fit into existing storage tracks in the Noble Quick building and it had to have automatic air brakes. The wants included the ability to service the braking system without having to turn the car over; easy to re-rail (we all know things come off the tracks every now and again); a handle for little kids sitting at the very front of the car to hang onto; easy for the public to get on and off of; not require ANY maintenance other than normal preventative things like cleaning and packing of truck bearings for a period of 10 years; and last but not least, the cars should not look too bad. Once all that was established, preliminary testing was done by seating people on one of our picnic table benches and establishing where 4 adults felt comfortable with total strangers sitting directly behind them as that established the overall length of the cars. We established the height of the seat to the floor where one's feet would be placed based on the arthritic legs of the old guys on the design team. The width of the seat itself was designed to keep the center of the load as close to between the rails as possible to preclude the center of the load mass from ever shifting to a point where the car would begin to list to one side or the other. We based the total passenger weights on the currently expanded FAA standards for adult passenger weights. It is interesting to note that the FAA and the U.S. Coast Guard have recently INCREASED the standard weights of passengers because of the increasing girth of the US population. It was established that we could have interchangeable 'shelves' that would slide into an opening in one end of the car with quick disconnect fittings on the only portion of the brake system that was actually attached to the car – the brake lines themselves and the trucks. This would allow a quick swap for defective parts, and not require that the car be upside down except for truck servicing.

With the criteria were set, the plans were drawn up and the weight of the steel evaluated, along with how easily the cars could be constructed. By using bent sheet metal and a light frame to hang the steel on, it appeared that the cars would assemble easily into a fairly rigid assembly, and be light enough to meet the requirements. All of the needs were met, and most of the wants were as well, with the exception of beauty being in the eye of the beholder as



to the final shape and size. Steel was purchased, and a prototype car was constructed. That car ran on RLS rails on occasion, and was subjected to loading and pulling for members use only on several run days with a hard wooden seat hastily attached to the top of the sheet metal sides of the car. The car seemed to do everything it was supposed to, so production began. There were several long days by Brook Adams, George Bartlow, Paul Quick, and Bill McLaughlin in constructing all the required parts, welding them together, and making the seat platforms.

Once the cars were completed, they were powder coated by Central Powder Coat in Brea CA. These folks have been doing the powder coat on the RLS owned fleet of gons, and their work has stood the test of time as we have progressed through the fleet, rotating individual cars into a rebuild program as dictated by the Car Foreman, Mr. Adams. The design team (Larry Jongerius and I) had established that ANY surface treatment that we selected would be scratched by the feet of the riders in the foot wells, so a pick up bed liner type material was selected to be applied to the foot wells. After considering the alternatives, Diamond Liners of Santa Fe Springs was chosen as probably the best selection for our needs. The cars were transported to Brea, and powder coated. Once that was complete, they went to Santa Fe Springs where the polyurethane liner was applied. During this time, the seat bottoms that Mac had made were taken to an upholstery shop in Whittier by Rich Casford, where they were covered in a heavy black vinyl, with exceptionally hard packing type foam being used for the seat cushion. Half the cars were picked up in Santa Fe Springs by Bill McLaughlin and Bill Hesse where the trucks, couplers, and seats were installed, and transported immediately to the Sage Brush Short Line in Ridgecrest CA, for use in the Christmas train celebration that is held there annually. I had occasion to go up to the Sage Brush to assist with that on its final night. I noted that the cars were being loaded to the point where the seat cushion was no longer visible, 6 to 8 people all squished together on the seat. The cars performed admirably, I didn't see any deflection anywhere except on the truck springs, and they only deflected about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the total travel. The coordinator of the Christmas celebration in Ridgecrest, Warren McGowan, attributed a portion of the successful completion of the thing to the straddle cars ability to haul far more

people than they were used to.



When the cars came back to the home road, they were lettered for RLS Pullman use by Brook Adams, and each named for a variety of the citrus that made Riverside famous in the days of steam. Take a look at the cars, and decide if we met the appearance requirement. I know, from an operational stand point, we hit a home run on the rest of the requirements.

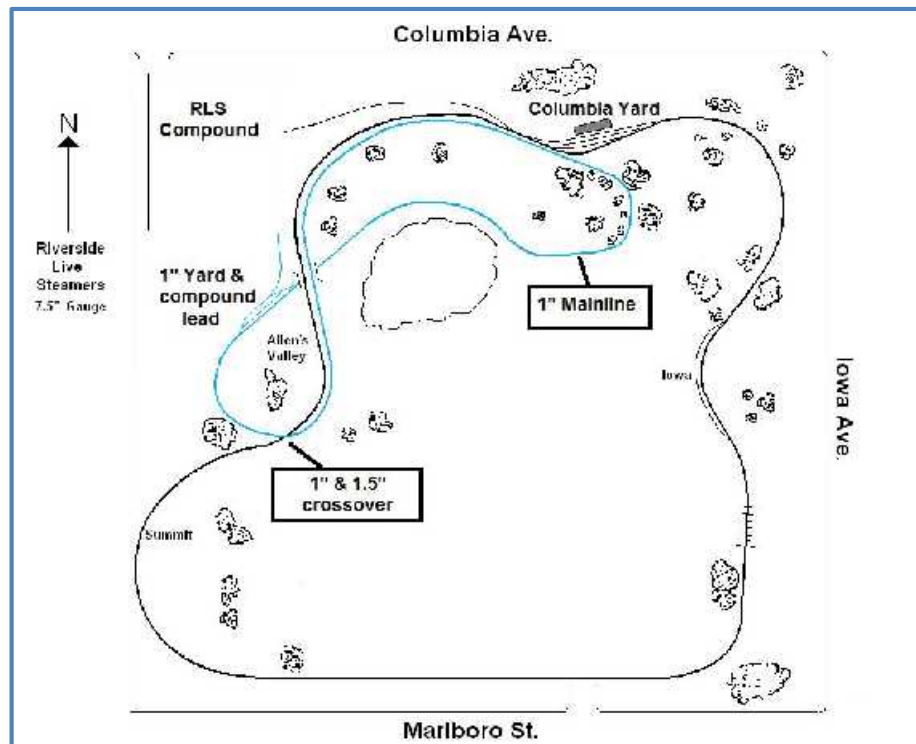


What's in a Name - Part #6: "Lower Loop" and "The 1" Railroad"

(by Rich Casford)

In the late 1960's, the RLS mainline ran only around the outside edge of Hunter Park. If you can visualize where Summit Siding is (located at the West end of the Straightaway) then proceeding along the ridgeline and approaching the Summit grade crossing, the original mainline dropped down hill quickly and was tied into the track that currently heads up the hill to the overpass.

As the club developed the 1" railroad, there was a diamond crossing located just east of the Allen's Valley grade crossing. If you stand on the Allen's Valley Grade



crossing, you can still see the cut-out in the concrete for the 1" track. Take a look at the hill going up to Summit and the hill going up to the overpass, and you can see how steep the grade transition was on the original mainline at this point. The track going to the overpass has never been changed in elevation!

The original 1" Railroad followed the

1 ½" mainline up the hill over the overpass, parallel to the mainline, all the way to just before Columbia Station, then headed down the hill in between the pine trees (where you can see a curve of trees) and would then turn back towards Noble Junction going west back towards the overpass. The 1" track would pass under the overpass where the current Hollywood Switch and North Fuel track are located now, and into a small yard. Access to the steaming area would run almost on the same track alignment as the eastside track in David's Yard going thru the Noble/Quick building area on a raised track mounted on full size rail. That rail is still used as a parking bumper along the west side of David's Yard.

Back on the 1" mainline, it would continue to curve back around the current 1 ½" mainline towards the Allen's Valley grade crossing and diamond crossing from the mainline headed down from Summit. The 1" track was a figure 8 pattern using the overpass and diamond crossing to cross the 1 ½" track.



Continued expansion of the 1 ½" mainline saw a track connected at about where the West switch for the Old Party Siding in Columbia Yard is located. This track ran down hill, parallel to the 1" track, curving through the pine trees to head West through Noble Junction area (though there was no Junction at that time). It continued West under the overpass and then ran around in the current track pattern back to the mainline past Allen's Valley grade crossing and switched back on the mainline going up the hill towards the overpass.

This lower loop was a short loop trackage for members who did not want to run the entire mainline. Back in the early days of live steam, a 4300 foot railroad was huge! Most live steam clubs were only 1000 to 2000 feet long at the time. Many were small back yard railroads. There were no yard tracks where Allen's Valley Yard is now; it was just a branch line track. Next month, we will cover continued expansion of the mainline with the addition of the Creighton Cut-Off making the lower loop a part of the mainline. Just like the full size railroads, RLS keeps adding track to better serve the traveling public and enjoyment for the members of the Riverside Live Steamers!

Brakeman's Class

Saturday, March 2nd is slated to be the next RLS Brakeman's class. Bill Hoey, our Brakeman Sergeant, will begin the class at 8:00am sharp with a brisk swim across the RLS pond in full RLS uniform, a jaunt through the RLS obstacle course (the new play area), and a shovel-held-above-the-head run around the park's perimeter. If you don't wish to perform all those tasks, just show up at 8:00am, bellyache for a bit, and Sergeant Hoey will "*most likely*" skip straight



to the Brakeman's Training portion of the class... but you should still be prepared for the worst. The class will last until approximately 3:30pm and will include written exams, verbal exams and practical exams while riding on the Hunter train-set. Trainees will learn RLS Passenger Train Safety Protocol, proper hand-and-whistle signaling techniques, the proper procedure to load and unload passengers, and how to fire a 50 caliber M2 Browning. Sergeant Hoey suggests that you download, print and read the RLS Safety Rule Book (http://www.steamonly.org/rules_laws.html) prior to attending the class.

In the end, Brakeman graduates will receive the coveted RLS Brakeman Badge of Honor. Please make sure you contact Sergeant Hoey at willcal770@socal.rr.com to inform him of your wish to have him kick your butt... errrr... "take the RLS Brakeman's Training Class".



January 13th Run Day

A perfect day met RLS members as they showed up for the first public run day of the New Year. Though the air was cool, the sky was crystal-clear and the sun felt wonderfully warm. These were the perfect conditions to fire and run steam locomotives!

Approximately 25 RLS members showed up to enjoy the day, but only three locomotives came under fire: The Hunter (Engineered by Bill Hoey with relief provided by Dave Bunts),

Ron Wilkerson's 2-8-2, and Andrew Martin with his 2-4-2. However, down in the compound, several locomotives were being worked on and tinkered with in preparation for a new year's worth of operation.

Our brakeman for the day was Jim Wood. The station was under the watchful of Glenn Maness (Station Master) and Cindy Caldera. Manny Caldera took up the post of Iowa Yard Switchman, and Rich Casford was our Operation Supervisor.

Hunter Engineer Class

Dave Bunts will be instructing a Hunter Engineer class on the weekend of April 6. To attend this course, it is suggested that all trainees should be qualified RLS Brakemen (that's not mandatory, but it is a good suggestion). Second, Hunter trainees must not be on probation and they must be an RLS member for at least one year. The Hunter class will last all day and the cost is \$25. If you wish to attend, be sure to contact Dave Bunts (He'll also provide the exact date of the course).



Ron Wilkerson's big 2-8-2 puts on a show with Ron's all-yellow train-set as they approach Summit Siding. In the background (far right), Andrew Martin eases his narrow-gauge 2-4-2 into Allen's Valley. Way in the background (center), Bill Hoey is throttling back for his approach into Noble Junction.





January Work Day and Board of Director's Meeting

As with any railroad, the RLS mainline, buildings, locomotives and cars need periodic maintenance. The first work day of the New Year arrived on January 19th and about 20 members showed up to lend a hand.



Out on the mainline, a number of small groups leveled track, worked on areas in need of re-gauging, and replaced damaged or dented rail; in the lowa Yard, the last few steps were taken to install the new Birthday Party Gate (our first birthday party is scheduled on 3/10); a few folks fixed the leak at the Columbia Station water box; and the electrical department worked on our crossing signals and lighted signs. Inside the compound, the

steaming bays area was swept, work was performed on our security cameras and the club house received a thorough cleaning. It was a very busy morning!

Because our Camp Cooks are in the middle of their busy season (tax season), Board Member Chris Enright fired up the grill and cooked up a bunch of hot dogs for all the hungry folks. For about an hour, people ate, drank soda and immersed themselves in good conversation. Right at 1:00pm, President Rich Casford dropped the gavel and began our monthly Board of Director's Meeting.

Of most importance was the discussion concerning the roof over a number of the west steaming bays. After many discussions with the city, it has come down to this: if we use any part of our existing buildings to in any way support the new roof, we will have to bring all of our building up to current ADA compliance codes. This would include ramps, new bathrooms, sidewalks, etc., etc. Thus, our \$10,000 roof and cement foundations around the steaming bays would become \$50,000 to \$100,000. Upon this announcement (and after applying the defibrillator at full charge to Dean Willoughby and Jim Kreider, RLS Treasurers past and present), it was decided the club will "further research our options".

Several other topics were covered, including the club's participation at the National Train Day Celebration in Los Angeles, the Orange Show celebration with the 3751 at the San Bernardino station, and the Big Train Show in Ontario. But one announcement stood out: President Casford announced that since our club has reopened to the public (December 2011), our club has pulled 14,782 passengers around our mainline! That's a lot of passenger miles!

The meeting was adjourned into Executive Session right around 2:30.



January 27th Run Day

This was a special run day for the RLS; we had a very special guest visit: Jack Frost! Wow, was it ever a cold run day! Now, granted, to those long-distance members who live in places far to the north and east of Southern California, this day would have been a walk in the park. But, for those of us who call So-Cal Our home, it was down-right miserable! The temperature never got above 52°... and that really isn't all that cold. But, with the humidity up and a breeze of 15 to 25 mph, the wind-chill factor was pretty miserable. In fact, it was "cold" enough that the public stopped showing up by 1:00, so our Station Master, Glenn Maness, called it a day and closed the line. With that said, we still had quite a number of locomotives out on the mainline!



First out was Paul Quick and the Battello Family on Paul's 4-4-2. That was quickly followed by the Hunter (Brook Adams), Ron Wilkerson (2-8-2) and Robert & Arlene Butler (from Tehachapi) on their 2-6-0. Then, at 1:00, Rich Casford (4-6-2) and Bob Cummings (2-8-2) came out of the compound and double headed to the Allen's Valley Yard. After a number of movements, Rich and Bob had put together a fine looking freight train with Bob's Mikado on the point and Rich's Pacific as a helper on the rear. For the rest of the day, Hunter Hobby Park echoed with the sounds of working steam locomotives, whistles, and the hollow sound of rolling equipment. When Iowa Station was closed, the remaining trains began running bi-directionally adding even more enjoyment to the moment. Our brakeman for the day was Ted Johnson, John Gurwell, and a shivering John Lytle. Glenn Maness and Tamiann Parrott froze at the station until it closed and our Operation Supervisor was Mac McLaughlin.

This day was also unique because of the projector mishap at the Annual Dinner the night before. Quite a number of folks wanted to see the entire presentation. So, the Parrott family brought their video projector down to the clubhouse, set up the club's screen and a small sound system, and over the course of the day, had two showings (each time to a full house) of the Sage Brush Shortline's documentary. What a pleasant production!



Remembering Wendy Benson & Shawn Oliver

Being the editor of the Chronicle has been a wonderful pleasure ever since I was handed the reins from our previous editor, Ken Casford. Think about it: I get to report on the activities of my most favorite club... populated by my most favorite group of people! I get to take pictures, edit them, collect stories, bring them all together in what I hope will be something that captures the heart and soul of our club. Most of the time, I love what I do! But, writing this article has been the most difficult endeavor I have had to tackle. Over the past month, our club lost some folks who were very near and dear to many of us, the most recent being Shawn Oliver.

I remember when Shawn moseyed into the compound one day just over a year ago. He was quiet, reserved, but showed an intense interest in our hobby. In other words: he was hooked. Before long, Shawn was coming out to every run day and all of our work days. There wasn't anything he wouldn't lend a hand to or offer to help with. He was a big man... but I believe he was big because he needed a body to carry that big heart of his. His laugh was infectious; his smile, doubly so. For us, he was a perfect fit into our family. For him, we were his family.

Shawn died very suddenly due to a stroke on February 8.

Another member of our family passed away on January 21: Wendy Benson. Though many of our members never met Wendy, she has had a lasting impact on all of us: her son is A.J. Benson. Beginning in 2006, Wendy would bring A.J. down to our club. At the time, he was only 10 years old. Wendy trusted the members of our club implicitly, as many times, she would simply drop off little A.J. in the morning and come pick him up in the afternoon. The times Wendy stayed and visited was like having our own little ray of sunshine within the confines of our clubhouse: She was a beautiful, smart, loving, lady with a bubbly personality who felt that



A.J. Benson with his mom, Wendy, and his little brother, Josh.



Shawn (in the back) admiring the Casford Northern

the influence of our club with A.J. was extremely important. Wendy was diagnosed with cancer a couple years ago. She went through all of the treatments (radiation, chemotherapy, pain killers, etc.). Though the process nearly killed her, she was given word her cancer went into remission about a year ago.

Six months ago, her doctor discovered her cancer was back. Even until a couple weeks prior to her passing, she made sure A.J. made it over to our club... and still had the determination to show everyone her beautiful smile.



Remember This??

One year ago, February 2012: Though we had been open to the public for a couple months, the newness of it all had not worn off with the folks who came to ride our trains. Every day, an hour or more prior to the arrival of the day's first train, the line of people would begin to form. By noon, wait-times would be 90 minutes! In the picture above, notice the line of folks stretching all the way to the parking lot.

COMING RLS EVENTS:

Feb. 10: Run Day

Feb. 16: Work Day, Board of Directors meeting

Feb. 24: Run Day

March 2: RLS Brakeman Training Class

March 10: Run Day

March 16: Fun Day (Work Day, B.O.D meeting)

March 24: Run Day

The R.L.S. Chronicle is published by The Riverside Live Steamers, Inc., P.O. Box 5512, Riverside, CA. 92518. The railroad is located at Hunter Park, 1496 Columbia Ave., Riverside, CA. Call (951) 779-9024 during scheduled activities for more information. Public run days are the 2nd & 4th Sundays of the month. Work days (Fun Day) are held the Saturday following the first run day of each month. The monthly Board of Directors Meeting is held at 1:00 p.m. at Hunter Park on the same Saturday as our work days.

Riverside Live Steamers' Board of Directors

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Secretary: Brook Adams

Treasurer: Jim Kreider

DIRECTORS

Chris Enright

Bob Beard

David Lazarus

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