



Greetings from Travel Town!

Travel Town Greetings to All!

Since our last *Travel Town Tender*, we've seen some big changes in the Travel Town landscape – quite literally! The Recreation & Parks Department's *Landscape Construction Unit* has been working feverishly to complete the new barbeque and picnicking area on the south side of the Museum. New trees were planted and sod was laid during the week of August 8th, and what a BIG difference it makes! The area now includes four spacious picnic spots, each with new tables and barbeques, as well as a number of freshly-planted xeriscape gardens and a graded access road to serve the railcar restoration zones in the Locomotive Pavilion. By the end of October, the sod should be rooted and the whole area ready for families eager to flip a few burgers on the new charcoal grills!



Meanwhile, all the way at the other end of Travel Town, rehabilitation work on two of the Museum's railroad display tracks has been completed. At the end of July, Tracks 5-West and 7-West received a complete surfacing, lining and tamping treatment at the hands of Travel Town's longtime friends at the *Sharp & Fellows Company*. Track 5W was re-laid this past spring by our volunteer Track Team while the rebuilding of Track 7W was the product of a Boy Scout Eagle Project several years ago. Both of these tracks were laid the old-fashioned way, with volunteer sweat and stamina – but there are a few things that are just a little easier to accomplish with outside help (and big machines that the Museum does not currently have at its own disposal). So Sharp & Fellows, with their specialized machinery, was called upon to put the finishing touches on both of these hand-laid tracks. This *Travel Town Tender* features a brief photo essay illustrating the various steps in the track construction process.

With both of these large projects completed, Travel Town volunteers will now turn their efforts towards constructing the new “station lead” and restoration service tracks along the southern edge of the Museum as well as installing the next segment of track east for the demonstration railroad to the L. A. Zoo. Construction work on the Station Lead and Service Tracks project “officially” started on September 3rd.

While we're on the subject of volunteers ... so much of what you see and experience at Travel Town is direct result of the Museum's small

band of hard-working volunteers. They tackle Herculean tasks on a regular basis, but there is so much more we could be accomplishing if we just had a few more good folks to help us out. Might you be one of those folks? Do you have some special talents you could offer to make Travel Town a better place? Our needs are wide and varied; our volunteer leaders are eager to guide you into just the right spot to fit your particular talents and interests. We've got easy jobs and hard jobs; some that require ingenuity and patience, others that are simple and recreational. Some activities

include interaction with the public, while others are quiet and secluded. We do locomotive maintenance, passenger car restoration, track laying, signal repair, grounds keeping, and historic interpretation. We need docents, woodworkers, mechanics, story-readers, teachers, leaders, sign painters, bodybuilders, dentists, seamstresses ... young or old, you name it. If you've got a few free hours from time to time, I'll bet we've got a place just right for you. Our volunteers are a very friendly group and are eager to get to know you and make you part of the Travel Town team. If you think you might be interested, please give us a call at 323-668-0104 or 818-243-5019 and we'll tell you more about it.

I hope to see you at Travel Town real soon!

Greg Gneier, President
September, 2005

On the Platform: Roger Ringle



Roger gets into everything! Here he is entering the engine compartment on California Western R.R. Diesel No. 56 to assist with removal of the giant cooling fan.

On the Platform in this issue, we'd like you to meet Travel Town Volunteer Roger Ringle. Roger is a retired welder who joined the Museum's volunteer team in August 2003.

Before retiring from the construction industry, Roger had a long career in shipbuilding and other types of commercial welding, including 14 years at the Todd Shipyard in San Pedro and a short tour with the U.S. Army as a Combat Engineer in Stuttgart, Germany. His last commercial assignment was on Disney's recent *Grand Californian Hotel*, a spectacular resort

adjacent to the Disneyland and California Adventure theme parks.

Roger grew up in nearby Long Beach where he attended David Starr Jordan High School. His childhood love of trains eventually

led him to sign on as a volunteer at the Orange Empire Railroad Museum in Perris, California. Roger volunteered at OERM throughout the 1980s and '90s before "discovering" Travel Town a few years ago. He found the friendly atmosphere and camaraderie at Travel Town much to his liking and he now volunteers with us on a weekly basis. Roger is now one of our most reliable volunteers!

While his favorite work is track construction, Roger is always eager to assist with whatever the task is at hand. Of course, being a welder by trade, Roger's professional skills often come in very handy for us at the Museum. We're very fortunate to have Roger on the team!



Roger's favorite work is on the track. Here he explains the finer points of pneumatic spike-driving to fellow volunteer Greg Hewlett.

All Aboard!

A warm welcome to the newest members and renewing supporters of the Travel Town Museum Foundation.

Roomette Passenger

Bryan Reese

"Little Nugget" Club

Timmy Berry
Owen Wyle

Pullman Passenger

Charlie and Meaghan Register

Streamliner Passengers

Annabella Fanelli
Rick Gomez
Joshua Weiss

Yardmaster

Stevan Dumas
Mona Lynne Oken
Dorothy Shepherd

Julie Adams
Claudia Anneman
Caroline Aslanian
Ricardina Astoquillea
Eric Aukee
A.J. Ayala
Steven & Violet Diamond Beasley
Marsha Berkavitz
Benny Bruskin
Colonel G and Margaret B. Cain
Joan Cass
Kevin and Clare Cohen
Langdon Dearborn
Marianne Duron
Diego Espana
Kirk Felmer
Magnus Ferrell
Carlos Flores
Kevin Garcia
Annie and Tom Giedraitis

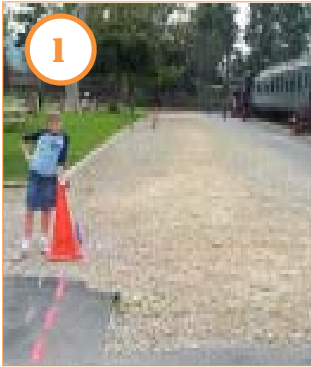
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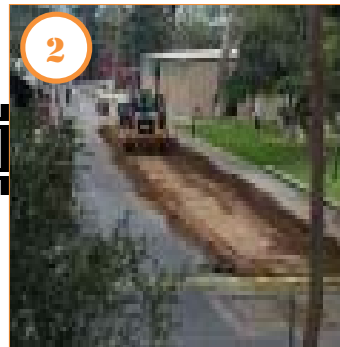
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Markeith Washington
Scott Wilkinson
Janis Wong-Lo
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Yolanda Yablonsky
Jeff Zarrinoran
Avery Zands, Monika Zands
and Alex Zech

We've Been Workin' on the Railroad

TRACK 5 WEST



1
Early February: The old track (laid about 1965), having been removed by volunteers, our beautiful Katy shows off the cleaned up right-of-way.



2
Mid-February: A Recreation & Parks heavy equipment operator grades the new right-of-way down to the necessary level and removes excess earth.



3
April 2: Volunteers lay out new cross-ties on the graded right-of-way.



6
Mid-April: Ballast is delivered directly to the job site by "truck & transfer" at 25 tons per load.



5
April 16: The freshly-laid track is now ready for ballast.



4
April 9: Rails are laid out, bolted together and spiked down by volunteers.



7
May 31: Museum volunteers use a Nordberg Power Jack to bring the track up out of the ballast and into rough elevation.



8
July: A crew from Sharp & Fellows Co. machine-tamps the ballast and surfaces the track, bringing it to the final level and alignment. The large yellow machine does the tamping; the rest of the work is done by hand.



9
August 1: The completed Track 5-West is now ready and waiting for its cadre of historic locomotives and cars to be moved into display position.

*A Trip to Old New York ... or, Where in the World is Amelia Summerville?
"The Little Nugget" Restoration - by Greg Gneier, Project Director*



This past July, I found myself on the east coast, serving as a chaperone for our daughter Katy's 6th grade class field trip to Williamsburg, Virginia, and Washington, D.C.

With Travel Town's beloved railroad car "*The*

Little Nugget" never far from my

mind, I thought this an excellent opportunity

to extend my stay back east and make a research junket to the *New York Public Library*. So, once the rest of the tour group had headed back home to Glendale, Katy and I struck out on an adventure in the Big Apple.

As many of you know, the story of "*The Little Nugget*" is a long and drawn out adventure in itself, filled with Hollywood celebrities,

railroad magnates, clowns, crimes and other fantastic intrigue. Let me set the stage, so to speak, with a little specific background on the car's New York connection.



The elusive Amelia Summerville, number 7 on "The Little Nugget" hit parade. This is a 'microscopic' enlargement of Amelia's original picture on the "Nugget" wall, taken from one of the early Union Pacific promotional photographs. Amelia's picture is still at large.

When renowned American artist Walt Kuhn designed "*The Little Nugget*" in 1937, he chose a "theatrical theme" for the club car's interior décor. It was gaudy and busy, to say the least. Kuhn covered the walls of the car with a great assemblage of vintage photographs of Vaudeville

actors, clowns and other show business personalities, interspersed with several of his own paintings on the same subjects. As a source for many of the vintage photographs, then New York resident Kuhn naturally turned to the vast archives of the New York Public Library for inspiration. Over 100 selected images were acquired, placed in little golden frames and fastened to the walls of the car. The Union Pacific even printed up cute little white booklets with the names of all the photographs that club car visitors could look at while enjoying their drinks. It was there that U.P. passengers would enjoy the pictures for nearly 20 years before the famous car was retired and ultimately brought to the Travel Town Museum for display in 1956.

Fast-forward to the 1970s and the dark days of a sadly neglected Travel Town; it was then that the entire collection of pictures disappeared from "*The Little Nugget*," along with much of its fabulous furnishings and other ornate decorations. Some 25 years later, after a considerable amount of detective work on the part of the Museum and the Restoration Team, a large portion of the "Nugget" collection of photographs was located and returned to Travel Town – most still sealed in their little golden frames. Still at large, however, are about 20 of the vintage photos and most of the paintings and furnishings. It is our continuing quest for those 20+ missing photos that led Katy and me back to the source archives of New York Public Library – there, we believed, might be found some of the original images from which Kuhn assembled his collection for "*The Little Nugget*."

Naturally, Katy and I arrived in NYC by rail, via Amtrak's *Metroliner* into the busy Pennsylvania Station. We were up bright and early the next morning to head uptown for our first day of research at the Lincoln Center Branch of New York Public Library, home of the large Billy Rose Theatre Collection. In the weeks prior to our visit, I had conversed at length with the Photograph Librarian at the Billy Rose Collection, Jeremy McGraw. He gave me advance instructions and a good idea of what we would be in for.

This was going to be RESEARCH the "old fashioned way" – no Internet, no databases – the "on-line" user card registration was the only computerized part of this episode. From there on out, it was manual card catalogs, hand-written call slips, rubber stamps and white cotton gloves. Many of our younger readers, Katy included, may have no idea what a library "card catalog" is; that's really kind of sad for today's youth. Fortunately, I went to school in the dark ages, so these traditional methods of research are familiar to me – although I had not actually experienced these delights for many years. Katy picked up the process pretty quickly! In a nutshell, here's how it goes (remember, we're looking for specific photographic images of specific theatrical personalities):

Our first stop was the big card catalog, which occupies about 40 feet of wall space along one side of the main Reading Room. It's a standard library catalog, with thousands of individual paper index cards, one for EACH item in the library's collection. The cards are alphabetically cross-referenced according to subject, title and author. For each personality we were seeking, we had to look up that person by name in the catalog; therein we would find any number of cards, referencing various photographic files, scrapbooks, clipping collec-



Greg at the Lincoln Center Branch of the New York Public Library. Note the bank of "card catalogs" on the wall behind him. (We had to get special permission to take the photo.)

tions and portfolios. Each one was a chance in itself – the images we were looking for could be anywhere, if they were there at all.

Now, step two: In order to actually look at any of the materials listed in the catalog, one has to fill out a *call slip* with the pertinent “call” information written on it. Each particular item requires its own call slip, filled out by hand using those little stubby yellow pencils (like you get with your scorecard at a miniature golf course).

Step three: You give the call slip to the librarian, who checks it for accuracy and hits it with a series of rubber stamps - indicating what department it is from and whether or not the viewing of the items must be done in the “Special Collections Room.” Caveat here is that you can only turn in four call slips at one time – and we had a lot of them.

Step four: Once we had the librarian’s literal stamp of approval, we then walked the slips (four at a time) over to the Call Desk. The Call Desk attendant punches the date and time on each slip and assigns the researcher a number (our number was “7”); she



No. 68, actress Lotta Crabtree. Our searches through the New York Public Library did yield a match to this original wall photo!

then hands the slip to one of the Pages, who scurries off into the bowels of the library to fetch the sought materials. Meanwhile, we wait for our number to light up on the callboard out in the main reading room (usually about 10 minutes later). The good news is, once your number appears, you can turn in four more call slips! The trick is to keep up the pace.

Step five is where the real fun begins: There are two possibilities now, depending on what notation the librarian has stamped on the call slip. If the stamp simply reads “Theatre Third Floor” then we just pick up the materials at the Call Desk and take them back to our campsite in the Reading Room for review – real easy! However, if the librarian has stamped “Special Collections” on the call slip, then the material is sent straight to the (guess where!) *Special Collections Reading Room* - what we’ll call the ‘Glass Room.’ In this room all the rules are different: no notebooks or ink pens, we have to sit at special tables and wear ill-fitting white cotton gloves. Two librarians sit at the front of the room and hand out

Continued on Page 6

Postcards from the Edge... of the Tracks

To go along with our story about researching “*The Little Nugget*,” we’d like to offer you a look at two Union Pacific Pictorial Post Cards from the collection, issued in the 1940s.

Below we see the very colorful interior of “*The Little Nugget*” car along with an equally colorful exterior view of the entire *Streamliner City of Los Angeles* train. Note the collection of framed pictures on the walls of “*This richly adorned Club Car ... It offers every modern luxury, but is designed in the manner of a high class hostelry in the bonanza days of the Old West.*”



And said of the train itself (above): “*This swift, superbly appointed extra fare train, providing the finest to be had in luxurious travel comfort, carries both Pullmans and reserved seat coaches between Chicago and Los Angeles.*”



G. Gneier collection #175 & #229

the materials as they come in from the Call Desk – we’re only allowed to look at one item at a time, under the vigilant eyes of a security guard perched at the back of the room. It’s a scene right out of a library horror movie. And, as you might have guessed, MOST of the items we want to look at are getting marked “*Special Collections.*” Happily, we were able to bring our laptop computer into the Glass Room, so we had all our reference information easily at our (gloved) fingertips.

Finally, with materials in hand, we’re ready for step six: actually LOOKING for the picture we need. So we did. We looked, and looked, and looked. Each item we “called” was different – and very old. The vintage of the items we are searching for is anywhere from 75 to over 100 years ago. The first item might be a manila envelope filled with dozens of souvenir photocards, a sort of a baseball card collection of Vaudeville performers. The next item might be a folder filled with extremely brittle newspaper clippings, many of which would literally fall to pieces as we leafed through them. Next, a scrapbook of old theatre playbills and programs, and then another envelope of photos. One item might contain only two or three pictures; another might have 60 or 70. All through the day, we would continually rotate from card catalog, to librarian, to Call Desk, to Glass Room, and back again. We quickly developed a system; I might be browsing through one folder while Katy was running the next batch of call slips through the mill. Over the course of two days at the Lincoln Center Library, we shuffled through materials on 89 separate call slips, looking at hundreds of pictures and countless clippings – happily, thirteen of those call slips did indeed yield images we were looking for! (An interesting archival paradox here, for those who are into that – the newspaper clippings which had been pasted into scrapbooks 75 years ago have survived intact, while those *safely* stored in “acid-free” envelopes have not!)

Bingo! We found an image we were looking for! Move on to step seven: Once we found something we were after, we needed to be able to record its location, so as to be able to find it again later (hopefully without going back to New York!). A reference photocopy of the item was in order. Now, yet another form must now be

filled out ... a *Photocopy Request Form*, of course. And if the item to be copied is coming from the ‘glass room,’ then one of the glass room librarians had to personally walk with us over to the Xeroxing Center on the other side of the 3rd Floor - where the requested copies would be made. The original items would then be returned to the glass room and hence back into the bowels of the library.

By mid-afternoon, Katy and I had gotten to know just about everybody working on the 3rd Floor and had made especially good friends with the wonderful ladies in the photocopying room. One of the biggest challenges in the seven-step process was that library personnel kept periodically rotating from job to job, every hour or so. Just about the time we would get one set of protocol figured out, all the librarians would shift stations and the ‘rules’ would suddenly change. While one librarian might require only the most basic information be written on the call slip, the next one would insist that our full name, address and blood type be filled out on every form. Meanwhile, in the ‘glass room,’ one attendant would allow us to pull out individual folders on our own, the next one would insist upon laboriously leafing through each file box himself. Some of the folks were outgoing and energetic, others were somber and methodical – and maybe a little eccentric (it was a research library, after all). What a grand experience it was for both of us – and we made great progress!



(Above) On a break from the card catalog, Greg fulfills a life-long dream of enjoying a chili dog at the famous Nathan’s Hot Dog stand at Coney Island.

(Below) Look tempting? This is the renowned Chocolate Pyramid of Amtrak dining car fame. Katy ate about four of these during the course of the rail journey back from the Big Apple to the City of Angels.



One of the interesting side notes to all this was, when we returned to our hotel near Times Square each day, we would walk past some of the same theatres whose ancient playbills and programs we had been sifting through all day – the *Winter Garden*, the *Lyceum*, and the famous *R.K.O. Palace*. (Naturally, you’ve heard the expression “*Playing the Palace*” – well it’s not ‘Buckingham’ they’re referring to.) *Show Business* is still alive and well in New York City!

So what’s next? Well, back in Los Angeles, I now have to wade through the materials we found, digest them with the pictures we already had, and then proceed with the reproduction of the missing frames and the replication of found images. Anybody want to help? 🚚

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Recreation & Parks

TRAVEL TOWN LANDSCAPING



Waiting for landscaping! The open area to the south of the new Locomotive Pavilion was formerly the site of the volunteer Restoration Yard. Seen here in the early days of the project, the area has been cleared to make way for the new BBQ and Picnic area.



One of the new "BBQ Rings" is taking shape.



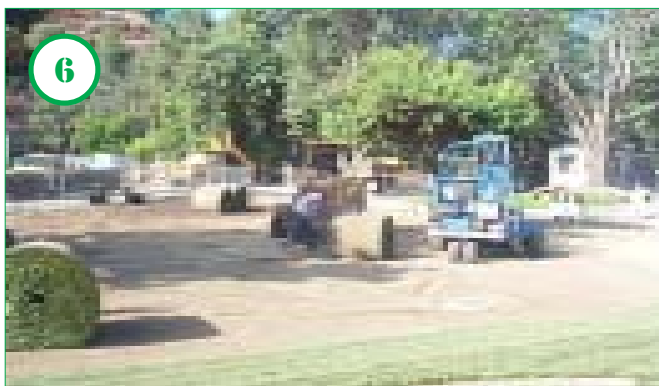
Recreation & Parks Concrete Crew pours new retaining curbs and mow-strips which will separate the lawn from the service roadways.



Recreation & Parks crews assemble new picnic tables for the BBQ area.



Landscape folks plant trees and shrubs in one of the new Xeriscape Gardens. The Parks Department encourages the use of low water, native plants whenever possible.



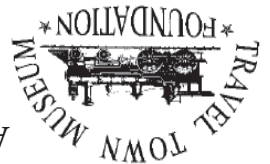
Nearly finished! One of the last things to go down was the grass "sod" - which came in rolls and was literally rolled out in a matter of hours.



Landscape Construction Supervisor Bernard "Bernie" Grijalva (right) and his lieutenant, Al Valensuela, take a quick break during the sod installation. Thanks guys for a lot of hard and beautiful work!

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Travel Town Museum Foundation members are cordially invited to:

Depot Day at the Travel Town Museum

Saturday, October 22, 2005 10am to 4pm
Tracks 5 and 6 under the Locomotive Pavilion

- ◆ Special tours through Passenger Cars, the M-177 & other Engines
- ◆ Member's Hospitality area with complimentary refreshments and playday!
- ◆ Special "game train" for the kids!
- ◆ Learn about our volunteer program & see restoration works-in-progress!
- ◆ Visit by Sir Topham Hatt - bring your camera!

Please RSVP if you will attend: 323-668-0104 or on-line at Traveltown.org