

The Travel Town



A Publication of the Travel Town Museum Foundation

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Greetings from Travel Town!

I am writing to you this summer from the *Pacific Parlor Car* aboard Amtrak's northbound *Coast Starlight* passenger train. We're just passing through the beautiful rolling hills above San Luis Obispo, California, a picturesque landscape of golden brown grasses dotted with majestic live oak trees. Earlier today, we were gliding along the pounding surf of the Pacific Ocean, north of Santa Barbara. This afternoon we'll traverse the bountiful farmlands of the Salinas Valley, and by morning we'll be climbing through the lush green forests of the Cascade Mountains in Oregon. These are just a few of the marvelous scenic vistas that can still be enjoyed when traveling across America by rail.

Our emphasis at Travel Town revolves around the history of America's railroads, a history most often associated with a "by-gone era" of steam locomotives and posh passenger trains – but trains, even passenger trains, are NOT just a thing of the past. While today's railroads may not be as glamorous (nor usually as fast) as they once were, America's passenger trains are still an enjoyable and viable way to travel – both short and long distances. If you and your family have never had the experience of traveling by train, I do encourage you to give it a try. Take the kids on a short MetroLink ride, or venture off on one of several day-trip opportunities out of Los Angeles, like Del Mar, San Diego, Oxnard or Santa Barbara. For a more adventurous outing, try San Francisco, Seattle or even the Grand Canyon – Amtrak trains leave Los Angeles Union Station every day for these great destinations! One caution, however: don't be in a HURRY! The train takes time, and the long-distance trains often run several hours later than the schedule states – but if you take the time to relax and enjoy the ride, the experience can be very rewarding.


In the 1950s, the old *Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway* had an advertising slogan aimed at families traveling through the Great Southwest . . . "Memories you'll treasure all the rest of your life." You'll find that slogan is still true today when you take your children for a ride on the train.

See you at the Park . . . and, hopefully, on the TRAIN!

Greg Gneier, President
Travel Town Museum Foundation
September 2007



We're Going Green!

The Travel Town Museum Foundation is going green! Thanks to special donations from Susana Hutcheson of the Allan Recycling Company in Glendale, and Keith Friend of the Rehrig Pacific Company, Los Angeles, and The Department of Conservation, Division of Recycling from the State of California, we have started a recycling program at the museum! Initiated by all the cans and bottles that our volunteers go through, we have placed recycling bins around the gift shop and have begun collecting recyclables from the general public. These extra bins have generated a nice source of income to help our restoration budgets – so if you buy a soda at the gift shop, be sure to put the can in one of the black bins next to the trash cans! Thanks! 



On the Platform . . . Paul Boschan

On the Platform this summer is volunteer Paul Boschan. Paul is heading up the rehabilitation efforts to bring Travel Town's venerable Southern Pacific steam locomotive No. 20 back into operating condition. We asked Paul to tell us a little bit about himself...

I must have been three or four years old when my parents strapped my brother and me into Dad's Toyota Land Cruiser and we headed off to Griffith Park on a family outing. I have no idea if Travel Town was the destination or a serendipitous find, but that's where we wound up. Travel Town was different then. Dormant aircraft, sadly static and dulled from years in the sun, sat in a compound of decomposed granite and chain link fence. The fence gave the sense that the planes had done something wrong and had to be given a "time out." They looked sorry.

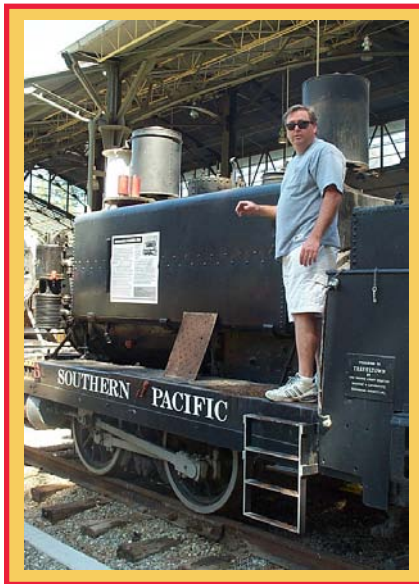
The planes were interesting for a few moments and the fire trucks in the steel warehouse were pretty to look at, but the real attraction was the rail equipment. I could climb in it and be part of it, a human extension of a massive machine. Though static, these locomotives seemed far from sad and not the least bit sorry, like a thoroughbred waiting in the gates for the bell to ring and doors to swing open. The steam locomotives displayed their machinery proudly as they flexed their mechanical muscle in the afternoon, L.A. sun. I was excited and cried loudly when it was time to leave.

We made several visits to Travel Town as my brother Howy and I grew up. Howy was into cowboys and Indians and I was into trains. The cultural connection between trains and the old west made Travel Town a mutually pleasing destination, evidently a feat of huge importance for maintaining parental sanity.

My maternal grandfather gave me \$20.00 for my sixth birthday. I was rich! Twenty bucks was a pirate's treasure to a kid in 1972. My dad wanted to take me to the bank and open a savings account. I wanted nothing to do with fiscal responsibility. The weekend before I was in Toy-O-Rama, the local toy store the neighborhood kids used as their personal Christmas catalog and saw the most incredible thing, a Marx electric train set. Beauty in a box! A shiny plastic steam locomotive and cars, steel tubular track and a transformer that plugged in the wall seemed very sophisticated and adult to me. None of that battery operated kid stuff, this set used the electricity that was sealed off to keep my brother from sticking things in the outlets. This is how I would invest my nest-egg, in O-gauge trains. I bought the train set, took it home, set it up on a desk in my room and sat and watched it go round in circles for hours.

Over the years, my train collection grew. I set up a layout in the garage and started collecting more Marx and some Lionel equip-

ment. As I got older and the high school years loomed, my interest in O-gauge waned and I got rid of my trains. I was train free for several years when I came to driving age and my parents helped me buy my first car, a 1977 MGB. I was stretching my newly acquired freedom one Saturday in 1984, top down on the 101 heading east, when I saw the sign for the 134. I hadn't been on this part of the freeway in almost a decade, but it seemed all too familiar. Instinctively I transitioned to the 134 and it soon became apparent why I needed to come this way, Travel Town. I got off the freeway, parked my car and walked in. I noticed some people mulling about the Santa Fe motor car and went over to find out what was going on. "We are volunteers working to restore the motor car," someone told me, "would you like to join and help out?" Immediately I was six years old again. All the excitement rushed back to me. I could actually work on the stuff I so loved as a kid. I took on the job of installing ceiling panels in the passenger compartment, what a thrill!



It didn't take long for the luster to wear off installing ceiling panels. By 1989 I started to make some inquiries about the steam locomotives. "When we're done with the motor car," I was told. Not good enough. My eyes began to wander and soon my attention focused on the Pickering Lumber Company Heisler #2. An odd duck of a steam engine, the cylinders are mounted in a vee around and under the boiler sending power to the wheels through drive shafts, like a car, to gears in the wheel sets or "trucks." I soon realized I needed an education in the anatomy of a Heisler. After a little re-

search (no Internet back then) I found Roaring Camp, a tourist railroad in the Santa Cruz Mountains with an operational Heisler. I planned a trip and not really knowing him long, asked Steve Devorkin, another Travel Town volunteer, if he'd like to join me. A man with a young family, a house and a job, Steve had his priorities right. Without hesitating he said, "When do we leave?" Early the next Saturday morning we were on I-5 heading North.

That trip to Roaring Camp was the genesis of a new career. Within a couple months I had everything I owned packed in the Nissan hatchback I was driving in 1990 and headed north, my trusty futon tied securely to the roof. I found a place to live and



Project Leader Paul Boschan is at the forklift controls as the "saddle tank" is lifted off of the S.P. 20 locomotive. Travel Town veteran and long-time Boschan friend, Steve Devokin, looks on through his camera lens.

(Continued on page 7)

Travel Town Museum Foundation members are cordially invited to

Depot Day

at the Travel Town Museum

An exclusive "Open House"

Special tours through
Passenger Cars, the
M-177 and other Engines

Member's Hospitality area
with complimentary
refreshments and playday!
Special "game train" for
the kids!

Sunday, October 14 11am to 3pm
Tracks 4, 5 and 6 under the Locomotive Pavilion

Learn about our
volunteer program!
See the restoration
work-in-progress!

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

Visit by Sir
Topham Hatt!
Bring your
camera!

We've Been Working . . .



Pausing for a short break during the big "move day," Travel Town volunteers posed with the crane boom, temporarily loaded atop the "Lonely Lady" track car. This and other great photos courtesy of volunteer photographer, Mike Teti.

Our Travel Town Museum Volunteers have kept themselves very busy throughout the spring and summer. Work to re-assemble the newly-acquired American Locomotive Crane No. 1887 was completed in late May and the World War II veteran was soon put to its first task at the Museum: helping to re-assemble its old working companion, an ex-U.S. Navy Flat Car. Volunteers moved the Flat Car from long-term storage into the Museum grounds in three pieces, which were then put back together with the help of the new Crane - much like a giant model railroad car "kit." The Crane, Flat Car and Travel Town's Model 40 Diesel locomotive "Charley Atkins" are all former United States Navy veterans, which worked together at the Douglas Aircraft plant in Torrance in the 1960s and 70s. The three old friends are finally back together again and are being readied for a complete exterior repainting.



☞ Our newly-arrived, ex-Navy Locomotive Crane was pressed into duty for the first time at the Museum, lifting the Flat Car body onto its trucks.



☞ Father and son visitors watch attentively as a merry band of volunteers move the two wheelsets or "trucks" for the Navy Flat Car.



☞ Meanwhile, out on Zoo Drive, the body of the Flat Car is moved into the Park from long-term storage.



☞ Volunteers Kirk Reinholtz and son Derek roll the first truck in under the Flat Car.

☞ The truck's "center pin" must be precisely positioned before the body can be lowered into place.



☞ There's that "hold" signal again... this time it's volunteer leader Greg Ramsey directing installation of the boom onto the American Locomotive Crane.



☞ Here we see the ex-U.S. Navy Locomotive Crane, Flat Car and the "Lonely Lady" posed together on the Lead Track, shortly after assembly was completed.

On the Railroad!



Here's a BIG moment as American Crane 1887 (out of frame) is used to lift the aging boiler off of the S.P. 20 locomotive. Volunteer Kirk Reinholz gives the "hold" signal to the crane operator as Project Leader Paul Boschan guides the tethering rope from the far side.



Matt Fitch, one of our hardest working high school student volunteers, disassembles the air pump from the S.P. 20.



Volunteer Mike Teti, who's talented camera lens is responsible for many of the other photos on this page, was "caught" himself while working to remove driving rods from the S.P. 20.



A future Captain of Industry, one of volunteer Michael Slosar's tasks is to label and tag parts as they come off of the S.P. 20.



M.177 Project Leader Bryan Reese has been busy testing paint samples on the Santa Fe Motorcar.



Veteran Travel Town locomotive engineer, Nancy Gneier, watches for signals during a recent switching move.



Sometimes we have to resort to old fashioned brute force in lieu of a locomotive!

Of course, with the hottest weather of the year nearly upon us – it's time to lay track! We worked throughout the winter and spring to acquire and/or fabricate several custom-made replacement parts for the historic "girder rail" switch being installed on the south side of the Museum. With those parts now in place, work will resume this fall on laying the two "station leads" and third "rip track" segments along the hillside.

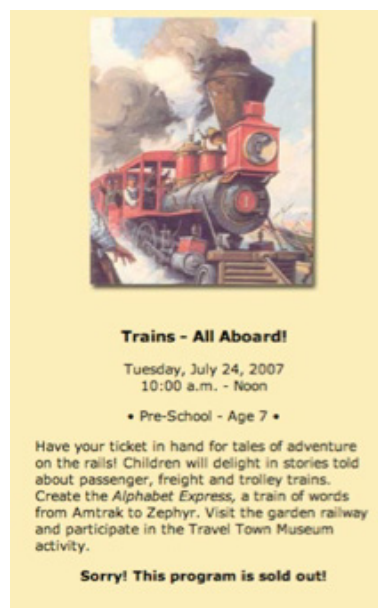
Come Join the Fun!

Visit www.traveltown.org and click on "Volunteer at Travel Town" to learn more!

TRAVELING TALES PROGRAM at Rancho Los Alamitos

by Paulette Westphal

Located in Long Beach, California, *Rancho Los Alamitos Historic Ranch and Gardens* offers educational programs for young children during the summer each year. This summer their program theme was “Traveling Tales – California on the Move” – with the last Tuesday in July focusing on trains and train travel. The Travel Town Museum Foundation was contacted and offered the opportunity to provide an activity for the children at this special event.




Stepping up to the plate, we accepted the invitation as an educational outreach opportunity for our museum and foundation. For the children’s activity, we provided unpainted

wooden railroad cars that can be attached to *Thomas the Tank Engine* trains as well as markers for coloring and decorating the cars.

Heading out to Long Beach were staff member Paulette Westphal along with volunteers John Evans and Chuck Kappmeyer. Arriving early, we had the opportunity to tour the ranch and the gardens. The gardens truly are beautiful and the ranch is set up as if it were still in operation, with work horses and sheep for visitors to see. If you’re looking for a nice place to go, we highly recommend visiting Rancho Los Alamitos! For information, visit www.rancholosalamitos.com.



The event was a sell-out! The 70 children were divided into three groups and went “round robin” through the activities: story time, games and our train coloring activity. Not only did the kids enjoy coloring their trains, they were quite excited to take them home. It gave the three of us from Travel Town an opportunity to advertise our own museum and the part the foundation plays in restoring historic cars and engines. 




Travel Town staff and volunteers enjoyed exploring the ranch and playing with the kids at Rancho Los Amigos. Paulette Westphal and John Evans (left); Chuck Kappmeyer (center); and John Evans (right).



On the Platform . . . Paul Boschan (continued from page 2)

started what would be a ten year run in the steam train business. I started as a mechanic’s helper and hostler and left as the transportation manager.

After Roaring Camp I spent a few years as a designer and quality control manager for a commercial boiler repair company. We worked on everything from power plants to hospitals and, of course, steam locomotives. Today I still build boilers for steam equipment. I’ve built boilers for cars, boats, tractors and locomotives. I am now looking forward to building the new boiler for Travel Town’s Southern Pacific #20. 

Hey, would you like to help Paul return the S.P. 20 to steam? We’re raising funds right now for the new boiler and your donation can make a big difference! If you’d like help, please drop us an email to greg.steam@traveltown.org or send a check (with “Steam” in the memo line) to TTMF, P.O. Box 39846, Los Angeles, CA 90039.

New Membership Levels Available!



*Pick up a complimentary wooden car
for your Junior Engineer to paint!*



Thank you so much for your past support of the Travel Town Museum Foundation. **None of the work we do at Travel Town is possible without support from our members like you** – and your membership has really helped us fulfill our mission of educating the public about railroad history in the Southern California region.

We are introducing a new membership structure for the Foundation. We hope the new levels meet the needs of our families: You will still be able to use your membership card for a 10% discount anytime you shop in the museum store, but we have offered some of the members at the higher levels the opportunity to receive a private tour for your family or even tour the diesel locomotives!

We hope these added incentives encourage you and your family to renew at a higher level, but we want you to know that your all your donations go to support our Foundation and the good work we do at the Museum. Stop in and talk to a gift shop clerk about our new membership levels today!

All Aboard!

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

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Larissa Ophella Agatep
Mark & Daniel Ferber
Spencer Klink
Cheri Love
Christina Phillips
Eileen Rauchberg
Kensuke Shimojo
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Come join the fun!

Fill out the form below, or for more information, call 323-668-0104

Please contact us for more information about corporate contributions or other special donations.

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Name: _____

Address: _____

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Plaque NAME, if different from above (please print clearly): _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

Children's Birthdays: _____

(We do not share your information with anyone!) Mail to:

Travel Town Museum Foundation

P.O. Box 39846

Los Angeles, Ca 90039

Please indicate your level of contribution support:

- ☐ **\$500 – Restoration Partner**
- ☐ **\$250 – “The Little Nugget” Club Member**
- ☐ **\$100 – The Streamliner Membership**
- ☐ **\$60 – Track Gang Family Membership**
- ☐ **\$35 – Individual Member**
- ☐ **Child – Junior Engineer**
- ☐ **Adult - Engineer**
- ☐ Please keep my member gifts! I will take the tax deduction for the full amount of my membership contribution.

Thank You for Your Generous Support of the Travel Town Museum Foundation!

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Travel Town Museum Foundation members are cordially invited to

Depot Day

at the Travel Town Museum

Sunday, October 14th, 11am to 3pm

The Museum Foundation would like to thank you, our members, for your support and patronage over the past year. Please come to our celebration of Depot Day and see the work we have done to make Travel Town a better museum for Los Angeles!

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Refreshments for Members! | <input type="checkbox"/> Learn about having a birthday party at Travel Town! |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Members only Thomas Playday! | <input type="checkbox"/> Learn about the volunteer programs! |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tours through railroad cars! | <input type="checkbox"/> See restoration work! |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visit by Sir Topham Hatt | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Games for the kids! | |

Please RSVP if you will attend to 323-668-0104, or on-line at traveltown.org