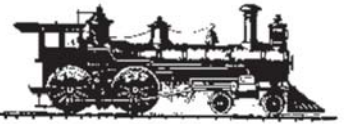


The Travel Town TENDER

A Publication of the Travel Town Museum Foundation

Volume 9, Issue 1

February 2012



New Year's Greetings from Travel Town!

I hope you all had a wonderful Holiday Season and are off to a prosperous new year! 2011 was a great year at Travel Town, filled with many exciting events and museum improvements - many of which are outlined in this issue of the Tender. The Museum benefited from several wonderful Scout projects this past year, including a beautiful restoration of the Pacific Electric "Rio Vista" waiting station building - accomplished, I am proud to say, by my own daughter, Katy Gneier, as her Girl Scout Gold Award Project!

Meanwhile, at the opposite end of Travel Town ... funding support from our Foundation enabled the Museum volunteers to complete restoration and installation of two century-old Union Switch & Signal "Style B" semaphore signals, originally donated to Travel Town many years ago by the Southern Pacific Lines. The semaphores are a great sight to behold, harkening back to the days when steam locomotives charged up and down the tracks of the west coast. The Museum volunteer team has also been making great strides on the restoration of the Santa Fe M.177 Motorcar as well as Southern Pacific steam locomotive No. 219 and the big American Crane. We hope to see lots more progress on all of these projects in the coming months!

This past fall, cosmetic restoration work was completed on the historic 1945 Railway Express Company Delivery Truck. It is now proudly on display inside the main exhibit building near Holden's Corner. The truck will soon be joined by restored REA baggage wagon and other artifacts to create an interpretive display about the rail express industry.



1945 REA Truck

Perhaps our most exciting news is that the Foundation's fundraising campaign to get and install a new Volunteer Center and Gift Shop building at the Museum has been very successful. Our hardworking team has raised over \$180,000 for the project, with very generous

support coming from three prominent southern California philanthropic organizations - The Ahmanson Foundation, The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, and the Griffith Trust - along with some wonderful personal contributions from several of our loyal Travel Town Museum Foundation patron members! However, our excitement was somewhat timbered when the Department of Recreation & Parks declined our initial proposal to donate the new building to the Museum. We are continuing to work with the Department Staff and

Councilmember Tom LaBonge to bring this long-awaited Travel Town enhancement to fruition. We greatly appreciate all of you who have donated funds and encouragement to this effort to improve the Museum and its ability to serve the community. We'll keep you posted on our progress!

Thanks again to all of you for your continued support. Hope to see you at Travel Town soon!

Greg Gneier, President
February, 2012

Expanding Plans for Docent Tours in 2012

Many of our regular visitors to Travel Town know that our museum docents conduct tours of the Union Pacific passenger cars on the second Saturday of each month from 10:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Our team of trained and knowledgeable docents all volunteer their time to the Museum to provide this public outreach and educational aspect of Travel Town's mission and purpose. As the Foundation's Executive Director Nancy Gneier points out, "We must speak for these trains and tell their story in the history of railroading and American history. These beautiful trains sit as silent sentinels all during the week, and only when the docents lend their voices are their stories told."

The Museum's four Union Pacific passenger cars offer a rich history of railroading and rail travel in the early 20th century - from Dining Car 3669/369 built in 1921; the one-of-a-kind "Little Nugget" dormitory/lounge car and the unique "Rose Bowl" Pullman sleeper, both of which were built in 1937; to the "Hunters Point" Pullman sleeping car, built in 1941. Each passenger car has its own special history and notoriety, but also features a broad view of rail travel during the "golden era" of railroad passenger service - the 1920s to the 1950s.



New Student Docents Georgina Molina and Samantha Benedicto (above) and Jaquie Esquivel (below) help out at Depot Day!



Under the enthusiastic guidance of Foundation General Manager Donna Choi, the docent program in 2011 saw an increase in recruitment and training of new docents, primarily among younger volunteers, many of whom are high school students. The training of these additional docents was greatly expanded with formalized training sessions with current docents and hands-on training providing tours under their supervision. We had a 77% increase in the number of people who went through the cars on public tour days (with a 54% increase in donation revenue from 2010), and we gave tours to over 5790 in 2011! The plan for 2012 is to expand passenger car and other tours to more Saturdays as well as walking tours of the Park.

A great challenge for our Docents in the 2012 year will be that one of our main cars, "the Little Nugget" will be taken out of its regular spot on tours for extensive restoration work. We hope to move our other sleeping car, "The Hunter's Point," into our line-up, however, still being able to offer Museum visitors three cars to tour. And though it may be challenging, all of our Docents are very excited about a restored Nugget to show off in 2013!

All Aboard!

Travel Town Museum Foundation memberships are available in a range of levels, all of which include special benefits including gift shop discounts and invitations to members-only events! In addition, each issue of the *Travel Town Tender* lists new and returning Foundation members. If you're interested in membership, please call us at 323-668-0104 or visit the Gift Shop for more information. A warm welcome to our new and renewing supporters of the Travel Town Museum Foundation!

RESTORATION PARTNERS

Beth Nguyen-Quach
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NEW LITTLE NUGGET CLUB

Don & Peggy Gustavson
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Remy Pierce
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Barbara Schlosser
Bill Stephenson
Mary Sushinski
Charlie Thomas
Damon Thomas, Jr.
Michael Vahanian
Lisa Walco
Andrew S. Warner
Chance Ysaia

Scouts to the Rescue at Travel Town!



Katy and fellow girl scouts Rebecca Goldman and Michelle Longtain take a break with Mike Sosa during early stages of the project.

This past year has brought several projects at Travel Town to completion with the help of the Boy and Girl Scouts of America!

Rio Vista Waiting Station

The first project, which you can see when you first come in to Travel Town, is the restoration of the Pacific Electric Rio Vista Waiting station. This building sits outside the fenced area near the entrance where the train ride tracks are. The waiting station was repainted and restored to its working colors, and location signs were added. An informational sign was also completed for the project which explains how the PE was crucial in the development of the railroads and layout of Los Angeles. This restoration was completed by Katy Gneier for her Girl Scout Gold Award Project. The Gold Award is the highest achievement Girl Scouts can earn, a rough equivalent of the Eagle Project for Boy Scouts. Project planning, fundraising, and volunteer management are all skills developed and used to make this award possible. Katy was from Troop 7351 in Glendale, California. Katy proudly carried a banner in the Rose Parade this new year because she earned her Gold Award!

Track Cart Restoration

Eagle candidate Denny Kim also helped the museum out by rebuilding and painting two cart tracks that are regularly used to move ties, rail and other material along the railroad to support various projects. Denny had to have the carts stripped and sanded down, replace the wood surface on the cart, and have everything put back together with new bolts and fasteners. And they were given a sharp new coat of yellow paint and new lettering! These carts have been used recently to help move ballast along the right of way track as well as the ties for Thomas Cisneros' tie project below. Denny is from Troop 621 based in Los Angeles.



The "before" shot of the track carts.



Priming the frame.



One of Denny's finished track carts.

Turnout 5-6

Thomas Cisneros from Troop 351 from the San Gabriel Valley also did a great Eagle project on turnout 5-6 on the crossover track in front of the Locomotive Pavilion. Thomas' crew removed the rail between the heel joints up to and including the frog, then removed the rotten wood ties.

Thomas went above and beyond and truly followed Scout spirit by getting environmentally-friendly "composit" ties donated by Axion International, Inc., of New Jersey, made from recycled plastic!



"Before" shot: Many of the ties were rotted out and broken.



Bundled for transport, Axion ties arrive at museum.



Thomas Cisneros (center with tongs) leads by example as boys from his troop remove the old broken down ties from switch 5-6.



Finished switch! Nice, neat and pretty!

Railroading Merit Badge for Troop 319

The rain didn't stop this train! Boy Scouts from Troop 319 earned their Railroading Merit Badge at a special Workshop/Campout last March. Although it rained cats and dogs, these boys were prepared and we did most of our teaching under the Locomotive Pavilion! Our next RRMB Campout is scheduled for March 24-25, 2012.



We've Been Working ...

M-177 Work Right on Track!

Progress on restoration of the Santa Fe Railway M.177 Motorcar continued to move forward in 2011 under leadership of Travel Town Volunteer, Bryan Reese. The main powerplant, the Winton Model 148 gasoline engine and its 600 volt DC generator, are essentially finished and only require tinkering and fine tuning to make them run smoothly. The previous year had seen the solving of a bedeviling problem with the main bearings of the Winton, and this was ultimately traced to cooling water contamination in the lube oil. The fix was not simple, and involved disassembling nearly all of the top half of the engine. Since then, the engine has only been run sporadically due to the difficulty in obtaining gasoline to run for any longer than a few minutes. However, a recent wonderful donation of gasoline from Valero Oil will now permit prolonged run-tests! This is just what's needed to complete the final testing and adjustment of the engine.

The final piece of the puzzle to seeing M.177 move under her own power is the heavy wiring to connect the generator to the traction motors through the controller. This part of the project is being spearheaded by volunteer Kirk Reinholz and is nearly complete! Meanwhile, Don Wooten was of great assistance with the windows in the main passenger areas. About a third of the original brass window tracks are missing from the car and Don Wooten spent a lot of time making non-working dummy tracks that enabled the windows to be put back into the openings.



In recent weeks, the non-smoking compartment has been repainted in the paint scheme it had when it came to Travel Town in 1957. In the middle-to-late '40's, Santa Fe "modernized" the interior of the 1920s-era car, removing the original 3-and-2 seating and replacing it with contemporary reclining 2-and-2 coach seats. Original mahogany wood paneling was painted over and brown linoleum was laid on the floor as part of the modernization. Today, the original paint colors from that period have been matched and re-applied,



and replacement linoleum purchased several years ago was located in Travel Town storage and is being readied for installation. Once the flooring is replaced, the re-upholstered seat can be installed and that room will be complete!

Meanwhile - on the exterior of the car - some prep work was done on the body of the car, including replacement of a few small rusted areas of the skin with new metal. Perhaps this year will see the painting of the exterior - along with the car taking its first self-powered movement in over 50 years!

Semaphore Signal Restoration

Museum Volunteer and Foundation Board Member Brad Slosar rehabilitated the original operating machinery for both of the "Style B" Semaphore Signals. Dating from the early 20th century, these two signals came to Travel Town from the Southern Pacific's Siskiyou Line in central Oregon near the town of Cottage Grove. They were retired and removed from railroad service in the 1980s and have been stored at Travel Town for two decades awaiting restoration.



The first of two restored US&S Semaphore Signals are being lowered into place on its new concrete foundation; Brad Slosar guides the signal as Kirk Reinholz signals the Crane.



Mike Sosa and Derek Reinholz handle the guideropes as the Signals were lifted into place by the American Crane.

On the Railroad!

Corporate Sponsorships: Big Business Making a Big Difference at Travel Town!



Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp. Sponsors Student Service Learning Program

With an extra dose of Holiday spirit, we're pleased and proud to report the receipt of a generous grant from the *Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corporation* to help sponsor our *High School Student Service Learning* and *Educational Outreach* programs at Travel Town! Through these programs, the Foundation helps provide the Museum with volunteer Docents, restoration workers and other support personnel. High school aged students are recruited and trained to help in a variety of volunteer capacities and positions. Students can be seen at Travel Town almost every Saturday - building new railroad tracks, helping with site maintenance, working on artifacts restoration or giving guided tours through the historic railroad passenger cars! Each student is registered through the City's volunteer registration program and can earn community service hours to help fulfill their school, church and/or scouting service requirements. The funds from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe grant are being used to underwrite training resources, exhibit materials, Docent uniforms and other program expenses - all of which help keep the wheels turning! Thank you BNSF!

And here's a little bit of educational outreach right now: Headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas, the BNSF Railway is one of America's largest Class One railroads, with 32,000 miles of tracks connecting points throughout the western two-thirds of the United States - from Seattle to New Orleans, Chicago to Los Angeles, and Canada to the southern tip of Texas. The present railway is the product of nearly 400 different railroad lines that merged together over the course of 160 years! Among BNSF's notable predecessors are the *Chicago, Burlington & Quincy (Burlington Route)*, the *St. Louis & San Francisco (Frisco Lines)*, the *Great Northern*, and the *Atchafalpa, Topeka and Santa Fe*.



Valero Energy Fuels M.177 Engine Testing

We're proud to welcome Valero Energy Corporation as a valuable partner in the Museum's M.177 Restoration Project! Valero's contribution of 200 gallons of gasoline will be used to power up the historic motorcar's recently rebuilt Winton gasoline engine during run-in trials and testing. This is the project's next big step towards a return to the car's self-powered operation! Many thanks to Steve Faichney and Gwendolyn Goodman at Valero for making this wonderful gift possible!



Tons of Thanks to Vulcan Materials Company!

In fact, 100 tons worth of thanks to the Vulcan Materials company for their generous support of Travel Town's ongoing track construction program. Vulcan supplied 100 tons of ballast for the new tracks along the hillside at the Museum. We also want to thank Ray Morales and his crew from Rec & Parks who brought an extra skip loader out to Travel Town and help spread the new rock on the day of the big delivery!



Kaiser Permanente Helps Travel Town Get Made in the Shade!

Kaiser Permanente helped our park THRIVE! by donating plants and the manpower to spruce up the gazebo under the trees at Travel Town. It looks great!

Your Business Can Make a Difference Too!

If your company would like to build team spirit and give back to the community by working at Travel Town, please contact our General Manager Donna Choi.

Depot Day

Depot Day this year was a fun event featuring the theme “Railroads in the roaring 20s”. Our exhibitors helped educate the public about rail and transportation safety with booths from Operation Lifesaver, LA Metro, the Fillmore Western Railroad, Los Angeles Fire Department Engine Co. 76, L.A. Trade Technical College, The Griffith Park Rangers, Boy Scout Troop 210, and Fairplex Garden Railway. Exhibitors that added to the historical educational purpose included Jackie Hadenot, woodcarver, Louis Arce and Adam’s Forge Blacksmithing, Darrell Rooney Productions, and the Model A Ford Club of America. Special thanks for donations go out to Pizza Hut, Costco, Trader Joes, Starbucks, Schylling/Toyology, and WowToyz. Performances that highlighted the day were made by Storyteller John, The Hollow Trees and the Crescenta Valley Jazz Band!



Docent volunteers Will Casso and John Evans wait to give tours through the dining car while Michael Ruble passes by.



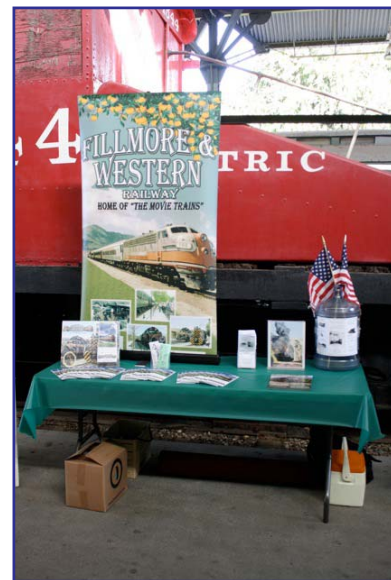
Author Darrell Rooney discusses his book about Jean Harlow.



Long time Volunteer Kevin Herrera poses while he greets visitors outside our tours.



Traveltown favorite Jackie Hadenot displays his train woodcarvings.



Sister Museum Fillmore and Western came out and added to our event.



More beautiful Model A's basking in the sun at the museum.



Volunteers from the LA Art Deco Society also spiced up the event in their period costumes. Also featured here are some of those beautiful Model As!

Depot Day



Instructor Jes Godinez poses with Operation Lifesaver exhibit.



The Musuem Foundation's great friends "The Hollow Trees" perform!



Executive director Nancy Gneier looks on in costume as Docent volunteer Bob Arbuckle helps visitors out of the Hunters Point sleeping car.



Visitors enjoy the fire truck!



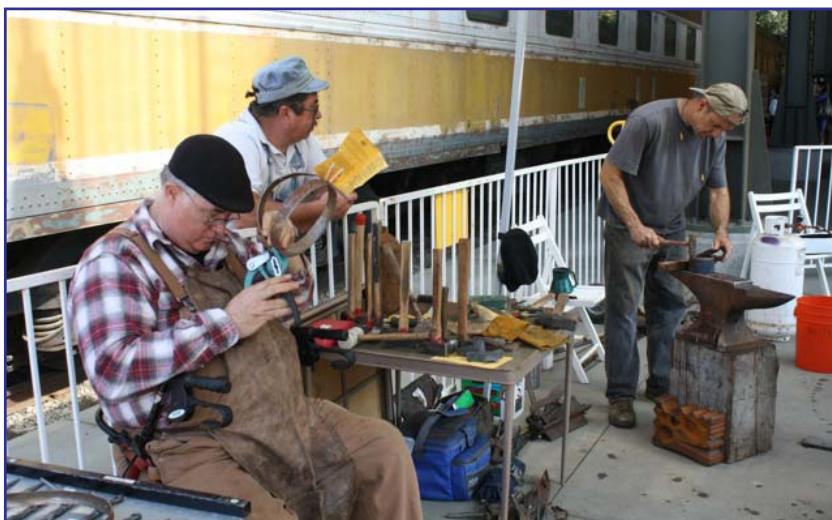
Blacksmith Louis Arce with Adams Forge works on the anvil.



A lovely shot of those Model As with the locomotive pavillion in the background.



The Fairplex Garden Railway brought a Thomas Train that always gets attention!



Volunteer Greg Ramsey watches the volunteers with Adams Forge.



The Crescenta Valley High School Jazz Band did a fantastic job playing fun swing music. These kids were great!!!



AMERICAN SOUTHWESTERN RAILWAY ASSOCIATION

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On the Platform . . . Gregory Ramsey II

Many of our long-time volunteers certainly know Gregory Ramsey II, a young man who has literally grown up around Travel Town. We are proud to report his recent graduation from his Recruit training as a United States Marine on January 20, 2012. Private First Class Ramsey was accepted into the U.S. Marines as a musician and will attend the Armed Forces School of Music in Little Creek, Virginia, after 29 days of Marine Combat Training at Camp Pendleton. Look for him in the Rose Parade in a few short years!



Proud Parents Greg and Yvonne Ramsey have been key members of our volunteer program for over 20 years.

We are so proud of you Gregory! HOOO Rah!

