

THE RLS CHRONICLE

News of the Riverside Live Steamers



June 2010

Bill Hesse's "Words O' Wisdom"
Ready for the Renaissance Project?
Summer Announcements
Plus so much more...



Thirty People per Lap!

When the Casford's big 4-8-4 (pulling the public train) derailed, a call went out to all locomotives under steam to help pull the public until the Northern could be re-raild. The answer became one of the largest public trains in recent history: Andrew Martin's tough 2-4-2 leads, with Tommy Bunts on Bill Mac's ten-wheeler as first helper and "Zip" Zipkie's big Columbia is second helper. The train had four brakemen and made several laps before the Casford's had their engine back on the rails again.



Bill Hesse's Extended Words O' Wisdom

AHHHH . . . Spring is here at last. The rest of the world might mark the beginning of the season from the Vernal Equinox, but we steamers know better. As late as February, the weather was still down in the seventies, much too cold to play outside. Only when the sun moved northward was it possible to indulge in our second most favorite past time; Attending RLS work days, that falls only slightly behind running trains under steam.

With the Dandelions in bloom all over the park, we knew another meet season would soon be upon us. After another devastating California winter that lasted nearly the entire month on January, we had good turnouts for the work days leading up to the spring meet. Piles of accumulated debris were removed from the compound, the club house got a good dusting, track kinks were realigned, weeds fell to the unrelenting assault of Brook Adams and his faithful spray crew, pine needles and soccer players were raked from the right-of-way, and record quantities of pizza, chicken, sandwiches, and tacos were consumed by the crews (not all on the same day, of course, even steamers have some limits).

This was probably our last meet in what will become known as the "OLD" park. The remodel of the "NEW" Hunter Park is finally moving from the planning to doing stage. After years of plan changes, and waiting for our turn in the "Riverside Renaissance" schedule, the plans and construction schedules are nearly ready. Road improvements on Columbia and Iowa should be done within the next month, and most of the palm trees should stop wandering aimlessly around the park and settle in to their new locations. Already, one end of the old tunnel has disappeared, and demolition of the south side of the park could start within weeks.

What does that mean to RLS? Written in to the schedules are instructions to all contractors to clear the track on the 2nd and 4th Sundays, as well as our meet weekends for 2010 and 2011. There is no guaranty we'll be able to run every weekend. There are several places that pipes, utilities, and new cement walking paths cross our tracks, so short segments may need to be torn up from time to time. On the bright side though, the new paths should keep foot traffic across the tracks to a minimum. An entirely new station will be located on the Iowa side of the park, with paved parking, covered picnic areas, rest rooms, and other amenities making us the focal point for the public portion of the park. Ball park crossing goes away, and the soccer field moves far enough from the track to avoid people standing on the right of way to watch the games.

Perhaps best of all, is an access road from the compound out to Marlborough Street that will reduce the traffic and need to turn our trailers around inside the compound while loading and unloading trains. That will mean moving and realigning Summit. The east side of the main loop moves to the new 4-track Iowa station just south of the palm garden wye, and the temporary Marlborough station will vanish in a cloud of dust. The



ball park loop will have to close for most of the rest of the year, but we will be able to run on the short loop for most of the construction time. Other than that, the renovation should hardly affect us at all.

Coming events for the rest of the spring season will include meets at most of the large scale railroad clubs surrounding Riverside, who have all invited us to visit and demonstrate the true meaning of “LIVE STEAM”.

June 4th, 5th, and 6th, RLS will have a booth at the “Big Train Show” at the Ontario Convention center, and we will be included on the bus tour of Riverside ‘garden’ railroads on the 4th. If you can, come out to run on Friday, June 4 or help give tours of the compound and railroad. Keep in touch with Bill McLaughlin for times and schedules. We also need volunteers to man (or woman) the booth at the show. Volunteers get free admission to the show, food vouchers, and unlimited opportunities to talk about the glories of LIVE STEAM and the true meaning of ‘Big Train’ to the uninitiated.

Our pool of motive power saw an unexpected increase recently when we were visited by Mr. and Mrs. Ken Flanigan and the donation of a Stuart “Swan” marine engine. While I saw no immediate use for a marine engine, several of the board members were quick to remind me we are a “Live Steam” club, and welcome anything powered by that magnificent substance. There is also a partially completed vertical boiler. Suggestions have ranged from using it for training of new and Jr. Members, to setting it up as a stationary display, and a rather ambitious suggestion to build another club engine. Let’s get it polished up, possibly running on air, and see where it goes from there. Anyone with experience with Stuart engines, and anyone who may have a ‘Live Steam’ model in G-gauge or below is cordially invited to the next RLS meeting to enlighten us with their wisdom.

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

It’s 3:13am... and you know exactly where your locomotive is....

Also, way back in February, I had the pleasure of attending Bill Gardner’s “Introduction to Welding” seminar. If you’ve ever had the need to stick two pieces of metal together, the class is highly recommended. While one day won’t teach you to weld, Bill has one of just about everything for MIG, TIG, Gas, stick welding, and I got my first chance to use a plasma cutter.



A Quick Word from the Editor

About a year ago, I began scheduling events for the current months of 2010. For anyone who knows me, I have a terrible time saying “no” to those who ask a favor of me. Unfortunately, I overbooked myself. What was needed during the past few months was a 10-day week. But, alas, reality didn’t permit such, thus certain aspects of all my planning took a ride in the caboose. Of the many projects I took on, one was being a coach for the Hemet High School Mountain Bike Team (of which, my son Nathan was a fine and proud racer for). The amount of time needed by the team was tremendous. However, they became the No. 1 team in all of Southern California (out of 22 different teams). Next year, I plan to coach for them again. So, I will be asking everyone to contribute pictures and stories for the Chronicle during the months of March, April, and May.

To the Club and to everyone else who enjoys the Chronicle: My deep apologies for the past several non-Chronicle months.

A Couple Corrections

February’s Chronicle had a few mistakes that should be corrected before the editor dies of shame and embarrassment: Josh Klenske runs a 4-6-4 Hudson, not a “4-6-2 Pacific”; One of our newest Jr. Members is Joel Najjar, not “Noel Najara”; and there were 28 ducks in our pond during the January 24th run day, not the 27 as reported (Dave Bunts had freshly roasted duck for lunch, thus the miscount on the editor’s part).

What’s in a Number?

We all know that RLS is really a job training program for engineers and conductors for the Nation’s rail system. As such, RLS has produced several members who work full time in the railroad industry.

Matt and Greg Casford both grew up at RLS. Matt has run Santa Fe 3751 and currently is working as an Engineer in Texas for the BNSF. Greg started his “full size” career on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic RR as engineer running ex-D&RGW K-36 2-8-2’s and C-19 2-8-0. Greg now is employed with Pacific Harbor Lines Railroad the terminal railroad that handles all the traffic in and out of the Los Angeles & Long Beach Port facilities.

On Sunday, February 28, 2010, I received notice that Matt was assigned Santa Fe 2926 in Texas and Greg was on the UP 8444 in San Pedro Harbor! Too bad it was not 1950 or they could have been running the real steam engines that still exist today. Santa Fe 2926 is under restoration in Albuquerque New Mexico and the UP 844 is still operated by the UP from Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Meanwhile, I was operating the real (albeit smaller) Santa Fe 2926 at Hunter Park in passenger service! Rich Casford



It Starts...

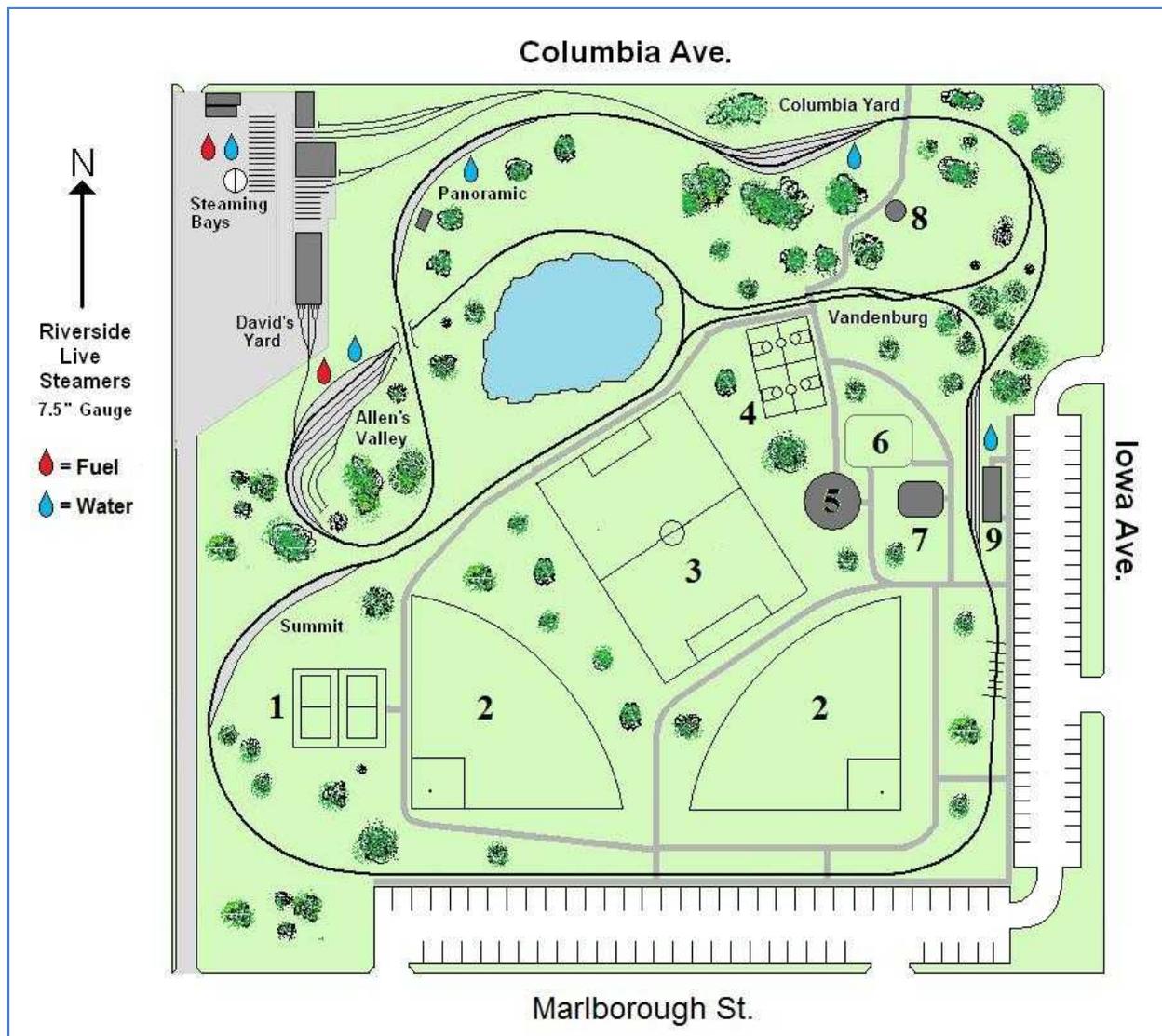
As of May 1, the bidding process for Hunter Park's renovation program (The Renaissance Project) closed. Fifteen construction companies (from as far away as Washington) placed bids ranging in the \$4.8 million to \$6.8 million. Over the next few weeks, the City will decide who will win the contract. Once that decision is made, work will most likely commence within a month.

One of the very first items on the contractor's to-do list will be to remove our Marlborough Station (See? It really was temporary) and remove the public restrooms/maintenance building. Afterwards, everything else will be torn out (ball parks, lighting, etc). Though there have been promises that a mainline closure won't happen, we should expect the contractor to have to remove portions of our track around the ball park. It should also be anticipated that our trains will be relegated to the short loop for many, many months. Talk about a second "temporary" station is currently under way with the idea of resurrecting the Columbia Station (however, parking will be an issue), or place something down in Allen's Valley (again, parking will be minimal for the public).

An interesting item to take note of is the bids themselves: All came in well below what the City expected. Therefore, the basketball and tennis courts (which had been dropped from the plan due to cost) are back on the table. While they don't impact our right-of-way, they could delay the date when we resume using the outer loop (Ball Park Loop) because of their proximity to our track.

About the only thing that is a "for sure date" is the month of March, 2011. Unfortunately, that is not the month we can resume using our Ball Park Loop again. Instead, this is when all the grass within the park must be planted... and could be a troubling time for us. Once the seed is sown, nothing can touch the ground (other than water) for a couple months. That means we won't be able to use a tractor for ballasting during this period. The question remains whether or not will we have track laid by that time.

The other item of concern is the actual replacement of our track once all of the Park's work has been completed. As it currently stands, the contractor does **not** need to replace what he removes. It was an unfortunate item left out of the bidding process. Therefore, the club will be responsible for the replacement of our mainline and could actually be a good thing for us: Just as when we had to replace our mainline during the BNSF Columbia Overpass project, the city will pay us an hourly rate as we re-lay our tracks due to the Renaissance Project. Depending on how much track the contractor takes out (and it could be as little as a few panels all the way to many hundreds of feet), the mainline replacement project could be very profitable for the club. During the BNSF/Columbia Overpass Project, the club was paid \$21,825 for the man hours used to take out and replace our mainline and yards.



So, let's take a look at what will be happening to Hunter Park over the next year, or so. Starting at the far lower left of the diagram, an access driveway leading to the back of our compound will be installed to help alleviate the entrance problems on Columbia St. Tennis courts will be located at point #1; At #2, the baseball/softball fields; Number 3 is the soccer/rugby field (fenced in!!); Number 4 are the basketball courts; 5 is a large covered picnic area; 6 is a new playground (swings, slides, jungle-gym, etc.); 7 is the birthday party area; 8 is a small gazebo/BBQ area; and finally number 9 is our new, permanent station. Interconnecting all the new areas will be concrete pathways. Also, among the many improvements, take note of the parking arrangement: We can all breathe a big sigh of relief as we will never again need to worry about cars not stopping at Ball Park Crossing.

For the latest in the Renaissance Project, keep an eye on the Chronicle for a recap of new information, or (better yet) come out to the monthly Board of Director's meeting that takes place on the third Saturday of each month.



Randy Chase and Dean Willoughby double-head the Candle Lighters Special on June 11, 2008.

Upcoming Busy June Run Day

Everyone available, mark your calendars: The June 13th run day will be extremely busy for us. Not only will we be hauling the public as usual, we will also be concurrently hosting two special parties: the Candle Lighters and the local chapter of the National Model Railroaders Association. There is also a scheduled birthday party. So... we need locomotives,

lots of them... not only to help with the extra loads, but to put on a show for both of these very special groups. We'll also need brakemen, station masters (at least one at Marlborough, one for the Candle Lighters in Allen's Valley and one for the Historical Society at the old Columbia Station) and possibly even some switch tenders.

Night Runs, Anyone?

Summer is approaching quick. This generally means very hot days and relatively cool nights. Those cool (er) nights are the perfect time for night runs! The Board of Directors will be talking about dates for night runs. Show your support, come to the Board of Director's Meeting on June 19 and put in your two-cents for these treasured and rare runs. If you haven't experienced one yet, you're missing out! Just remember: because of the Renaissance Project, we may only get to run short loop. Even still, running at night is a real treat!





One year ago: At the June 2009 workday, Nathan Parrott was told to clean out all the crossing pads in the park due to rocks and weeds filling in the flange gaps. Here he is working particularly hard on the last remaining remnant of the old 1" mainline.

COMING EVENTS:

June 4: Big Train Show tours RLS.

June 13: Run Day: Eastbound, outer loop

June 19: Workday and Monthly Board Meeting

June 27: Run Day: Eastbound, figure eight

July 11: Run Day: Westbound, outer loop

July 17: Workday and Monthly Board Meeting

July 25: Run Day: Westbound, figure eight

Visit the RLS Website: www.steamonly.org

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 Days) are the 3rd Saturday followed by the Monthly Board of Directors Meeting at 1:00 p.m. at Hunter Park.

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