

THE RLS CHRONICLE

News of the Riverside Live Steamers



November 2011

**W.O.W!
The (mini) Fall Meet
Elizabeth Lives!
Run Days and Work Days
Time to Vote!
Plus so much more...**



The Last "Private" Annual Meet!

On what would have been our Fall Meet, Robert Butler enjoys a day out in the new Hunter Park while he eases his loco and train down Vandenberg. Several RLS members showed up for the two day run. But missing, were the many visitors from various cities across the land. Fortunately, with the park opening soon, our Spring and Fall Meets will become the "Celebration of Steam" we've come to know and expect.



PLEASE READ:

You know the drill:

**Stay off the grass; only walk on our right-of-way; the city will close us down;
yada, yada, yada; no child left behind; hefty responsibility; no foot prints;
blah, blah, blah.**

“Ya Falla?”

This shortened, “Doyle Lonnegan” version of the current Hunter Park “Stay-off-the-grass” rule is brought to you by the Chronicle Editor... who wants his page back.

Glenn Maness’ Words O’ Wisdom



HAPPY HALLOWEEN to everyone!! By the time you read this, the ghosts and goblins will be gone. We hope you didn’t eat too much candy.

Our friend, Bill Hoey, was here on Saturday the 29th, and conducted a brakeman’s class. We now have seven new brakemen: Two junior members and five adults! That will sure help when we get back to full operation. Thanks to all of who took the class. Ryan Turley steamed up the C-16 to do the practical test. Everyone passed with flying colors.

Dave Bunts and Larry Jongerius worked on the Hunter engine and tender. Dave was working on the tender brakes and got the trucks installed. Larry is doing the finishing touches on the engine... it won’t be long now.

Please remember our Annual business meeting and election on the 19th of November. All ballots must be mailed in: Ballots brought to the meeting will not be counted. Hope you will be there.

Another quick reminder for our annual dinner in January at the Hidden Valley Golf Resort in Norco: Reservation forms are coming soon.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 1900, the South Park & Pacific Railroad was lumbering up the Colorado Rockies. In tow were cars from Barnum and Bailey’s circus. Near the top of the mountain, the locomotive couldn’t quite pull the load over the crest. To the rescue came two circus elephants who used their heads to push the train over the top.

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

an honest sadness fills your heart as everyone who came to the mini-Fall Meet packs-up to go home.

Until next time, Glenn



Elizabeth is back on the RLS rails!

By Mel Hitchcock

After a prolonged bout of “In-FLU-enza” (a bad case of runny nose and “dripping” Flues), Elizabeth is feeling her oats, and elated to be able to get back onto the “New” RLS railroad.

Last Saturday and Sunday’s “mini-meet” (Oct. 22 & 23) was a great time for our little 4-4-0, as we were successful in getting the boiler “weeps” sealed and certified to run again, just in time to take advantage of the newly re-opened railroad. It has been several years since Mike and I have been able to run on the RLS track, and what a huge difference we experienced when we finally were able to run the mainline once again. The once familiar turnouts, where the grades “kick-in”, etc., were all changed. Actually, this was also the first time we were able to use the fantastic convenience of David’s Yard and the Noble-Quick Building to pick up and return our entire consist in one string. Sure beats the old way: the “endless sideways shuttling pairs of lower-track cars, two at a time” process!

It appears that old habits never completely die away: we were still able to keep the steam up and pull anything that was left “unattended”. In fact, by the end of the day, we ended up with a nice “borrowed” consist of 17 cars plus any stray hitchhikers along the way. It took a bit of sand to make it up the Vandenberg grades, but we made it up and over several times on Sunday without any “stopping for more steam” delays. I really like this little Gene Allen built American: it just pulls like a, well, “Steam Locomotive”! There just isn’t anything better than the fun of running the mainline under a full head of steam.



Good to be back!

Photo by Joan Adams

Send in those Ballots!



By now, all RLS members should have received the ballots for the next Board of Directors election. Please consider carefully the nominations, mark your choices and mail your ballot back. Remember: for your vote to count, all ballots must be mailed and received by November 19th, 2011 (hand carried ballots will not be accepted).



October 1st mini-Run Day

Yes, Virginia, there was a run day on October 1st!

With the club relegated to short-loop run days for the past 14 months or so, and with our track completed around the outside loop and through the Iowa Yard, RLS folks were very antsy to fire up their locomotives to make the long-awaited trip over the entire right-of-way. With the final track panels placed, spiked, ballasted, and tamped into place on the extra October 1st work day, it was planned that anyone present who had a locomotive to fire and run, could do so in the afternoon. But, alas, it seemed the Park's contractor had other plans: The concrete molds for our neon RR Crossing signs covered our right-of-way in two places, eliminating any possibility of an outside loop run. Did that stop a few folks from firing up? Nope! Ron Wilkerson, Paul Quick and Dean Willoughby fired their locomotives and made laps on the last "short-loop only" mini-run day.



U.P. 844 Coming to Town

It has been a good many years since Union Pacific sent their large 4-8-4 to Southern California. Fortunately, it's scheduled to make an appearance as part of the locomotive's Centennial Tour.

On November 17th, the big Northern is scheduled to depart Yuma, AZ at 7:00am and arrive in Bloomington, CA (Colton Yard) right around noon. It will spend the night there and be on display all day on the 18th (10359 Alder Ave.) At 8:00am on the 19th, the locomotive and train will depart, head up and over Cajon Pass, and arrive in Yermo around 10:30am. Finally, it will leave Yermo on the 20th at 8:00am and head to Las Vegas for display before it makes its way back to Cheyenne over the next seven days.



The last time this locomotive made it to So. California was for the Los Angeles Union Station's 50th Anniversary celebration in 1989. If you have the chance, take time to see this locomotive in action: it's a soul-stirring experience!



October 9th Run Day

Finally! With great anticipation and elation, the October 9th run day arrived. No more would the trains be relegated to the short-loop. No more would members have to stare longingly to the South as they headed downgrade on Vandenberg wondering when (if) the next time they'd be steaming past Big Tree and up the straight-of-way. No more would we have to look at piles of dirt, dead grass and deep trenches.

The morning began on this major red-letter day in RLS history with the sound of five locomotives coming under steam. By 9:00am, Ron Wilkerson and his ten-wheeler were pulling a train up toward summit, making his way to Hunter Station and then over the final leg of track that would complete the first full figure-eight lap in over 14 months. Soon, Ron was joined by Paul Quick with his Atlantic, David Lazarus on Gil Baird's Berkshire, Bob Cummings on his Mikado, and finally the Parrott family with their Shay. Each train and their riders made that "first trek" around the entire mainline, enjoying the new grass, the new Iowa Yard and the feeling of great accomplishment.

To put it bluntly: the park is beautiful. Anyone who hasn't made it to RLS for a lap (or three) around the park is really missing out. Hope to see you soon!



New RLS faces

Even though our club has been stymied for the past year with the park's renovation, our club has added several new members. Recently, we've seen our roll-book increase by seven more steam-loving folks: Vincent Battelo, Steve Byerly, Jerry Lees, Jack Bodenmann, Charlie Gresham, Shawn Oliver, Corey Kelly and Paul Stevanus. Be sure you say hi to these folks and make them feel welcome to our unique club.



October Work Days and Board of Director's Meeting

October had only two work days as compared to the nearly once-a-week work days for the months of July, August and September. The work day on October 1st was pivotal as the track crew placed and bolted together the last track panels to complete our outside loop. With those final pieces in place, the club now enters a maintenance and improvement stage. We will be returning to the once-a-month work days as we work over the entire track a little at a time.

The "regular" October 15th work day began with leveling and tweaking the east and west approaches to Iowa Yard. Ron Wilkerson and Bob Beard brought out the weed train to combat the encroaching new grass, and lots of clean-up work was accomplished in the compound. By noon, our camp cooks (Curtis and Donna Claybrook) had prepared a unique meal of turkey wraps served with watermelon and potato salad (which was perfect since the day was rather warm).

President Maness called the Board of Director's meeting to order at 1:00 and thus began several dynamic discussions. Of the liveliest topics were the designs for the new straddle cars (with air brakes); the soft, semi-grand opening of the park (sort of); repairs that need to be made for the hoist table; and the upcoming Annual Dinner. Also, the 25 club members present were read the names of folks nominated for the four positions that will be open on the Board of Directors come Nov. 19.

By 3:10, the Oreo cookies had all disappeared and the topics were all well talked about with action plans in place. With that, President Maness closed the meeting and called for the BoD to enter into an Executive Session covering more details about the soft Grand Opening of Hunter Park and our Annual Dinner (January 21st).

December 10: Soft, Grand Opening of Hunter Park

Much attention was given to this historic occurrence at the Board of Director's Meeting... and much work must be completed prior to this event happening. As mentioned in October's Chronicle, the City officials, their families and invited guests will arrive at the park early for a celebratory breakfast, train rides, meet-with-Santa, and opening ceremonies and rededication of our park. It's expected to have about 600 to 800 people at the event that morning. We'll need LOTS of RLS members on hand. We also need at least five (preferably 6 or 7) locomotives to pull public until about noon, with the first train leaving Hunter Station at 9:00am. So, this is an "All Hands" alert: we need engineers, brakemen and station monitors; Station Masters and Assistant Station Masters; yard monitors in Iowa Yard, Allen's Valley, and maybe even in Columbia Yard; pathway crossing guards and folks who will be willing to do what is needed when the need comes up. In all, we should have at least 25 to 30 RLS folks to make this event happen. And, just when you'll think it's all over, we will be open to pull the public the very next day (Dec. 11) as RLS "Opens for Business" once again! So, please mark your calendars, it will be a very busy weekend for us! The City has spent a ton of money on our park; let's show them our gratitude this day!



October 22 & 23 Run Days (the mini-Fall Meet)

The weekend came and went. It wasn't a particularly special weekend: there were no earthquakes, wind-storms, rain or snow. It was, in fact, a perfectly normal, Southern California weekend... with one exception: Riverside Live Steamers held what would have been their 45th Annual Invitational Fall Meet. But, as we all know, the Park's renovation has hampered operations severely over the past 15 months. To our dismay, the "Invitational" wasn't as broad sweeping as in years past. In fact, we had to keep the invitations within our own house. But that didn't stop the fires from being lit, steam pressure from rising and the sound of locomotives taking advantage of our newly finished loop.

October 22nd saw seven locomotives come to life. Beginning around 9:00am, and lasting throughout the day and well into the night, RLS rails were well polished as trains ran the Eastbound, figure-eight pattern. Out engineering for the day were Robert Butler (Mogul), Warren McGowan (Climax), Bill McLaughlin (Ten-wheeler), Ron Wilkerson/Gus Farwick/Casey Farwick/Larry Nilles/ (Ten-wheeler), Josh Klaske (Hudson), David Parrott/Nathan Parrott/Cody Gates (Shay), and Mel Hitchcock (American). A host of RLS members and their friends also made it down to the club, making sure they all rode the rails and admired the condition of the new park (beautiful!).

With the setting of the sun, steam stayed on the rise as the Parrott's Shay continued with a most pleasant night run. The friendships, conversations, laughter, and the perfect night-time air all combined to make for a memorable evening with "Steam under the Stars".

When the sun rose the following morning, even more locomotives fired up and ran Westbound, figure eight (It should be noted, this was the first time trains were directed to run Westbound by the Operations Supervisor in 15 months!). Locomotives out for this day were Paul Quick's 4-4-2, Dave Moore's 4-6-6-4, Chris Enright's 0-4-0, Ron Wilkerson's 4-6-0 and 2-6-0, the Parrott's Shay, the Hitchcock's 4-4-0, and Bill McLaughlin's 4-6-0. The engineers were plenty (about 20) and nearly 35 more RLS members, plus their friends and family spent the day enjoying the blue skies, sun and steam.

As the day came to a slow end, there was a unanimous conclusion floating through the topics of conversation: Even though it wasn't a full Fall Meet, filled with locomotives and guests from railroads near and far, it was probably one of the most pleasant, fulfilling, charming run days the club has had in years. Which, in a sense, is a great way to end our "mini" meets. Beginning April 2012, RLS will be having a full-fledge Spring Meet as we celebrate our new park with folks and trains from near and far.





Braving the trenches: One year, ago in November 2010, our park looked more like a rehearsal for a new reality show "Trench Masters": Trenches ran everywhere including under our right-of-way in several places. The question on everyone's mind was, "Can we still run over some of these trenched areas?" Larry Jongerious provided the answer as he eased the C-16 over one of the many deep cuts/land bridges. Afterwards, someone heard Harvey Korman say, "Rest your sphincters, gentlemen..."

COMING RLS EVENTS:

Nov. 13: Run Day (no public)

Nov. 19: Work Day and Monthly Board Meeting

Nov. 27: Turkey Run Day (no public)

Dec. 10: Soft, Grand Opening of the park!!!

Dec. 11: *1st Run day pulling public!*

Dec. 17: Work Day & Monthly Board Meeting

Dec. 25: Christmas (no run day)

For info on extra work days and park updates, visit the RLS Website:

www.steamonly.org

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Riverside Live Steamers' Board of Directors

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