

The Travel Town



A Publication of the Travel Town Museum Foundation

Volume 2, Issue 1
June 2004

Summertime Greetings



I hope you have all had a chance to see the new *Locomotive Pavilion* building at Travel Town. It's really tremendous! The Museum celebrated the official "ribbon cutting" ceremony and dedication of the new building on December 11th as part of Travel Town's 52nd Birthday celebration. Among those honored guests on hand for the big

event were Los Angeles City Councilman, Tom LaBonge; retired Union Station Superintendent, Tom Buckley; Recreation & Parks General Manager, Manuel Mollinedo; and community philanthropist, Linda Hope, daughter of beloved comedian Bob Hope.

While the Pavilion building was not yet officially completed, it was made available for public inspection during the celebration weekend. In the ensuing first weeks of 2004, construction workers continued to put the final touches on the building and Travel Town Volunteers have begun the complex process of switching and repositioning the Museum's historic locomotives and cars under the shed roof. The building was opened to the public during the first week of May. Speaking candidly as one who has been championing this project for nearly 15 years, I am ecstatic to see this day finally arrive!

As part of the December ceremony, we had the pleasure of dedicating the "**Bob Hope Track**" within the new *Locomotive Pavilion* – a recent product of the Museum's on-going display track rehabilitation program. We were excited to have Bob's daughter Linda Hope on hand for the festivities, as a representative of *The Bob and Dolores Hope Charitable Foundation*. The Hope Foundation joined in partnership with the Recreation & Parks Department, the museum's volunteers, and the *Travel Town Museum Foundation* in funding and executing the dis-



President Greg Gneier and Executive Director Nancy Gneier present the dedication plaque for "The Bob Hope Track" to Mr. Hope's daughter, Linda Hope.

play track project, just prior to the start of the *Pavilion* construction work.



Another wonderful part of the December 11th festivities was dedication of a new Children's Learning Center at Travel Town, affectionately named "**Holden's Corner**." Holden Dichicki was a youngster whose great love for trains and Travel Town was sadly cut short

by cancer. As a tribute to this little railroader, the Dichicki family worked with the Museum Staff to create a unique educational area, as a way of sharing Holden's love for trains with all of Travel Town's youngest visitors. Using proceeds from our Museum Gift Shop, the Travel Town Museum Foundation was able to assist in providing several important components for the *Holden's Corner* project, augmenting the base contributions donated by the Dichicki family. I myself was honored in being asked to produce some of the design elements for the project and greatly enjoyed working with members of both Holden's family and the regular Travel Town staff to bring this terrific project to fruition.

In the months and years to come, *Holden's Corner* will be host to a myriad of children's activities, from story telling, to interactive play, to special interpretive exhibits. The Travel Town Museum Foundation looks forward to playing a continuing role in the evolution and development of this wonderful learning center. And by the way, we're looking for new volunteers who might like to spend a few minutes now and then to help out in *Holden's Corner*, reading stories and/or supervising other activities. If you're interested, I hope you give us a call at the Foundation Office 323-668-0104 for more information!

The coming summer months promise to be exciting as well with relocation of the Museum's historic narrow gauge passenger cars into the protective shelter of the *Locomotive Pavilion*.

I look forward to seeing you at the Museum soon!

Greg Gneier, President
June, 2004

All Aboard!

A warm welcome to all who have joined or renewed our membership since October, 2003. Members can renew or join on-line at www.traveltown.org (click on the yellow membership button), or by contacting us at the Foundation office at 323-668-0104.

“Little Nugget” Club

Gropper Family
Don & Peggy Gustavson

Streamliner Patrons

Robert Anderson
Judeth Cosgrove
Jonathan Green
Tom LaBonge
Chris Marci
Phyllis Nieman
Dr. & Mrs. Dave L. Sell
Larry Thomas

Pullman Passengers

Ethan S. Fan
Alexander & Samantha Feder-Trosclair
Theresa & Craig King
Christina Lane

Yardmasters

Kenneth J. Acord
Jacqui & Tom Biery
Heidi Brewington
Robert & Lisa Bucks
Jack and Sherrie Jessup
Marty Jewell
Kevin Johnson
Michael Johnson
Sherman Lee
H. R. Moody
Bonnie L. Peters
David Sklansky
Maria Tanquary
Olive Varga

**TravelTown
Foundation Member
Support Levels**

Little Nugget Club:
\$250

Streamliner Patron:
\$100

Pullman Passenger:
\$75

Yardmaster:
\$50

Railway Express Agent:
\$25

Railway Express Agents

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Jake Anderson
Tristan Anderson
Claudia Anneman
Zoe Lisboa
Kerry Auld
Atticus Baldwin
Jill Bauman
Brian Jeffrey Baustert
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Violet & Steve Beasley
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Luke Bennett
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Carole Bergin
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Nicolas Boedeker
Jon Bonanni
Stephiten Bordelon
Diana & Thomas Bram
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Jon Larsen
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Tomy Lopez
Marspen Lyonwahl
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June Manatt
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Makoto Watanabe
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Stephen White
Noni White
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Solange Wills
Spencer Wilson
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Julien & Hannah Wolfe
David Young

A "Nugget" of Nostalgia

The "Little Nugget" - Then and Now!

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The unusual "Little Nugget" Club Car on the Streamliner "City of Los Angeles"

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The circa 1939 advertisement shown at left, probably from the *National Geographic*, extols the virtues of Union Pacific Streamliners - and features the "unusual" club car on the Streamliner "City of Los Angeles": our own "Little Nugget"!

Fast forward 65 years, and there's something else "new" inside the vintage "Little Nugget." Shown below is the "new" club room door, recently completed by the Walt Disney Studios Moulding Department. Working from the original 1937 Pullman-Standard construction drawings, the combined efforts of woodworking craftsmen, a machinist, a sheet-metal shop and glazing specialist were all required to replicate this

ornate door. Great care is being taken to reproduce this piece as closely as possible to the original door, missing from the car since the 1970s. Exacting details include custom-carved wood mouldings and specially machined pivot hinges; the *Harrington & King Company* of Chicago even fired up a rarely used machine to re-make the expanded metal grillwork to meet their own original 1937 material specifications.

But wait, are we sure that this is a recent photograph? Isn't that Johnny Ruh, the original "Little Nugget" bartender, standing next to that fancy *new* door? Actually, that's a life-size photo cut-out of Johnny,



printed this past December and provided as a donation by the Ruh family. Spearheaded by Ruh's grandson, John, the family have been loyal supporters of the Nugget Project.

Leslie Hamilton and Joy Klein, professional faux finish painters, have also generously donated their talents and expertise toward bringing this historic car back to life. Below at left, Leslie matches the original color and finish on a plaster ornament, located just to the right of the new door.

But perhaps the most significant milestone in the entire "Little Nugget" conservation process is what's shown below at right: This Los Angeles Cultural Landmark is now under protective covering!



Project Updates: 2003 in Review

On any given Saturday, Travel Town is abuzz with a small army of volunteer personnel, performing a myriad of tasks from routine equipment maintenance to interpretive educational outreach. You may find them greasing locomotive bearings, gold-leafing plaster relief, rejuvenating track switches or re-wiring a generator. And the work is not just confined to Saturdays —much of it, including hours of planning and logistics support, goes on seven days a week! Since a significant portion of our gift shop revenues go to help support these Travel Town programs and activities, we want to keep our readers apprised of the progress!

M.177 Restoration Continues

Restoration work on Santa Fe Motorcar M.177 is progressing at a rapid pace under the leadership of Museum Volunteer Bryan Reese. New coils for the main generator have arrived from the motor shop and have been assembled in the frame. The air compressor has been removed for inspection and found to be in excellent condition; the interior of the compressor's gearbox appeared brand new, despite having sat idle at Travel Town for over 50 years! At right, we see Bryan dressing the armature shaft of the main generator in preparation for re-installation into the coil frame.



Diesel Servicing

Diesel servicing has been another busy area for Travel Town volunteers this past winter. The massive Baldwin engine in California Western locomotive No. 56 underwent a full lube oil change in January, a project requiring four new filters and nearly 150 gallons of engine oil! This is the first oil change since the locomotive's arrival at the Museum in 1992. Not to be left out, Travel Town's little workhorse, the *Charlie Atkins* locomotive, just received new cab windshields and headlight glass. In the picture at left, volunteer leader Greg Ramsey is seen steam cleaning the air compressor from the M.177.

"The Tile Game"

Now that the Locomotive Pavilion has been built, Travel Town's volunteers are beginning to re-position many of the historic locomotives and cars into the protected display area. This is a complex and drawn-out process, requiring a numerous series of back-and-forth movements that Museum personnel have come to call "the tile game." The "game" will go on for the next several months, so don't be surprised if you come to Travel Town and discover that your favorite piece isn't in the same spot it was during your last visit! At right, Diesel locomotive Number 1, *Charlie Atkins*, is pushing Sharp and Fellows steamer No. 7 east-bound into the Shed on Track 5. You can see by the crowd that moving engines is a popular attraction at the Museum!



Display Track

Another ongoing source of work for our volunteers is maintenance and construction of the Museum's display track network. At right top, volunteers Daniel Lee and Scott Byun are seen working on a recent Track Crew undertaking - the replacement of "head-ties" and "switch stands" in two turnouts behind the Birthday Party Cars on Track 6. Track work at the Museum provides an excellent opportunity for local area high school students to fulfill their community service requirements. At right bottom, volunteer leader Greg Gneier finishes up installation of the first new switch stand while seasoned trackmen Roger Ringle and Greg Ramsey work with student volunteers John Stumreiter and Eric Recchia on placement of a second stand.

Once this project was complete, track gang volunteers turned their attention to the job of rehabilitating a 1930s-era girder rail "street switch" – recently donated by the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power and soon to be installed on the south side of the Museum as part of the Demonstration Railroad.

More out-of-doors work included volunteers sprucing up one of the equipment support buildings at Travel Town (below), recently the subject of a full-on refurbishment, both inside and out.



Foundation Outreach

In addition to the opening of the Holden's Corner Learning Center (see *President's Message* on page 1) and Thomas the Tank Engine Play Days (see page 8), the Foundation also continues to offer public tours and other educational opportunities. Below, docent Nancy Gneier leads a walking tour of senior citizens, explaining how the boiler works on a steam engine. Public tours take place on the second Saturday of each month and can also be scheduled for special groups during the week by calling the Foundation Office at 323-668-0104.



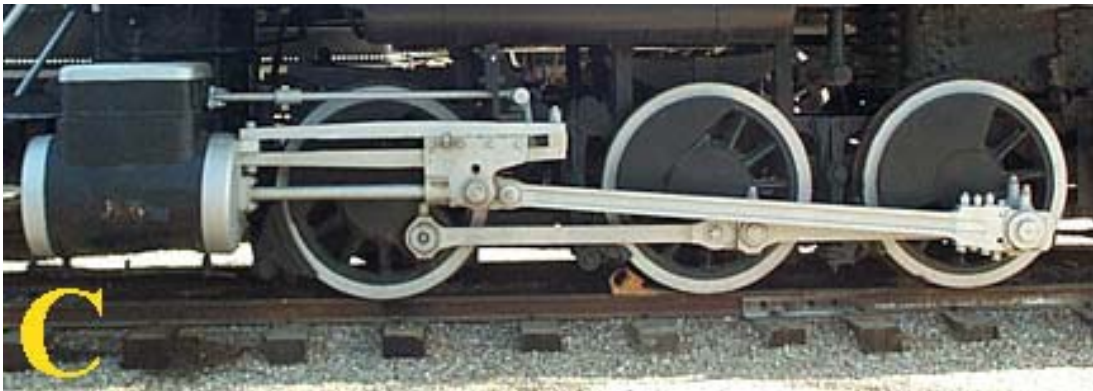
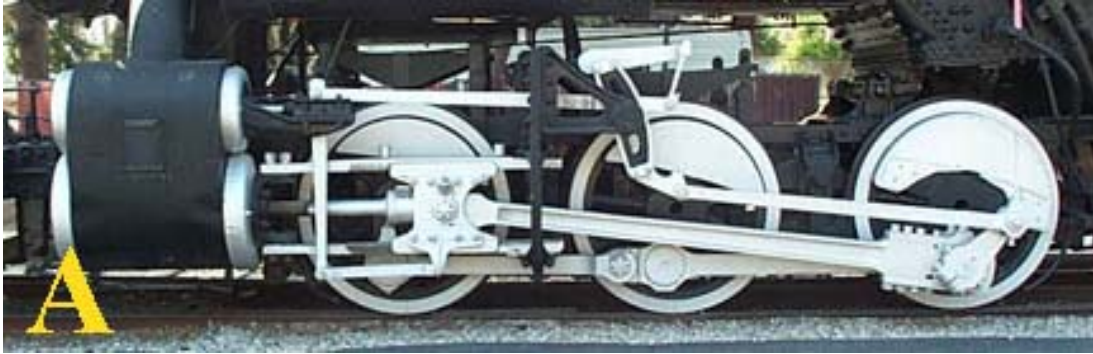
Historic Railcar Restoration

Student volunteers also get opportunities to do restoration inside the historic railcars, under careful supervision. The photo below shows volunteers hard at work doing detail cleaning and surface preparation on the mahogany walls of Union Pacific dining car 369. With this 83-year-old car now under the protective covering of the new Locomotive Pavilion, volunteer restorationists will soon begin the big task of replacing the rotted wooden window sills and sash throughout.



Quiz: Name That Engine

Here's a little quiz for those really hardcore Travel Town aficionados out there ... Can you correctly identify the three locomotives "A" "B" and "C" whose *engines* are pictured below? Try to guess the age, too. To make this a little more tricky, only the engine drivers are shown, not any pilot or trailing wheels which the locomotive may have. The answers can be found on page 7. Photo "D" is the bonus round, and not a locomotive – but whose truck is that anyway?



Everything New! Everything Thomas!

Stop by the Travel Town Gift Shop today to see the latest arrivals to the island of Sodor! The Thomas Wooden Railway boasts brand new characters, destinations, and more that little engineers will love to discover and explore.

Travel Town Museum Foundation Members receive 10% off with every purchase!

Summer hours:
10:30 am to 4:30 pm (Monday - Friday)
10:30 am to 5:30 pm (Saturday & Sunday.)



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Quiz Answers (from Page 6)

So, how did you do? If you answered all four correctly, you probably spend way too much time at Travel Town! If you're not already one of our volunteers – you should be!

D: (Bonus Round): This is the oldest shown, a truck from none other than Union Pacific caboose #2117, built way back in 1881.

C: This is the youngest of the group, Concock No. 1, an 0-6-0T "tank engine" built by ALCO (Coke) in 1925.

B: No. 664 from the Atchison, Topoka & Santa Fe, a Baldwin 2-8-0 of 1899.

A: Union Pacific No. 4439, a 1918 Baldwin 0-6-0.

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Come Join the Fun!



What could be better than an afternoon of Thomas the Tank Engine? How about an afternoon every month! One of our most popular events, *Thomas the Tank Engine Playday*, allows the Museum's youngsters to learn about tracks, engines and the jobs they do. Our playdays are on the first full-weekend Sunday of every month in front of the Gift Shop, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

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