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 “bygone 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
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...
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.

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.
We’ve Been Working . . .

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.

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

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.

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.

There’s that “hold” signal again . . . this time it’s volunteer leader Greg Ramsey directing installation of the boom onto the American Locomotive Crane.

Further down Track 4, work continues on the disassembly of Southern Pacific steam locomotive No. 20. Having been “warmed up” with the Flat Car lifts, our American Crane’s next job was to carefully lift the old boiler off of the S.P. 20 – making way for further disassemble of the locomotive’s frame and running gear. Volunteers removed the engine’s driving rods in early July and are now in the process of tearing down the frame and other basic components. A fund-raising drive is underway to help raise the $18,000 needed to purchase materials for the new boiler.

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 Reinholtz gives the “hold” signal to the crane operator as Project Leader Paul Boschan guides the tethering rope from the far side.

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

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

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.

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

Come Join the Fun!
We've Been Working . . .

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Come Join the Fun!

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

On the Railroad!

Further down Track 4, work continues on the disassembly of Southern Pacific steam locomotive No. 20. Having been “warmed up” with the Flat Car lifts, our American Crane’s next job was to carefully lift the old boiler off of the S.P. 20 – making way for further disassemble of the locomotive’s frame and running gear. Volunteers removed the engine’s driving rods in early July and are now in the process of tearing down the frame and other basic components. A fund-raising drive is underway to help raise the $18,000 needed to purchase materials for the new boiler.

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 Reinholtz 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.

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 Reinholtz gives the “hold” signal to the crane operator as Project Leader Paul Boschan guides the tethering rope from the far side.

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.

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

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

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.
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.
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 had 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 railroad, 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, like a car, to gears in the wheel sets or shafts, like a car, to gears in the wheel sets or “trucks.” I soon realized I needed an education search (no Internet back then) I found Roaring Camp, a tourist railroad in the Santa Cruz Mountains with an operational Heisler. I went there and the luster to wear off in-...
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 "bygone 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!

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!

We're Going Green!

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!

- Refreshments for Members!
- Members only Thomas Playday!
- Tours Through railroad cars!
- Visit by Sir Topham Hatt
- Games for the kids!

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