



NEWSLETTER

Santa Clarita, California

April, 2010

April Meeting

Sunday, April 18, 2010
5202 Zoo Drive
Griffith Park, Los Angeles, CA

Walt Disney Barn & LA Live Steamers

DIRECTIONS

HEADING SOUTH ON INTERSTATE 5 FWY:

Take the **Western Street** EXIT in Burbank.
Go west to **Victory Blvd** and turn **LEFT**
Turn **RIGHT** at **ZOO DRIVE**.
Follow **Zoo Drive** for about 1 / 4 mile
Parking for **Walt's Barn** is in the first parking lot
On the **LEFT**.

COMING FROM THE 134 FREEWAY.

Exit **Forest Lawn Drive**, and through stop sign,
Turn **LEFT** at the first signal—**ZOO DRIVE**
Turn **LEFT** at the stop sign
Follow the road around to right for about 1/2 mile
Walt's Barn will be on the **RIGHT**.



DETAILS

This is a combined PICNIC, MUSEUM TOUR and TRAIN RIDE at L.A. Live Steamers. We will meet about 12:00 noon. We will picnic first and will meet inside the Barn area if there is enough room. If not—look for us just across Zoo Drive in the picnic area. **Bring food & drink for your own group— it is not a pot-luck.**

WALT'S BARN

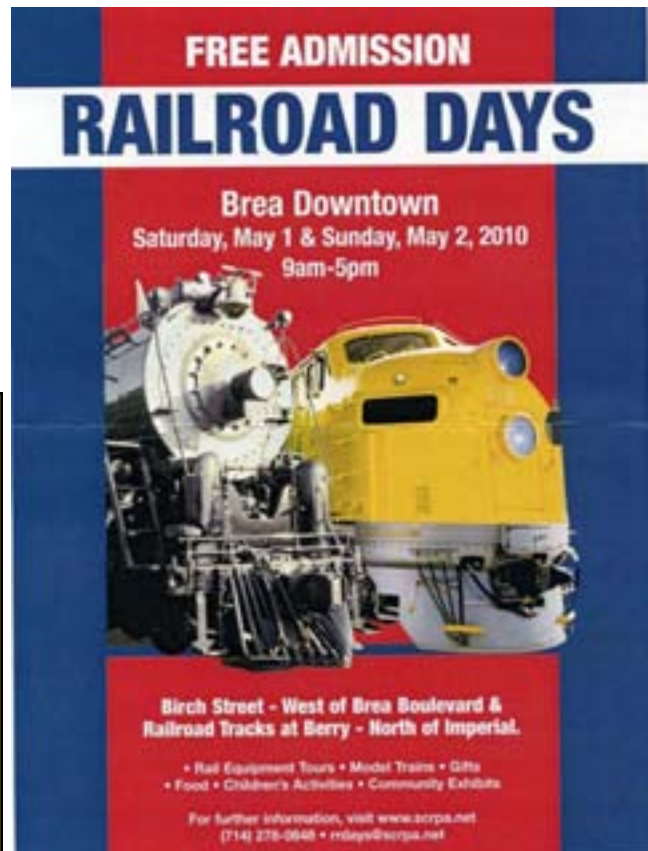
In 1950, Walt Disney built the Carolwood Pacific Railroad in the backyard of his house in Holmby Hills, CA. He named the railroad for the street where he lived on Carolwood Drive. The first run of his railroad took place on May 7, 1950. The 2, 615 feet of track included a 46 foot long trestle and a 90 foot long tunnel under his wife's flower bed. Amidst the railroad, he had a barn built where he could monitor and remotely control the switches on the track. The barn also served as a workshop. After Walt's passing the house was sold and the family saved the barn & it was moved to this location. Open on third Sunday of each month between 11:00 am—3:00 pm, admission & parking are free.

L.A. LIVE STEAMERS:

Founded in 1956 it is a non-profit public benefit corporation. They operate 7 1/2 gauge model trains for the general public to ride on 11:00 am—3:00 pm every Sunday, weather permitting. Rides are provided to all except for some height & weight limitations. They ask for a donation of \$3.00 per person to ride.

2010 CALENDAR

- APRIL 18 **WALT DISNEY BARN & LA LIVE STEAMERS**, Griffith Park, Los Angeles
 Sunday Walt Disney's live steam artifacts in his old workshop (the Barn) Take a ride on one of LA Live Steamers trains on 7 1/2 gauge track. .
- MAY 1--2 **RAILROAD DAYS**, Brea, CA See flyer below if interested. Not a Club event.
- MAY 23 **RIDE THE RED CARS**, Port of Los Angeles Waterfront, San Pedro, CA
 Sunday Resurrected from history, the famous Red Cars take you on a 1 1/2 mile run where you can get off and on as you wish, taking in some of the restaurants along the way.
- JUNE 5-6 **BIG TRAIN SHOW**, Ontario Convention Center, Ontario, CA and/or
 Sat.—Sun **SOUTHWESTERN GARDEN RAILROAD SHOW**, Fairplex, Pomona Fairgrounds
- JUNE 27 **TEHACHAPI LOOP & BBQ**, Member John Bell hosts meeting at his home overlooking
 Sunday the busy railroad traffic coming out and going into the Loop.
- JULY 26 **MEMBER LAYOUT MEETING**, Jim & Sandi Owens, Canyon Country, CA
 Monday
- August 2-8 **2010 NATIONAL GARDEN RAILWAY CONVENTION**, Tacoma, Washington
- AUGUST 29 **MEMBER LAYOUT MEETING** : Scott & Aletha Miller, Frazier Park, CA
 Sunday
- SEPT. 27 **MEMBER LAYOUT MEETING**: John & Marie Nozzi, Valencia, CA
 Monday
- OCTOBER 24 **LOMITA RAILROAD MUSEUM**, Lomita, CA
 Sunday Display of steam locomotives, cars, water tower, recreation of historic station
- NOVEMBER: **TO BE DETERMINED**
- DECEMBER **NO MEETING IN DECEMBER**



**SANTA CLARITA VALLEY GARDEN
RAILROAD CLUB**

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ON TRACK by Alan Wright

I had an email the other day from a local man who is starting to build a layout in his backyard. He had questions about Dwarf Alberta Spruce trees in our climate and choices of ballast and roadbed material. I was glad to respond, even though he is not a member. (I hope he will decide to join, however.). This got me to thinking about why we formed a club of garden railroad enthusiasts 10 years ago. Most of us were into garden railroading and had started, but needed to have others to talk to when choices had to be made and problems solved.

I think we still do this, but find that often we are not being asked to do workshops on particular subjects, nor are we putting these on in hopes of finding interest. These don't seem to be appropriate for general meetings since it is likely only a few will be interested in the subject at hand.

With a number of members early in the construction of their layouts there has to be a need for this kind of assistance. I am proposing we find the pockets of interest, poll the participants to find most convenient time and do these mini-workshops as needed. Those interested will have to let me know what they want so we can make it happen.

ANTELOPE VALLEY N SCALERS had their modular railroad set up inside the old depot. They have done this for several years, but I took the time to look at the detail and talk to one of their members. Although it was pretty crowded, I understand this was only a third of the modules they have available. This is a nice layout and with N scale you can run a lot of track in a small space. Although some of the switches were electrically operated, most were manual.



RAILFEST IN FILMORE, CA. March 28, 2010



It was a really nice day to be out enjoying trains. I still think that the Tri-Tip BBQ sandwiches are reason enough to attend Railfest. The program hasn't changed much in the several years we have attended, but it is a good event. Our group assembled just after lunch for the picture. Attending were: Don, Dodie & Ron Pilling, Ray & Martie Smith, Jim & Sylvia Kerschner, Alan & Donna Wright and Ray & Tina Krystof with her mother and grandson. Not in the picture were Jim & Sandi Owens who came a little later.



As we got on to ride the Speeder it ran out of gas. Donna waits while they tinker to get it running again. Ray & Martie are on the trailing car, below.



WORKING ON THE RAILROAD—LOS ANGELES TO BAKERSFIELD

By Jim Kerschner

You are home and the crew dispatcher will call on the telephone and tell you to report on duty at 11:00 pm LA yard office to work to Bakersfield. He will try to give you a 2 hour notice, a little better than the one and half hour notice required by Union contract. You thank him and report at 11:00 pm.

First thing you do when reporting is read the track bulletins looking for any changes since you worked in the day before. Then you walk down to the chalk board at Round House turnout track and copy the engine numbers down that you were assigned for the trip. The engines are supposed to be ready with fuel, water, sand and coupled together. I climb on with my grip, because it is an over-night trip. Next I turn the rear headlight on dim so when I get to the rear unit I will know all engines are coupled together with MU cables. Then I turn the sanders on and off, so when I walk around looking at the engine brake shoes to make sure all the bad ones were replaced. I will see a little sand on the rail indicating my sanders work properly.

I climb on the engine again, make an air test, ring the bell and move toward yard track. The herder gives hand signal to proceed through the yard to mainline to the shops yard. This is where the train was built up with piggybacks and containers. It is another four miles to outboard yard. I test the dynamic brakes before we arrive at red signal and have the tower operator give us permission to flag by the red signal to couple to our train. Now I have to switch to the other end of the engine consist after coupling to train. The car department is there to give the air test.

The conductor arrives in a van with the outbound train orders along with any brakemen on the crew. We read orders and get a high ball from the car department on the air test. Yardmaster gives signal to depart. Now that we are on the high rail we have to call all signals and watch for any smoke on the train or wheels on all curves. If we stop, the head brakeman or conductor has to cross over to make a rolling inspection of a passing train.

The conductor has a list of cars and tonnage of the train, any short set outs, or anything else. Tonight it's a straight shot to Bakersfield with no stops. I know what the slowest speed I'll be down to by figuring out horse power per ton x 12 / grade = speed. If it is under 15 mph, scream for a helper. Tonight we can make maximum speed with no restrictions.

It is the engineers job to control speed. The first place for speed adjustment is coming down the grade out of the Newhall tunnel. We will be in dynamic braking until the engines get around the Saugus Speedway. We will stretch the slack out until we tip over Vincent Hill and work dynamic braking on to Palmdale. We then stretch'em out again and work power until we get to Tehachapi, gather up slack and go into dynamic braking. Then, almost to Cable Crossover, I make a small brake pipe reduction to set the brakes on all cars.

You always have to have speed five mph under the maximum

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jim is a member of our club and enjoys our events and outings. Jim started with Southern Pacific in 1967 as a crew dispatcher. He moved up the ranks as a brakeman (1970), In 1971 he had a 4 month layoff, but went to work in the signal department. He was promoted to Conductor in 1972, then to fireman in 1973. In 1974 he was again promoted, this time to Engineer a position he held until retirement in 2004. He lives in Santa Clarita.



Jim at the controls.



View from the cab.



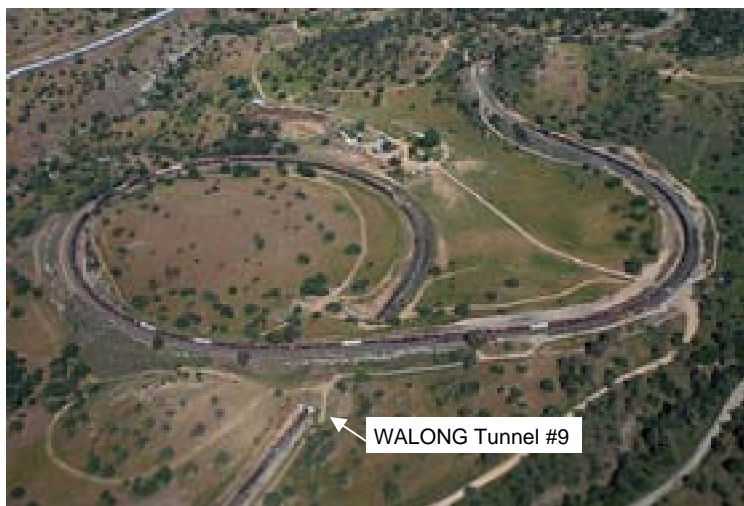
Jim, left, with his conductor.

Con't from page 4

when tipping over grades. Set air and balance with dynamic brakes. On other grades we didn't use air because they were short and we could hold speed with dynamics. We are now blistering down the hill at 25 mph until we leave Caliente. If the train is heavy it will roll all the way, but tonight, to keep our speed up we will stretch 'em until we leave Bena helper spur and then go back into dynamic braking to Bakersfield, unless we get color (ie. a red signal light) anywhere, then we adjust accordingly.

This was a good night. On the hill (the Tehachapi Loop) we had a Santa Fe in the hole at Walong (4,800 feet) roll by us and give us a high ball . As you can see from this trip the engineer must control speed and adjust slack in the train or you break in two. It is easy to move forward, but to stop where you want is determined by speed, grade and tons per brake.

On duty at 11:00 pm and off duty at 5:45 am. As the sun begins to rise the crew goes to Bakersfield hotel and waits for the call to return to Los Angeles.



Runs from Los Angeles to Bakersfield always included going through the Tehachapi Loop, shown above from the air. In the years he worked for the railroad, Jim figures he made over 4,100 trips over the Loop. This and other photos on pages 4 & 5 were provided by Jim & Sylvia Kerschner.

The club outing on June 27 will be at this unique location to see lots of trains under way in both directions. Normally, over 40 trains pass through here each day and night. This line is used by both the Southern Pacific and the Burlington North-ern - Santa Fe Railroads.

FIRE IN THE TUNNEL AT WALONG

On February 20, 2010 a derailment at the west end of Tunnel #9 at Walong, CA caused the rupture of flammable liquids and a resulting fire. Here are some photos of the event provided by Jim Kerschner.



BITTER CREEK & WESTERN RAILROAD

Gary Woolard and Carla Breitner were off again in pursuit of railroad adventures. The following pictures were taken by Carla and Gary furnished captions. Here is Gary's description of the event.

The Bitter Creek and Western fundraiser for the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum was a lot of fun and apparently very successful for SLORRM. I was told that they handled more people than they had planned for, and still turned people away at the gate! (Which is not surprising—it was an 'advanced tickets only' event!). This is the largest 7 1/2 gauge layout I've ever seen! While we were there, there were 6 to 8 trains running at a time and a ride on one of the mainline routes took about 20 minutes. One of the volunteers said that it was likely the largest ride-on layout west of the Mississippi.



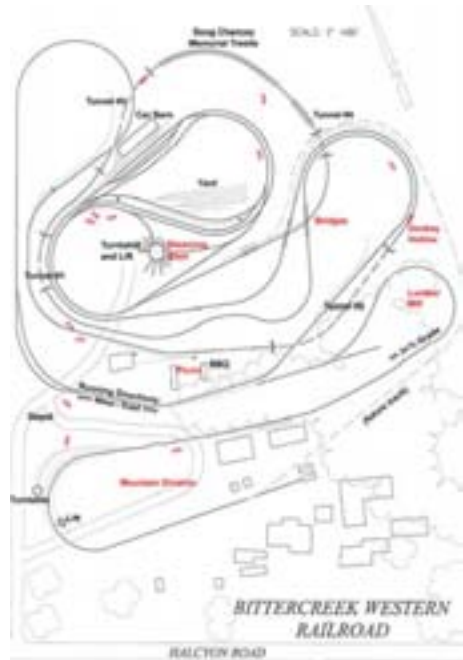
Not some Photoshop trick, Carla used her telephoto lens looking down the long sloping driveway. People are gathering towards the right side and the line that formed to get on the trains. Down at the bottom, one of the trains is passing by the loading area on an inside loop.



Above, from the train, we're heading north on a center track and suddenly two engines come around the bend from the opposite direction, one to each side of us. There was a lot of surprised laughter and hand-waving.

Left, Pleasant Valley No. 11, a narrow-gauged prototype was one of the largest steamers running that day. The refrigerator car behind the tender actually holds extra butane tanks, connected to keep the steamer running all day.

BITTER CREEK & WESTERN RAILROAD



Gary pulled this track layout from the Bitter Creek & Western web site. (how about a G scale layout with this track plan?)

Photo 1

There were several scale buildings scattered along the right of way. The most striking was this almost Disney-esque train station.

Photo 2



Like any good model railroad, the BC & W has lots of bridges, tunnels and trestles to surprise you as you come around a curve.

Photo 3

This is a shot of the roundhouse & turntable. There was activity here most of the day as engines and rolling stock were being switched in and out of the trains. Turns out that this is only one of the two roundhouses set up with turntables—the other one is up the hill and out of public view.