

THE FIRE DOOR

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
LIVE STEAMERS
TORRANCE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA LIVE STEAMERS, INC.

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YEAR IN REVIEW ISSUE

THE SMITHVILLE DEPOT DEDICATION

October 28, 2012 was the City of Torrance's Centennial Birthday Bash held at Charles H. Wilson Park. Among the festivities was a station dedication ceremony for "Smithville Depot", a project spearheaded by SCLS member Kelley Smith. Many city officials were present and they presented SCLS with a proclamation and afterwards SCLS opened the gates for a special "Centennial Birthday Bash Run-Day".

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the Southern California Live Steamers, a 501(c)3 non profit corporation established in 1946, has provided the Torrance community with miniature train rides and railroad safety instruction, and is celebrating its 25th Anniversary at Charles H. Wilson Park; and

WHEREAS, during the past 25 years at Wilson Park, the Southern California Live Steamers, has given over 450,000 train rides to the citizens of Torrance, surrounding communities and schools; and WHEREAS, the Southern California Live Steamers has continually upgraded and beautified the previously unused property by planting many trees and plants, providing landscaping, building picnic areas, installing a fully functioning miniature railroad with support facilities and over 8000 feet of track; and ; WHEREAS, the Southern California Live Steamers has maintained an impeccable safety record during our public run days; and WHEREAS, the Southern California Live Steamers through donations of money and labor, by members and friends, has built the new Wilson Park Depot to further support our services to the public; and WHEREAS, the Southern California Live Steamers has continuously strived to preserve the railroad history of the Torrance area and educate the next generation in the history and importance of railroading to the growth of our community, state and country.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FRANK SCOTTO, as Mayor of the City of Torrance, California, do hereby commend and express sincere appreciation to the Southern California Live Steamers as it celebrates a quarter of a century of outstanding and dedicated service to the citizens of our community and beyond.

Signed this 28th day of October 2012. -- Mayor Frank Scotto



Crowds gather to ride the trains (above) and SCLS President Tim Brothers gives a speech to the crowd gathered for the dedication (below).



2012 President's Messages

"Keep on trucking"

1/3/2012 3:52:21 PM

Happy New Year!

Again we had a great year. This year holds in store some very exciting events as well as some challenges. We hope to add the finishing touches to our new "Station" and begin using our new "Crenshaw" loading area. We also hope to have a proper dedication ceremony to mark our accomplishment.

We have only been able to accomplish so much, because we have built such a diverse "core group" of hard-working



Tim in the engineer's seat

individuals who take on tasks when they see a need.

Even though, we still have some who spend half their time looking for the person who is "responsible" and the rest of the time is spent making excuses why someone else should do "this" or "that", the "core group" just keeps on trucking. No one can argue with our results. We all have a lot to be proud of.

"Dog days of Summer"

8/6/2012 3:44:11 PM

Once again we are in that season when we find ourselves laying track and pulling weed in 80+ degree heat... Of course, that is when the rail is all stretched out, the weeds have stopped growing, and lemon aid becomes "first aid".

The inside "8" is coming along well and many other much needed improvements are all being made without invitation or reservations to those who put in an hour or two of good hard work.

Some of our own members often forget that we are all volunteers and we can not just vote projects completed, like magic. Most work is done a little at a time by a handful of people. Every Saturday is a "Work day".

You get out what you put into it... If your goal is to improve the safety and experience the public enjoys then you will roll up your sleeves, get dirty and have the satisfaction of a job well done. If you just want to complain about what needs to be done, you will never be happy. Just find another organization to impress with your keen "nit-picking" observation skills.

Better yet re-read the past Presidents Messages and see if you can find a familiar theme. Are you "That Person" who comes to meeting and executes "HIT AND RUNS"? That is to come to meeting, complain about this or that and then not stay to help with the run day??? Or if you come to any run days you act like there is nothing for you to do (Also complaining while you are there...)???

Tim Brothers, President SCLS

Our
400,000th

passenger was:

Graden Eastham
of Torrance, CA
07/01/12

**THE
FIRE DOOR**

Spring 2013 Edition

Newsletter Editors: SCLS Secretary Robert Lee, Scott Graham, Phil Cohen.

The Firedoor is a quarterly publication of the Southern California Live Steamers.

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THE NUMBERS

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2013 Board Members

President
Tim Brothers

Vice President
Phil Cohen

Secretary
Robert Lee

Treasurer
Tom Downing

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Wilson Park, Torrance, CA

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The Torrance Historical Society Rocks Around the Block in Celebration of the All-America City Award



On Thursday, July 19, 2012 from 5:00PM - 8:00PM, SCLS participated in the 6th annual celebration, benefiting the Torrance Historical Society & Museum, 1345 Post Avenue.

The Torrance Historical Society and our 2012 sponsors will host the sixth annual 1950s-style family summer event in celebration of Torrance's All-America City Award -- one of America's original and most prestigious community recognition awards. The City received this award for "Growth without strain" back in the 1956 when Albert Isen was Mayor of Torrance. This free event is open to the public and will be held in front of the Museum (1345 Post Avenue). Post Avenue will be blocked off from Cravens to Sartori, so guests can:

- View vintage cars on display along Post Avenue, courtesy of Cruisin' 50s
- Car Club, local car owners - special appearance by the Oscar Mayer Weinermobile
- Bop to 50s music
- Visit with the Southern California Live Steamers
- Munch on burgers from the IN-N-OUT burger wagon (burgers served from 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM, nominal fee for food & beverages; see below)
- See special exhibits featuring the original congratulatory telegram from President Eisenhower, along with the All-America City button & logo
- Slurp milk shakes made with vintage machines by real "soda jerks" (nominal fee applies)
- Check-out high school yearbooks -- the Torrance Historical Society has the largest collection
- Enter the hula hoop, bubble gum blowin', cake walk and pie eating contests - there are prizes!

The Depot Dedication Ceremony

The Dedication Speech by Tim Brothers

Dedication of our New Station
28 October 2012 By: S.C.L.S.
President, Tim Brothers Hon-
orable Mayor Scotto, City
Council members, Commis-
sioners, and Faithful riders
and friends of the Southern
California Live Steamers.
Welcome to the "Wilson Park
Trains". Today we are all so
proud to be a part of the City
of Torrance's Centennial
celebration. What makes it so
special for the Live Steamers
is that we were here 25 years
ago, to celebrate the city's
75th Diamond Anniversary.
We were invited to set up a
small circle of track on this
once dusty "pie shaped" prop-
erty, to celebrate the city's rich
railroad history. What was
thought would be a temporary
train attraction, has become
what you see today. The
reason for the "pie-shape" is
because this piece of property
was the railroad switching
yard for the Military Mainte-
nance and Supply Depot, lo-
cated where the rest of the



of the park is today. We could not have done this, without the continued support from the city and the Community Services department and the Parks department and our faithful riders. We are proud to be celebrating our 25th year and we look forward to the future. Over 407,000 rides and thousands of feet of track, JUST LOOK AROUND..... A lush forest, a full-size caboose, Pacific Electric #4601 and many other attractions await our riders on their journey through this now beautiful corner of Wilson Park. One of our most famous members, Walt Disney envisioned that his masterpiece theme park "Disneyland" would never be finished and it would continue to improve, over time. We are inspired by that same vision of our future.... Now please take a good look at this beautiful train depot.... This was the most ambitious project, since the initial installation of track, some 25 years ago. The person who needs to be recognized as the "Project Manager" is our beloved SCLS member and "Master Builder" Kelley Smith. Kelley saw this project through from just a dream, to a simple sketch, city approval, fund raising, construction, and the finishing the details, (that is Details with a capital "D"), Of course Kelley did not do it alone. Along with his son Jeff Smith he had help from Professor Mike Stalling from the El Camino architecture department and his students, for the blue prints and Professor Max Pena from Long Beach City College construction-

and the Year in Pictures

department whose students built it. But the bottom line is that this could not have been built without the generous donations from individual club members, local vendors, and the donations from all of our faithful riders. The names on this plaque are but a few of those who made it possible: We thank!!!!!!-I would like to recognize a few: "Charlie Johnson's Roofing" for donating the roofing materials.

Robinson Helicopters- The Donut Den- Harbor Industries- R.B.H. Insulation- Pacific Supply-The Donut Den- Crenshaw Lumber- Catalina Pacific Ready Mix-Kelly, what a "Shed....." You may have thought you were building just a "Depot" But it will, from this day forward be known as the "Smithville Depot" And this 28th day of October 2012, the "Southern California Live Steamers" dedicates this depot to the residents and children of all ages of the City of Torrance. May this depot stand, as a tribute to the city's proud railroad history.





THE SCLS NEIGHBORHOOD

Thomas Downing can be best described as, “Talented, meticulous and reliable,” as told by the Live Steamers Staff.



Thomas Downing was recognized by the City Council and Mayor for his work

Thomas has been a member of the Southern California Live Steamers and a City of Torrance Volunteer since 2008. He has been a board member, treasurer, membership coordinator and souvenir stand coordinator. He really enjoys challenges, which can be seen by the way he puts in many hours on the long list of items that need to be done at the Live Steamers Club. Some of the tasks he does are re-build train tracks, train repairs/upgrades, painting and cleaning. He also uses his talents to build miniature trains that do justice to the “real thing.”

THANK YOU!

Boy Scout Troop 134, aspiring Eagle Scout Justin Kuo
– for his June 9, 2012 Project, SCLS main loop landscaping.

Robert Lee, BNSF Essay 1st Place Winner

By Phillip Cohen - Torrance, CA

Lee: “Jobs are created by the train.

People with jobs help contribute to the community.

The community thrives”

First prize essay by Robert Lee: “Jobs are created by the train. People with jobs help contribute to the community. The community thrives”

An Essay By Robert Lee:

The sun is setting in California and the skyline of the “City of Angels” is highlighted by a burnt orange sky. A locomotive horn is sounding, the crossing signal bells are ringing and the red lights are flashing while the gates are down. Cars are waiting for the train and folks are captivated as the locomotive passes through the crossing, pulling shipping containers, petroleum tankers, and auto carriers. What is the importance of freight rail to my community’s future?

Freighters packed with shipping containers and tankers full of petroleum sail to the largest port in the United States, the Port of Los Angeles, from all parts of the world. These massive ships are unloaded and the goods packed in shipping containers travel onward to other parts of this great nation via the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway.

The auto carriers hold brand new cars, while the tankers hold fuel produced by the refineries in Wilmington to be used in the new cars that the train will bring to a neighborhood near you. Jobs are created by the train. People with jobs help contribute to the community. The community thrives.

The last train car goes by; a little red light flashing near the coupler gets smaller and smaller. The crossing gates go up, the red lights stop flashing, the signal bells stop ringing, and the locomotive horn fades into the distance. I suddenly realize that the car I’m driving, the gas I’m using, and the clothes I’m wearing, probably wouldn’t be possible without the train in our neighborhoods. That’s the importance of freight rail to my community’s future.

Great job Robert! We at SCLS are all very proud of your accomplishment.



About the Author:

Robert Lee is a member of the Southern California Live Steamers. He and his wife Daisy work above and beyond the call of duty in running the SCLS kitchen on run days and keep us all from starving. Robert also brings a level of professionalism to our public run days as he assumes the position of station master, safely and efficiently dispatching the many trains that run carrying thousands of passengers in a 4 hour period each run day. Robert has just been nominated to the position of SCLS club secretary. We look forward to some excellent newsletters in the future.

THE NUMBERS 2012

RIDER NUMBERS

January 1, 2012 = 1855
January 19, 2012 = 795

February 4, 2012 = 1455
February 18, 2012 = 1009

March 4, 2012 = 1461
March 17, 2012 = 32

April 1, 2012 = 1304
April 17, 2012 = 930

May 5, 2012 = 1200
May 20, 2012 = 675

June 3, 2012 = 1085
June 17, 2012 = 906

July 1, 2012 = 1002
July 21, 2012 = 890

August 5, 2012 = 1034
August 18, 2012 = 586

September 2, 2012 = 922
September 15, 2012 = 626

October 7, 2012 = 1157
October 20, 2012 = 569

October 28, 2012 "Centennial" Run Day
Riders = 1794

November 4, 2012 = 1172
November 17, 2012 = 397

December 2, 2012 = 699
December 15, 2012 = 518

**Total passengers
for 2012:
25,757**

SCLSHOWTO...

"BUILD A DIAMOND"

By Phillip Cohen -
Torrance, CA

The latest project at SCLS is the addition of an inner loop figure-eight track. Total length of the addition is approximately 880 feet. The figure-eight required the construction of 2 switches one to enter the figure-eight and the other to exit the track into the inner mainline loop. Additional switches were added to provide sidings near the picnic area and a future mountain siding that traverses the inner berm and eventually will connect to a coal dump. In addition to all of the switches and track sections that had to be built, the trickiest part of the process was building the "diamond" or cross track. This had to be constructed at the precise angle so that it could be used to join the intersecting tracks without any bends or kinks.

Tom Downing had purchased a ready-build diamond track section from Rich Eaton however the angles were incorrect for our layout. Tom used the design to build a new diamond from scratch with the proper angles so that it would mate correctly at the track crossing.

Below are some photos that Tom had taken showing the construction process of the new diamond section. As you can see it is a fairly involved process.

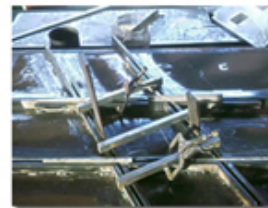
Check for our next article on the completion of our new figure-eight loop and inaugural run.



The first step was cutting 3/8" x 1" cold rolled steel bar stock and tacking it to a 2' x 3' 1/8" thick steel plate.



Tom had purchased a diamond off of e-bay that Rich Eaton had built. The angles did not work for our track. He liked the way it was built so he used that as a guide when building this one. Here you can see some more of the pieces welded to the base plate. We use 7.5" rail spacing at SCLS.



Lots of cutting and fitting of the individual rail pieces and guide rails. This shows Tom getting ready to weld the center guide rails in place. You can see the various gauge bars used to make sure that the spacing is correct between the rails.



After Tom got it all welded up he broke out the super duper whiz-bang e-bay plasma cutter and proceeded to cut out the 1/8 plate around the bar stock rails. You can see the diamond really starting to take shape. Almost complete!



The plasma cutter left a ragged edge where the plate was cut away so Tom had to quite a bit of grinding to get the flanges cleaned up and give it a finished smooth look. This is the completed diamond, ready for the ties.



Well, Tom got the ties on, and now it's time to take it out to SCLS and install it on the figure-eight track this weekend. This was a lot of work however it was quite fun. It is hard to believe that there is 20' of bar stock used to build this diamond.

This crossing is affectionately known as "The Downing Diamond of Death". Let us hope it doesn't live up to it's name. Remember to always look both ways before crossing and pay attention to the signals and NO TEXTING!