



The Fire Door

The Official Publication of the Southern California Live Steamers, Inc.

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<http://www.southerncalifornialivesteamers.com>

February 2010

The Southern California Live Steamers, Inc. has been in existence since 1948. The [mission](#) of the Southern California Live Steamers is to educate and promote interest in railroad history by building and operating a miniature railroad facility.

New members are always welcome to join the club; just show up at Wilson Park, 2100 Washington Street, on run day (the first Sunday of the month) or at a regular meeting (the third Saturday of the month). Member support is especially needed on run day! The February run day is [February 7, 2010](#), so please come and support the club.

Regular meetings of the club are held on the third regular Saturday of each month in the club house at Wilson Park, Torrance, California beginning at 10:30 AM. The next club meeting will be [February 20, 2010](#).

2010 SCLS Officers:

President:	Tim Brothers (310) 618 - 0674 TTBrothe@lasd.org
Vice President:	Rudy Guajardo (310) 984 - 9550 xcitedgoats@yahoo.com
Treasurer:	Kelley Smith (562) 598 - 4090 choochookelley@earthlink.net
Secretary:	Lynn Fielding (310) 533 - 8627 lfielding@elcamino.edu

January 16, 2010 Minutes

Meeting opened at 10:40 AM by President Tim Brothers. Lynn Fielding read the November 21, 2009 Meeting Minutes and they were accepted as read and published in the December 2009 newsletter. There were no December Minutes due to the Christmas Party.

Guests present: Herb Griffith and Sarah Reed.

Old Business

Run Day Safety Inspections

Engine and riding cars must be inspected prior to run day operations. Tim Brothers maintains a binder for the check list sheets and will also provide a short inspection check slip to be completed by the engineer on run days.

Shed Project

Tim Brothers provided an update on the shed structure project.

Proposed By Law Changes

A discussion of the proposed new By Laws took place. After the discussion, Bob Bryant motioned that the proposed changes be accepted. Lonnie Cope seconded. Motion passed. Another proposed By Law change was introduced for a two month discussion period.

New Business

Donation

Jim Berryman donated \$1,000 to the Club.

New Members

Herb Griffith and Sarah Reed were welcome as new member of the Southern California Live Steamers.

Meeting adjourned at 11:40 AM. There were 25 members and 2 guests present at the meeting.

Run Day [January 3, 2010](#)
1,850 Riders



It was a sunny and warm January run day, with a cool breeze developing in the early afternoon. Attendance was steady all day with a large crowd of visitors enjoying the first run day of 2010.

The January 16, 2010 run day was cool and overcast with 1,295 riders enjoying the day.



Sarah Reed, a new Southern California Live Steam Member, grew up with trains, as the granddaughter of former Club member Bill Kofahl.

Photograph taken by Lynn Fielding.

Oliver M. Johnston, Jr.
1912 to 2008
Another Early Club Member

By Harlan Hiney



Ollie Johnston became a member of the Southern California Live Steamers in 1947, after being bitten by the live steam bug when visiting Dick Jackson's one inch scale (4 ¾ inch gauge track) back yard layout in Beverly Hills. Fellow Disney animator and rail fan Ward Kimball suggested Ollie talk with Harlan's father, Laurence Hiney, after he decided to have an engine of his own. Laurence had had built stationary engines and had a partially completed half inch scale Pacific, but this would be his first commission to build a one inch scale locomotive. He conferred with Jackson on many occasions during construction, which started in October of 1947. As a 9 year old, Harlan Hiney got to see what was involved in scratch building a miniature steam locomotive. Ollie liked the appearance of the Baltimore and Ohio Pacific that was first built in 1927. Plans were made available to the model maker soon after by Baltimore and Ohio Railroad public relations department employee Larry Sagle and that was why so many half inch locomotives built in the 1930s were 4-6-2 Pacific types.



Logo and photograph from The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Museum at www.borail.org.



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During 1948, Walt Disney was having his studio shop machinists build his own one and a half inch scale 4-4-0 old timer and asked Ollie if he could see his engine under construction. Walt visited my Laurence's backyard machine shop 2 or 3 times and discussed at length the building of a successful miniature steam locomotive. By March 1949, Ollie's chassis was run by air pressure at Jackson's pulling a very pleased owner over the track outside the shop door and by summer the boiler was completed and the Pacific had her first steam test with Laurence at the throttle pulling his two sons, Leland and Harlan, and Ollie.



Positioned at the throttle of his new one inch scale Pacific, Ollie operates on the layout around his home in Flintridge, California in early 1950. She had not yet received her headlight, bell, and the tender lettering of "La Canada Valley". Laurence Hiney's two sons, Leland, 14, and Harlan, 11, sit on cars borrowed from Dick Jackson's Colorado Central Railroad. Photograph taken by Laurence Hiney .

Ollie had recently moved from an apartment in Pasadena to a 3 bedroom ranch style home he had built on an acre of land in the foothills of La Canada Flintridge, northwest of Pasadena. Here he spent about 2 years building 2 connecting loops of track which totaled 1,300 feet. He made a cut about 3 feet deep in order to keep the grade from being too severe, but gave up in the hard decomposed granite, and had to settle for about a 3 percent grade. That certainly gave the engine a workout. Calendar year 1949 not only represents the year Ollie's "baby" was born, but also the year Ollie's wife Marie gave birth to their first son, Rick. Ollie called his railroad the "La Canada Valley" (in this instance, Canada is pronounced Can-Yah-Dah) and his engine the 515. He said it reminded him of going to the station to catch the 5:15 commuter train.

Ollie's engine had a copper boiler, was coal fired, and equipped with cylinders of 1 11/16 inch bore by 2 5/16 inch stroke. Her drivers were 6 9/16 inches in diameter and could go as fast as the track and terrified passengers would allow for in each situation. Although based on the Baltimore and Ohio Pacific, it was largely a free lance design. In 1951, their second son, Ken, was born and like his older brother, Rick, grew up thinking it was not unusual to have a railroad in the back yard.



In 1954, Ollie got the idea to have Laurence Hiney build a Shay geared locomotive to utilize a large part of his property on the hill between the street and his house. This subsequently did not come to pass, however, the Shay was built. Ollie had bought some castings for a Willamette Locomotive, an engine design as close to a Lima Shay as patents would allow. Laurence used the truck castings but it was decided that Lima's design of the 3 cylinder engine would be best. While Laurence built the copper boiler and the engine itself, Ollie bought a lathe and milling machine and did much of the other machine work himself.

The wooden cab was completely fabricated by Ollie. Laurence made wood patterns and would turn his garage with it's cement floor, into a foundry as needed. Even though the crucible only held about 2 cups of molten metal when full, pouring brass at 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit was something one does not soon forget. Before the project progressed too far, Laurence and his son Harlan visited the Westside Lumber Company, at Tuolumne, in the Mother Lode Country situated in the Sierra foothills. In 1955, they were still using narrow gauge Shays. In addition to Laurence getting much needed information first hand and talking with the engine house foreman, he and Harlan got cab rides as well.



Built by Laurence Hiney, Ollie's second steamer was a free - lance two truck Shay, similar to Lima Number 3353, and was Number.2 of the Flintridge Lumber Company Railroad. Laurence Hiney photograph taken in 1956

By the summer of 1956 Ollie's 2 truck free lance Shay was completed. She weighed 155 pounds and was powered by 3 piston valve cylinders of 7/8 inch bore by 1 ¼ inch stroke and became Engine Number 2, of the Flintridge Lumber Company. Harlan had just graduated from high school and the Shay was his first lettering job on a miniature locomotive. It was even more challenging due to using gold paint, but Ollie was pleased at how it looked on the maroon cab and tender.



In the early 1960's, the Johnston and Thomas family's purchased property near the town of Julian in San Diego County and had a summer home built. They planned to build a narrow gauge railroad around their land and contacted friend Jerry Best to try and locate a small steam locomotive. A 3 foot gauge 0-4-0T Porter was located in Puyallup, Washington, just outside of Tacoma. It was not in the best of condition and Ollie sent Laurence there to see if it was worth buying. On November 21, 1965 during a light rain, Laurence determined that it was worth rebuilding. So, the next day, Porter Number 2472, built in 1901 was loaded on a truck and sent to Flintridge, where she underwent complete rebuilding. She sat by Ollie's garage for the next several years. Her saddle tank was removed and friend Art Fleming, who had built the tender tanks for Disneyland engines, and was a Southern California Live Steamer charter member, made one for his new 4 wheel tender.



In October of 1968, Ollie's operates his 3 foot gauge Porter Number 3, on the Deer Lake Park and Julian Railroad, near Julian in San Diego County. Photograph taken by Leland Hiney.

By 1968, Engine Number 3 of the Deer Lake Park and Julian was running on a half mile of track at her new home. In October of that year the Harlan family visited and all got a turn to run Number 3 for a couple of hundred feet. Later, Ollie had a small yellow caboose built to go with several open riding cars. Finally the name "Marie E." was put on the cab side, named for his ever patient wife Marie Estelle.

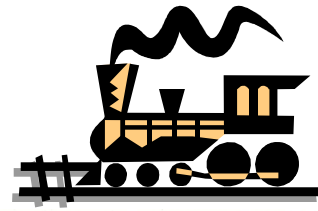


Ollie poses in the cab of his Porter in 1979, now with a larger smoke stack and named the "Marie E". His wife Marie, wearing a Mickey Mouse sweat shirt, prepares to throw the switch in this photograph used on their Christmas card that year. Photograph courtesy of the Johnston Family collection.

Ollie graduated from Stanford University's Art program in 1934 and soon he and fellow art student Frank Thomas joined Disney Studio, just as Walt was working on his first feature film, "Snow White". During the following 43 years these two young men climbed to the top of their field in animation. They also became life long friends and when Ollie built his house in Flintridge, Frank bought the adjoining property down slope of Ollie's, and for the next 50 years they would share a close friendship. Even when not at the studio, they would bounce ideas off one another when either was in a quandary as how a character should be presented. After rising to animation directors, Walt referred to them and seven other indispensable animators as "The Nine Old Men." Harlan was privileged to be acquainted with three of them, Ward Kimball, Frank Thomas, and Ollie Johnston. Ollie was the last of "The Nine Old Men". The phrase represented Walt's sense of humor and was derived from President Franklin Roosevelt's description of the Supreme Court during the 1930s.

One of Ollie's first major animation jobs was the blue fairy in Pinocchio. Walt did not want her to be a cartoon style and Ollie had a lot of figure drawing experience. In 1948 the Harlan family was given a tour of Disney Studio by Ollie and he showed us what he was working on at the time. It was a jail break sequence from Ichabod and Mr. Toad. Both Frank and Ollie retired in 1978, and wrote books together on the art of animation.

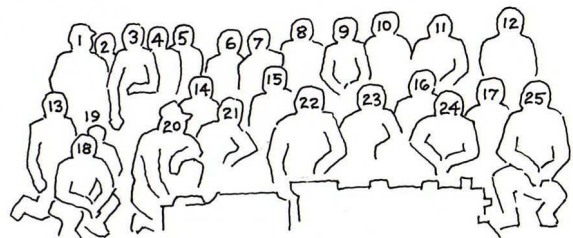
In 1998, Ollie ran the "Marie E." for the last time as they sold their property in Julian. Shortly after that, John Lasseter of Pixar bought the engine. In May of 2005 John surprised Ollie by taking it to Disneyland and before the park opened on the morning of May 10th a very surprised 92 year old Ollie ran his former engine around the park for a final farewell to a nearly life long involvement with Disney and a passion for steam railroading.



Group photograph taken at Ollie Johnston's home and provided by the Johnston Family collection.

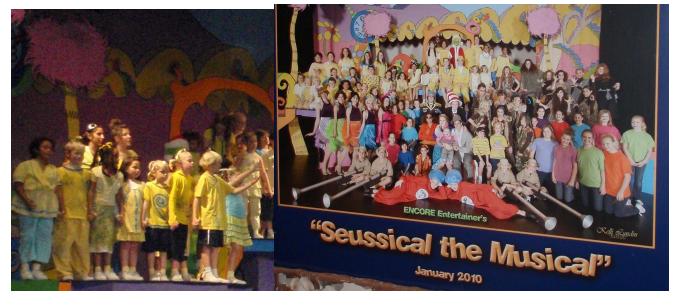
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA LIVE STEAMERS AT OLLIE JOHNSTON'S
1" SCALE LA CAÑADA VALLEY R.R., FLINTRIDGE, CALIF. -1950.

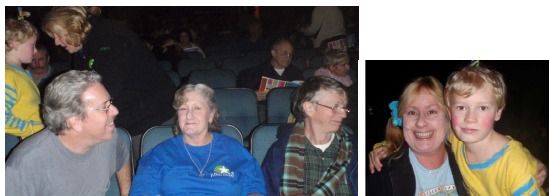
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|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1 - FRED CARNAHAN | 10 - MURVEL GLASS | 19 - |
| 2 - | 11 - CHARLES COLE | 20 - OLLIE JOHNSTON |
| 3 - LAURENCE HINEY | 12 - JIM URQUHART | 21 - ALLAN BIRGE |
| 4 - | 13 - LELAND HINEY | 22 - |
| 5 - | 14 - HARLAN HINEY | 23 - |
| 6 - DICK JACKSON | 15 - MARK PIPER | 24 - STAN CHOVIL |
| 7 - | 16 - | 25 - ROY BOSWELL |
| 8 - JIM KEITH | 17 - BILL COOPER | |
| 9 - | 18 - | |



Identification of the persons in the group photograph is provided in the associated drawing.

Junior Club member Daniel Genuth recently appeared in the production Seussical, The Musical, by Encore Entertainers.





Seussical is based upon the Dr. Seuss characters. Photographs taken by Lynn Fielding.



Comments, Ideas, or Suggestions

As newsletter editor, I welcome your feedback, comments, corrections, and suggestions for material to include. Please contact me directly, at the address provided, by phone, or by e - mail.

Lynn

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Steamers, keep on chugging along!

Upcoming Club Events

Run Day	February 07, 2010
Business Meeting and Run Day	February 20, 2010
Run Day	March 07, 2010
Business Meeting and Run Day	March 20, 2010

Southern California Live Steamers
P.O. Box 11322
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Happy Valentine's Day

