



# The Fire Door

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

P.O. Box 11322, Torrance, CA 90510 - 1322 (310) 328 - 0236

March 2009

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 March run day is **March 1, 2009**, so please come and support the club.

Regular meetings of the club are held on the third regular Sunday of each month in the club house at Wilson Park, Torrance, California beginning at 10:30 AM. The next club meeting will be **March 21, 2009**.

## 2009 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

## February 21, 2009 Minutes

Meeting opened at 11:02 AM by President Tim Brothers. The January minutes were read by Lynn Fielding and published in the newsletter.

Guests present were Rory Hawkins, Keith Decker, and Donna Valencia.

## Old Business

### Insurance

Kelley Smith announced that the Club has paid \$1,800 for the annual insurance to the City of Torrance.

### Pay Pay

Phil Cohen has activated the Pay Pal function on the web site so that donations to the Club may be accepted. Rosalie Manzo motioned that donors be listed in the newsletter and on the web site unless they wish to remain anonymous. Heather Ambler seconded. All in favor.

### Torrance Rail Park at Wilson Park

Tim Brothers provided an update about the Torrance Rail Park development project.

### Water Testing

Phil Cohen gave a report on the status of the Club's water quality from a report he received from Culigan. He has purchased two different types of test kits to continue monitoring the water quality. Heather Amber motioned that a water committee be formed. Rudy Guajardo seconded. All in favor.

## New Business

### Donation

Pat Dobbins donated a heat gun to the Club.

### Naming Things in Honor Club Members

Tim Brothers commented on honoring Club members who have died with a feature named for them in the Club Compound. Dave Cox motioned that the Club honor the memory of Club members by naming something for them. Lynn Fielding seconded. Tim Brothers and Lynn Fielding will create a list of what features have been named and who the features honor.

### New Member

Rory Hawkins was accepted as a new Club member.

### Third Saturday Run Day

Tim announced that the third Saturday run days will begin on March 21, 2009 from 12:00 - 3:00 PM. Business Meeting will begin at 10:30 AM beginning in March.

Meeting adjourned at 11:55 AM. There were 24 members and 3 guests presents at the meeting.

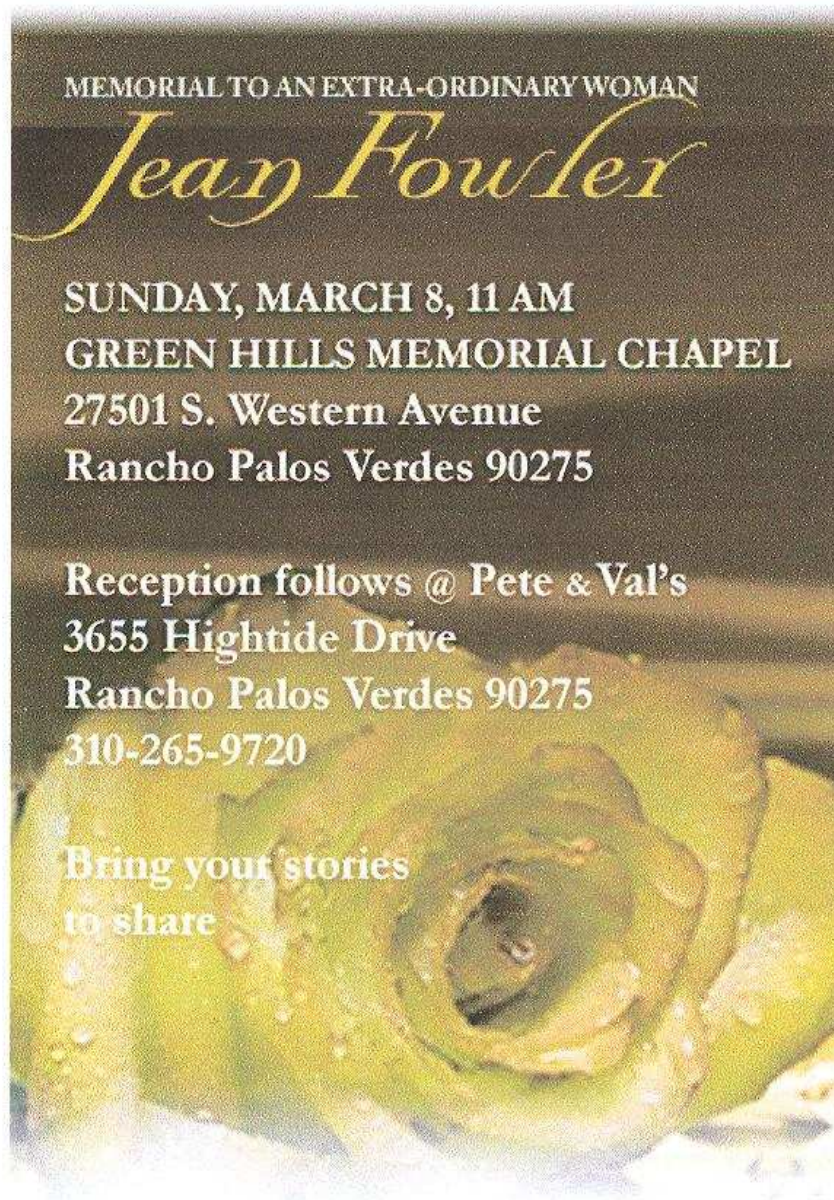
Run Day February 1, 2009

**1,966** Riders



It was a cool and sunny day for Super Bowl Sunday, but the riders came for their monthly train ride. Many riders enjoyed a ride on the Crenshaw Line as a light breeze developed from the northwest.





**No wearing black, as Jean would not wish it.**

**Directions to the mortuary:**

<http://www.greenhillsmortuary.com/FuneralHome/Default.asp>

**Directions from the mortuary to  
Pete and Vals's home:**

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps?1qn=Green+Hills+Memorial+Park&1c=Rancho+Palos+Verdes&1s=CA&1a=27501+S+Western+Ave&1z=90275&1y=US&1l=33.77026&1q=-118.309579&1v=ADDRESS&1id=43975408&2c=Rancho+Palos+Verdes&2s=CA&2a=3655+Hightide+Dr&2z=90275-6134&2y=US&2l=33.737017&2q=-118.342014&2v=ADDRESS>

A memorial bench dedicated to Jean is going to be placed in South Coast Botanical Gardens. Anyone wishing to make a donation toward the bench may send it to:

Foundation office  
Jean Fowler's Memorial Bench  
South Coast Botanic Garden  
26300 Crenshaw Boulevard  
Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274 - 2515

(310) 544-6815

## A founding Member

by Harlan Hiney

Richard B. Jackson (1886 - 1971) was a founding member of our club in 1942. Before the association with Little Engines Company in Lomita, his one inch scale back yard railroad was used by the club for their Sunday run days.

While not a machinist by trade, Dick was a skilled craftsman equally at home working with metal as well as wood. When Dick was a young man, the automobile industry was still in its infancy. He created a business that gave auto buyers a multitude of accessories. Things that come standard on today's cars were not included in those early days. Still a young man in his forties, Dick sold his business just before the 1929 stock market crash. With his money securely invested he was able to devote ample time to building a miniature railroad larger than one half inch scale which was popular at the time. Rather than riding sidesaddle on a car perched on a 3 foot high elevated track with rails only two and one half inches apart, Dick set out to build his to twice that size and ride at ground level.

By July of 1930 Dick, with the help of his brother Stanley, had completed what has been considered the first one inch scale live steamer west of Chicago to run at ground level. Dick chose the gauge of four and three quarters inches, which was more to scale than the gauge of five inches made popular in England.

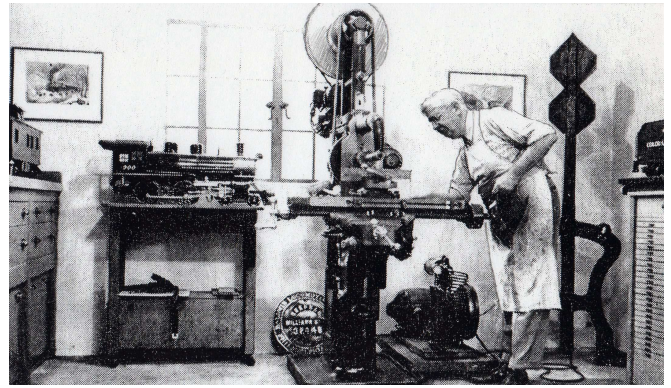
A resident of Denver, Dick patterned his steamer after a standard gauge 700 class ten wheeler built by Alco-Brooks for the Denver and Rio Grande. Dick shortened his steamer from a 4-6-0 to a 4-4-0 so he could carry it in his car. He called his railroad the Colorado Central, after the real line of the same name that ran west of Denver in the late 1870's.

Shortly before World War Two, Dick moved to Santa Monica. Not long after that, he bought a two story traditional style home, with bay windows, on Alpine Drive in Beverly Hills. He built a 300 foot loop of track in his back yard, and it became the 900's home for more than 30 years.

More information about the first layout where members of the early Southern California Live Steamers could run their engines will appear in future articles in the newsletter.



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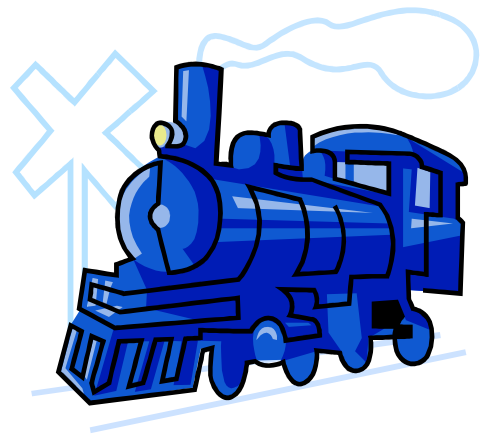


Dick is pictured working at the milling machine in his machine shop that connected to the rear of the garage at his home in Beverly Hills. The 900 sits on her stand ready to be carried out for the next steam up. At the far right, the tender and turntable sit on top of a cabinet, while the caboose can be seen at the far left. At the bottom of the bench are 2 tracks where the cars were kept. This photograph was taken in 1941, before Dick restored the South Park Railroad's Harp switch stand which can be seen at the right side of the photograph.



The 900 is posed on the trestle, carrying white flags, and popping off with a full head of steam. Dick removed the seats from the tender and both cars for a touch of realism, in this shot taken in 1944.

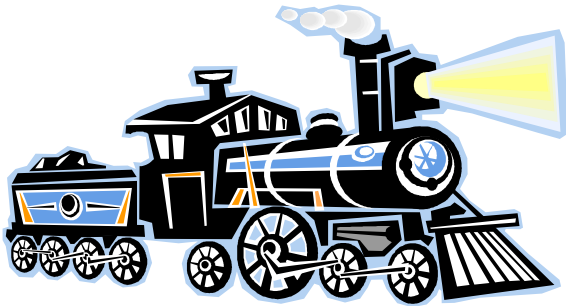
Photographs were taken by Gerald M. Best



**Of Interest:  
Second Run day of the Month**

Beginning on March 21, 2009, the Southern California Live Steamers will operate a second run day each month on the third Saturday of the month from 12:00 – 3:00 PM.

The business meetings will begin at 10:30 AM instead of 11:00 AM to facilitate preparations for the third Saturday of the month run days.



Visit <http://www.sanpedro.com/spcom/redcar.htm> for information about the Red Cars which operate along a 1.5 mile long line in the Port of Los Angeles waterfront area.

**Ride the Red Cars!**



# Upcoming Club Events

Run Day	March 1, 2009
Run Day and Business Meeting	March 21, 2009
Run Day	April 5, 2009
Run Day and Business Meeting	April 18, 2009

## 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!

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

