



Holiday Banquet

Good time at our annual holiday get-together Saturday, December 14 at Viva Rancho Cantina (Glen Manchester Photo)

New Online Membership Renewal Coming in 2020

By Wilbur Dong

This coming year, the membership renewal procedure will be conducted online using the newly designed LALS RM Website. (For members who do not have computer access, you will receive a paper renewal form in the mail.)

All members will be notified by email as to when you can pay your 2020 dues. At that time we will provide step-by-step instructions on how to begin the registration process, and pay your dues either by credit card using the Museum PayPal account, or by check.

For those of you who assisted in testing the new web site by registering, we thank you. Once the system is ready and the PayPal account is turned on, you can login and make your 2020 dues payment by credit card or by check.

The Year of Smaller Scales

By Alex O'Donnell

This year has been a very productive one on the smaller scales with a lot of new structures and trackwork. I cannot begin to say how happy I am to see and support the resurgence of these scales, which are more easily transportable, affordable, and the backbone of our Club's genesis.

Firstly, we made some massive progress on the storage front with the construction of two new sheds. The first of those two barns required demolition and removal of the decade-old Alkire Carbarn. While the demolition and grading work was led by myself and assisted by Sean Donaldson, the new structure was largely constructed by the LaGalys. In addition to this new structure, Rob Nuccio delivered his beautiful new carbarn, which Tim and I helped install and tie in.

Rehabilitation of the existing railroad has also been a priority since I started ramping up my efforts in 2014, and I'm happy to report that we replaced another couple hundred feet of wood ties with plastic ones this year. Nick Guzman and I replaced ties and panels along the southwest curve, Cooper Yard, and the Jungle Cruise Bypass be-

(Continued on page 4)

Public Service

December

- 22 Public rides
- 29 Public rides

January

- 5,12 Public rides
- 19 Public rides; Disney Barn Open/Steam Plant in operation
- 26 Public rides

Inside: photos of projects completed or ongoing in 2019.

SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD

By Diana Manchester, Secretary



At 7:00 pm on December 2, 2019, the December BOD Meeting was called to order by President Ted Merchant. Six Directors were present as well as 28 members.

Secretary's Report – the November Minutes were approved unanimously. Martha made an announcement for the Holiday Banquet, scheduled for December 14 at Viva Rancho Cantina. There were no party requests.

Altmyer Signals Update – Drew LaGaly reported that the crew plans to pick up some of the signals this Friday, December 6. Cement pads and conduit are in place. The Signal crew inspected the signals and will be hooking up the electricity after they are set in place. Bear Mustoe volunteered to help with transportation.

Vice-President's Report – Bill Schirmer said we have a busy day Saturday, December 14. It is a Club workday, the Staubach shower will be held from 10 am to 1 pm in the Picnic Pavilion, and a movie company will be filming onsite from 6 am to 12 noon. They will be parking in both our lots. Bill also publicly thanked Martha and Ron Figueroa and Diana Manchester for cooking our Thanksgiving dinner at our November 16 Steam Meet.

Membership Report – Nick Suncin welcomed Richard Roy as a new probationary member. Richard has joined to support his seven year-old son, Max's dream, which was to own a steam engine. He says they have been at the Club the past three weekends running their one-inch scale 2-6-0 mogul. At their home in Orange County they have trains in every room and Max is also hoping for a backyard railroad. Robert Lamont was reintroduced after an absence of a year. He originally went through probation in 2001 and works on locomotives large and small. Welcome back, Robert. Wayne Crabb

will be giving up his position on the Membership Committee the end of December; Nick Suncin will stay on, and Jeremy Steinert offered to serve. Thank you Wayne, for your outstanding service.

Superintendent's Report – Jeremy Steinert reported that with the recent rains we have been proactively scraping sections of our slopes along the Crystal Springs division to avoid landslides, which seems to be working. Both the Sherwood Station switches have been disabled and we have been using Track #1. Les and Doug will examine the switches and hammer out their points. This might be a workaround until we can find or build new ones.

Jeremy also reported that there are a number of members who would like to learn how to build track panels. Les said he will include them in his next work session. The track at Minden needs a switch replaced. Doug thinks the tree there may have to come out.

Ted asked Jeremy if he was retiring from his Superintendent role. Jeremy said yes, his life is busy with his new job and marriage and other Club duties. Drew LaGaly and Les Kovacs have volunteered to take on the responsibilities. The Bobcat is out for repairs; Les will call them about an ETA. The control stick for the forklift needs to be professionally restored, per Bill Schirmer, and a new clutch is needed for the tractor; he will look into these.

Website Update – we are continuing to test the site for the member registering (login) process. Let Diana or Wilbur Dong know if you are having problems or questions. We need members to help us on an IT committee. Let Zak Holman or Jeremy know if you are interested.

Disney Shed Presentation – Drew LaGaly shared plans for a three-section shed to be built in Disney's E. Meadow. It will house and display the mine cars and the plantation engine (being restored). The shed will be a steel structure like the Combine shed and have three rollup doors for viewing on public days. It

will have a flat roof and door at the end. There will be no cost to us.

2020 Board introduced – the outgoing directors moved to the audience and Ted invited the new directors to the table. They are: Steve Rodstein, David Holman, Martha Figueroa and Alex O'Donnell; congratulations! Officers were elected for the coming year: Ted as President, Bill as Vice-President, Alex O'Donnell as Secretary and Tim as Treasurer. The retiring directors were thanked.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

New Conductor Course January 22

The next conductors course will be held Sunday, January 12, 2020 at 10:30 am. We will meet in the Kountry Kitchen.

Please contact Fred Lack to confirm. Cell: (310) 213-0722 or email: atlantis90230@yahoo.com.

Please bring a whistle, or one will be available at the ticket booth. Please bring a radio set to 8.2.

Equipment Inspection and Recertification January 11

Club Equipment will be recertified on January 11 between 9 am to 2 pm. Private equipment will be recertified after 2 pm. Cammarata is the coordinator.

Meet Our New and Returning Members



Richard Roy



Robert Lamont
Returning Member



From the SUPER



By
Jeremy
Steinert

Hello Live Steamers! I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving surrounded by friends and family!

Rain and Rocks: Rainy season in LA has arrived along with our turkeys and the ground is getting soft and muddy. So far, there hasn't been much debris to clear from the tracks, but there was a fresh bit of erosion that washed down in Eucalyptus Canyon. The Mountain Division remains open for the moment but I expect more material to come down during our next storm. Last year we preemptively removed a bunch of loose soil from the hillside and it may be a good idea to do that again in the coming months.

Leaves: Speaking of material on the tracks, this is the peak time that our deciduous trees are dropping their leaves. The nectarine is already nearly bare and most of the oaks are not too far behind. We've been doing a great job keeping on top of the situation, so let's keep that energy up! Also, it may be a good time to clean out areas where the rails are filled in, such as at our crossings and station. Keeping these areas free of mud and organic material prevents early rail rot. All it takes is a nozzle on the end of a hose. If someone enjoys playing with water, I'd be happy to point out the areas that could use a quick blasting.

New Signals: Steve Altmayer donated a number of semaphores and crossing signals to the Club. They have been installed at our facility! (See article on page 6.) Thank you to the members who moved the equipment and put it into place, as well as a huge thanks to Steve for this donation. This is an amazing Christmas present for the Club! Next up will be wiring which the Signals Division is gleefully looking forward to. They plan on getting the crossings working first, followed by the signals in the G gauge garden, and finally come up with a plan

President's Message



By
Ted
Merchant,
President

Hello LALSRLM:

Here we are another year behind us! Looking back, I realize the incredible adventure of being your President. I thank you all for making it so. I particularly thank the Board of Directors: eight energetic, thoughtful and focused people that believe in LALSRLM. We are indebted to the four Directors that are stepping down from the Board and I want to mention each of them:

Diana Manchester is an absolutely masterful secretary. I talk to her several times weekly to keep myself straight. She is tremendously supportive. She knows everything about our Club. She works her heart out. She is a terrific marketer. She keeps terrific minutes. And she records everything! I already told her I will miss our frequent conversations. Her response is: "So keep calling".

Doug Young is a perennial member. Whatever we are doing, whenever we do it, Doug shows up. He is happy to do any-

for the semaphore near Nelson Tunnel.

A Fond Farewell: Finally, this will be my last report to you all as Superintendent. This has been a wonderful year for me with a new job and getting married to Jasmyn after nine and a half years of dating! Unfortunately, this also means that my free time has become even more limited. Andrew LaGaly has stepped up as my replacement. He's been involved with a lot of the major projects here at the Club, so it was a perfect fit. I won't go away completely, though! I'll still remain in my roles as Caretaker, Signal Maintainer, and Steam Plant Operator, as well as take on a minor role assisting Nick Suncin with new membership for the foreseeable future. See you on the rails!

thing particularly if it means operating a vehicle with a diesel engine and four-foot tires! Doug thinks like a live steamer. He knows our history, and his input keeps us on track.

Wayne Crabb is a total gentleman. He gets things done by being thoughtful, positive and supportive. He takes time to reason things out. He doesn't waste time with bluster (I hate bluster). And he runs Sherwood Station with a smile! Serving the public is a backbone of what we do. Wayne not only does it well, he advises the Board so we all can do it well. I don't know anyone at the Club that doesn't respect Wayne and consider him a good friend.

Drew LaGaly caught me by surprise. He seemed quiet and unassertive. I was totally wrong! He is smart, energetic and appropriately visionary. Drew not only identifies challenges; he proposes appropriate solutions and he gets the job done! He directed several significant projects this year (e.g. the O'Brien-Moore Bridge and Crystal Springs Drive rebuilds), and they were done strategically, on schedule and above our quality expectations. We all need to support Drew as he becomes next year's Superintendent.

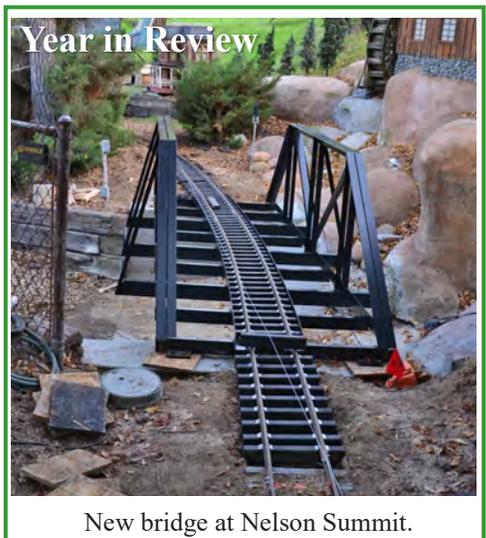
Thank you so much Diana, Doug, Wayne and Drew for your service to LALSRLM. It is a joy working with you, and we look forward to your leadership and comradery in the future.

So that's the way it is! Please accept my continued best wishes for the holidays and a joyful 2020. I'll see you at the rails.

Your comments and concerns are always welcome.

Ted Merchant

EdwardBMerchant@gmail.com



New bridge at Nelson Summit.

2019 Year in Review— Much Accomplished

Here is a list of our achievements this year. See photos of these projects throughout this *Booster*. Thanks to all the members who contributed to making these projects a reality and the Museum a success. For a complete listing of small scale projects see the Smaller Scales article beginning on page 1.

Facility Improvements

January-June

- Facility clean-up / East Meadow re-seeded – January through May
- Nelson Summit Bridge rebuild – February
- O'Brien-Moore Bridge restoration – February through May
- Kheen Tower refurbishment and relocation – March to April
- Repaving of Crystal Springs Drive and Sutchville parking lot - May
- Electrical drop and new sub-panel – February to April; June
- New facility lighting and signage – April - May

July-December

- One inch car barn rebuild – March to June; November to December
- New drawbridge at gauge 1 – May/June; August to December
- Miniature buildings West End – November

Ongoing

- One Inch western expansion – major progress in west meadow
- Crystal Springs pit renovation – October onward
- Ongoing track rebuilds, equipment upgrades, signals work, irrigation system repairs, and grounds maintenance

Club Special Events

- Steam Only Meets – March 22 and November 16
- Rail & Road Event – April 28
- Spring Meet – May 24-27
- Scent Dog Trials – July 12-13
- Disney Barn 20th Anniversary Celebration – July 13
- Fall Meet – Sept 6-8
- Operations Meet – Nov 9
- Potlucks/Movie Nights/Night Runs for members and their friends (June – Nov)



Nameplates added to Bell Tower.

Smaller Scale Projects

(Continued from page 1)

hind Old Sherwood Station.

In addition to all this, we have made significant progress this year on the herculean effort known as the 4-3/4" Gauge West End Extension. Michael Mahan led the design and construction of a new gigantic 60-foot trestle spanning the Smith Valley wash, and Nick Guzman completed rock and track work along San Fernando Curve with help from Rod and Jake Dierking. The loop in Smith Valley is nearly completed.

Finally, we added the long-anticipated new extension for the 3-1/2" gauge to Rocky River Subdivision. This has been in the pipeline for almost a decade and got delayed due to the complex frog work needed. Les Bernell laid third rail along the corridor this Fall, and I milled the necessary modifications into the diamond at Rocky River Junction. Still in progress are the three new dual-gauge switches which will be reinstalled.

2020 Goals

We have a lot of goals for 2020 as well. Once the trestle and Stutson Crossing are complete, we will be focusing our efforts on the return leg back towards Purinton Junction where we will eventually cross over from East to West End. Back on the East End, we plan to begin footing work for the Keddie Wye Interchange near Lake Schirmer, where the extension will spring-board off of the existing loops.

Efforts will continue in the East End as well, as Steamplant Junction Yard will receive capacity and layout improvements to better utilize space. We will continue to focus on tie replacement as we narrow down on the remaining wood tie sections. Inchberg water tower, built by Bud Whitmer in 1970, is also being restored by Chris Mahony.

All in all, these projects will be a handful, but I am certain we can make these a reality with all the progress we've made this year. Thank you to all who have helped and shared the vision in making LALS the true destination for small scalars.

Crystal Springs Block Wall Will Replace Ties

By Drew LaGaly

Project Overview:

Replacement of north retaining wall in current pit area. The current north retaining wall in the pit area is failing and getting ready to give way. The idea of this project is to replace the retaining wall with cement blocks as well as move the retaining wall further north to gain more space in the pit area.

Retaining Wall Overview:

The wall will be constructed of cement “lego” blocks that are currently in the members parking lot on the east end of the facility. These cement blocks measure 32” x 32” x 5’. The existing wall in the pit will be taken out and railroad ties disposed of; then we will dig into that berm and remove lots of the existing dirt. We are planning on gaining as much of that area as we can to make our pit area larger. The grand plan of this project is to eventually replace the south retaining wall in the pit, then have a steel roof placed over the top of that whole area. The cement blocks on either side would act as the foundation for the walls

to rest on and would be more than capable of supporting the weight of the roof.

This proposal is only for the north retaining wall. At this point we are not discussing drainage from the canyon, roof coverings, or the south retaining wall. Note that the design of the north retaining wall has taken into account the future location of the south retaining wall.

Scope of Work:

1. Remove existing foliage south of the caution tape.
2. Remove existing railroad ties acting as the current retaining wall.
3. Dig out berm 20’ to the north. Approximately 451 cubic yards of dirt.
4. Dirt will be dug out with excavator, loaded in dump trailer then dumped in outer parking lot.
5. Shoot grade, prep area for blocks to be placed.
6. Lay first course of cement blocks.
7. Lay second course, continue as necessary.

New Free Weekend Griffith Park Shuttle

There is now a new FREE Griffith Park shuttle for visitors to Griffith Park. The GP ParkLine shuttle runs every 15-20 minutes on Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 10 pm, and connects riders to all the major attractions in the park. There are 13 stops on the route, including **LA Live Steamers (Stop 12)**, Travel Town, the Zoo, the Autry, the Carousel, the Greek Theatre, and the Observatory (Stop 1). See map of route on page 7.

For more information, visit <https://www.laparks.org/griffithpark/planyourtrip#DrivePark>



Year in Review



Clockwise from top: Newly-coated girders placed at O'Brien-Moore Bridge ; Small scales Diamond at Rocky River Junction; One-inch trestle in Smith Valley; New one inch barn; Repaved drive.



Altmayer Donation to Club

Vintage Signals Arrive in Time for Christmas

By Drew Lagaly

The six vintage railroad signals are now in their new home at LALSRM, just in time for the holidays. Friday, December 13 was the final day of moving the signals from Steve and Georgia Altmayer's house.

The team got the signals all back to the Club in one piece without damaging any. Friday the team started the day by setting in place the signals picked up on December 6.

They are very heavy, and we used the Gradall to move and place them. Around 10 am the team finished up and headed to Steve's house to dismount and load the remaining two signals from the Altmayer patio.

The job would have been completed all on December 6, but shortly after lunch time it started raining hard, and we had to load up what was already dismounted and head to LALSRM to drop the trailers.

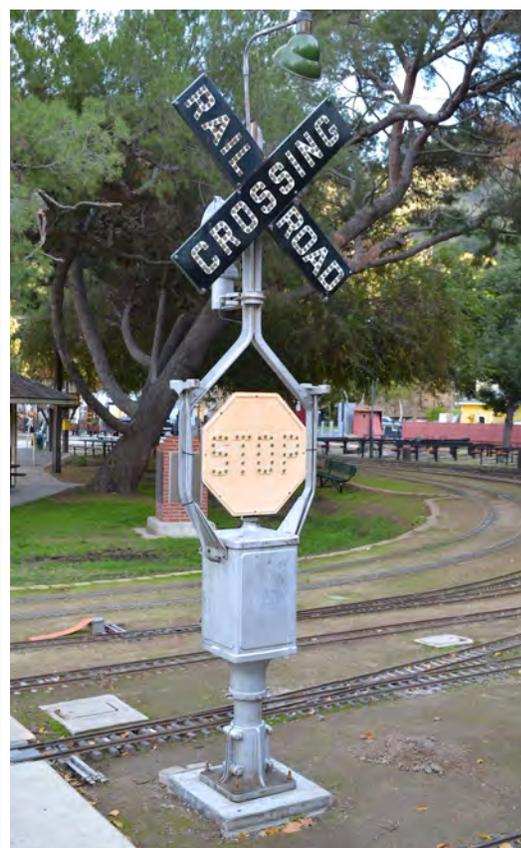
On Saturday, December 14 we set the rest of signals onto their footings. Thanks to all the members who assisted us.

The Signals Crew will take over the final step of connecting the wiring so each can be operated. They are very interesting to watch and we are looking forward to demonstrating them.

Thanks again to Steve and Georgia for donating these impressive examples of railroad history to our museum. Next month we hope to share the background about each signal.



Clockwise from top: Levi, Les, Doug and Tim removing signals from Steve's home patio; Griswold rotating stop sign signal; vintage semaphore near Nelson Tunnel; and vintage Wig Wag Signal at Members Gate. (Photos by Drew LaGaly and Diana Manchester).



Who's been Working on the Railroad

Jeremy Steinert, General Superintendent

November 2019

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Alex O'Donnell | Lisa Lipton |
| Andrew LaGaly | Les Kovacs |
| Bear Mustoe | Mark Vreeken |
| Bill Schirmer | Martha Figueroa |
| Bill Walker | Mel Bresee |
| Bob Crone | Michael Mahan |
| Charles Rhoades | Miles Kristman |
| Dave Holman | Nick Suncin |
| David Clark | Nick Guzman |
| Darrell Payne | Ray Burden |
| Diana Manchester | Roderick Fritz |
| Don Kallgren | Ron Hitchcock |
| Doug Young | Ross Harper |
| Frances Barnes | Ruth Payne |
| Michael Murphy | Ryan Hechinger |
| Glen Manchester | Scott Hoagland |
| Jeanne Olson | Steve Altmayer |
| Gregg Olson | Steve Sauber |
| Harrison Hitchcock | Steve Rodstein |
| Jack Streit | Stevy Brock |
| Jeremy Steinert | Ted Merchant |
| Jim Baker | Tim LaGaly |
| Jim DeBiaso | Tim Silver |
| John DePhillip Jr. | Tom Lang |
| Joseph Clow | Wayne Crabb |
| Kathy Crabb | Zak Holman |
| Larry Tighe | |

SUNDAY EXTRA BOARD

November 2019

November Ridership

November 3 657 November 17 716
November 10 625 November 24 574

November 2019 — 2,572
Total YTD 2019 — 28,896
Total YTD 2018 — 29,797

Engineers and Conductors

Bear	Mark Vreeken
Darrell Payne	Nick Guzman
David Lazarus	Paul Liu
Francis Barnes	Peter Fuad
Gregg Olson	Ron Nelson
Harrison Hitchcock	Ryan Hechinger
Jeanne Olson	Scott Hoagland
Jeremy Steinert	Steve Rudy
Joseph Clow	Tim Silver
Marc Weiss	Tom Harwood

Safety Coordinators

Jim Cammarata, Michael Murphy, Ron Hitchcock

Station Masters

Robert Guzman, Wayne Crabb, Don Donaldson

Souvenirs and Tickets

Kathy Crabb, Martha Figueroa, Jeanne Olson, George Becker, Carolyn Hoagland, Jim Dubensky, Marc Weiss, Larry Mitchell, Bear

Member Schedule

December

- 22 Public rides
- 29 Public rides

January

- 5 Public rides
- 6 Board Meeting
- 11 Work Day and General Meeting; **Change Directions; Safety Inspection**
- 12 Public rides
- 19 Public rides; Disney Barn Open/Steam Plant in operation
- 26 Public rides



The *Engine Booster* is the monthly publication of the Los Angeles Live Steamers Railroad Museum, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

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Diana Manchester • Alex O'Donnell
Christie Edinger • Drew LaGaly



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Phone (323) 661-8958
Website: LALSRM.org

2019 Officers and Directors

President	Ted Merchant
Vice President	Bill Schirmer
Secretary	Diana Manchester
Treasurer	Tim LaGaly
Wayne Crabb	Diana Manchester
Les Kovacs	Ted Merchant
Tim LaGaly	Andrew LaGaly
Bill Schirmer	Doug Young

Larry Fisher – Friendship Forged through Live Steam

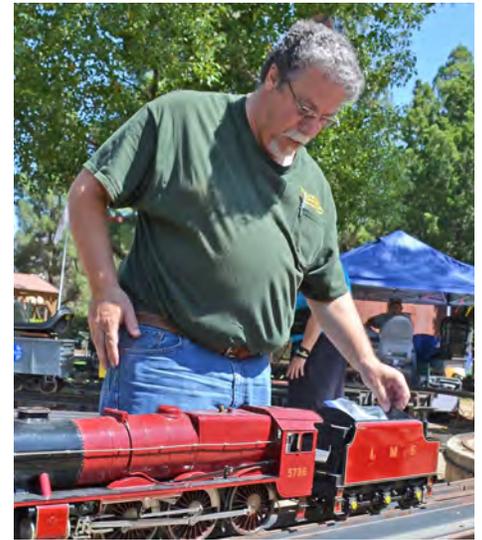
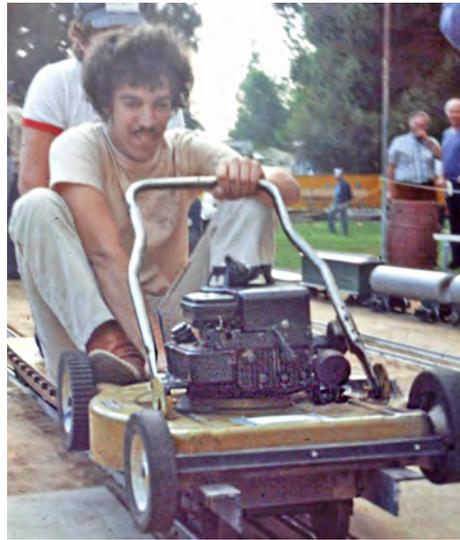
By Matt Swain

Larry's cancer and subsequent death have hit me pretty hard. I was so happy to have had him back on my list of friends after his escape to the east so many years ago. Upon his return, we both really enjoyed reestablishing our friendship and I was hoping that it would last many more years.

Here are some of my memories about Larry.

Larry, in his mid-teenage years, about 1975, lived in North Hollywood where he became acquainted with a neighbor, LALS member Bill McLucas. Bill took Larry under his wing and began a tradition of taking Larry to breakfast and on to LALS for both Saturday workdays and Sunday run days. Gradually, Larry became a part of the fabric of LALS.

About age 16, Larry was hired by Chet Peterson to work at Railroad Supply Corporation in Burbank where his knowledge of the hobby expanded rapidly. The only documented evidence that I am aware of regarding poor judgment on Larry's part was the photo of his piloting "The Lawnmower" for a lap around the LALS track with me seated behind him. "The Lawnmower" had been built from an actual lawnmower by a group of our friends, as a jab at the diesel locomotive fans. The builders knew better than to be seen operating it, but being younger and more foolhardy, Larry's and my standards weren't quite so high. I took the first lap, thus



Larry and Matt Swain on "The Lawnmower" circa 1975; Larry at 2019 Fall Meet.

avoiding the cameras, but Larry took the second lap, becoming infamous, with photographic proof in the process. Chet Peterson subsequently "invited" Larry into his office to talk about what WAS and what

A celebration of life to honor Larry will be held after the New Year. The NHRA has generously offered their facility . More details to come.

WAS NOT appropriate behavior for a RRSC employee (diesel locomotives represented a large segment of their business). Truth was, I and several of the builders of

"The Lawn Mower" were former RRSC employees, but were beyond the reach of reprimand. Like myself, at RRSC Larry picked up a lot of knowledge and skills that served him well as he moved through his career. We would joke about "The Lawnmower incident" any time we were together. It is a memory that I will always treasure.

Larry worked for Disney Imagineering for a number of years, starting in Glendale and eventually transferring to Orlando, FL. More recently, Larry worked as Executive Director at the Circus World Museum in Baraboo, Wisconsin. Over the years, Larry's interests and expertise expanded to include hot rod and custom cars, antique motorcycles, miniature automobiles, wooden boats, restoration of a historic house and just about anything that might serve as an outlet for his boundless energy and creativity.

Larry returned to California with his sweetheart (and now wife) Leone to serve as curator for the NHRA Motorsports Museum. Once back in California, Larry returned to his live steam roots. Larry has served on the BOD of the Riverside Live Steamers and had formed his own live steam based company, Fisher Detail Foundry, producing a line of detail products aimed primarily at 2-1/2" scale narrow gauge equipment.

Larry was deeply affected by the passing of his older brother (in February, 2017) and more recently, his mother in September 2019. He is survived by his wife, Leone, his son, Matthew, his sister Elizabeth, and his dad.

