

# OLD IRON EXPRESS NEWSLETTER

Volume 7

Issue 2

March 1989

Next Chapter Event:

March 25, 1989

**Gunther's Yard Meet!**

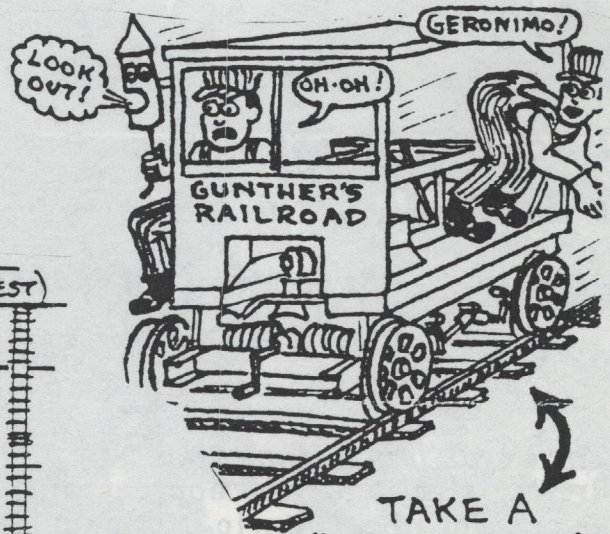
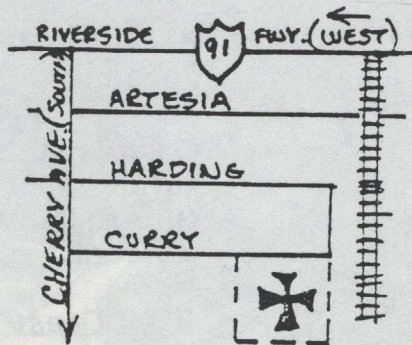
George and Betty Gunther have again invited our chapter to their yard in Long Beach. Those of you who missed the last Gunther Yard Meet now have another chance to see the many attractions located there. You can ride the Gunther rail car, sit in the S.P. caboose, kick the tires on some old trucks, lean on some old tractors and view all kinds of "Neat Rusty Stuff". If you are Mechanically-minded, this outing is for you!

The Gunthers and our chapter will host lunch. There is plenty of parking, so drive your old iron. The yard will open at 10:00 am. and we should finish about 2:00 pm. No unattended children please!

George is looking for more volunteers for his team which will do all the unloading, set-up, crowd control and other duties at the National show in Ontario. If you want to give George a hand, sign-up at this time or give him a call at (213) 429-1597.

## DIRECTIONS:

- TAKE **91** RIVERSIDE FWY. TO LONG BEACH
- GET OFF AT CHERRY AVENUE (SOUTHBOUND)
- PROCEED SOUTH  $\frac{1}{2}$  MILE TO CURRY ST. (1 BLK. BEYOND HARDING)
- LEFT AT CURRY ST., THEN DRIVE TO THE END OF THE BLOCK
- GUNTHER'S YARD IS THE LAST LOT ON YOUR RIGHT!



TAKE A  
"FREE RIDE"  
IN THE RAIL CAR  
(BUT DON'T PARK  
ON THE TRACK!

### Last Chapter Meeting!

Bob and Chris King's yard in Rubidoux was the site of our last meeting. Chris put on an outstanding lunch for the sixty plus members and friends who attended. Bob's collection of old iron kept all the old truck nuts busy viewing most of the day.

The main attraction of the day were the many displays of toy trucks. Bob had one room set up with tables for members to display their toys. We almost filled the room on this first ever toy show attempt.

This meeting brought out many new faces. The old timers were out numbered for the first time. We thank all of you who came and please come to the next meeting at Gunther's yard.

### Chapter Dues. Did You Forget?

We are now starting the third month of 1989, with only half of our membership in good standing! Please use the form provided in this newsletter and swiftly

### send in your '89 Chapter Dues!

The Southern California Chapter needs everyone's support. We look forward to your participation in our 1989 activities.

### Dates to Remember!

March 5th - Toy Show, Buena Park

March 25th - SCC to Gunther's Yard

April 16th - Swap Meet, Pomona

April 27-29th - ATHS National  
Red Lion Inn, Ontario

### The Great Truck Hunt Continues!

Pre-registrations are approaching 200 trucks for the Ontario National Show. To reach our goal of 350 trucks, we need to search out trucks that belong to non-ATHS members. These people don't get "The Wheels Of Time" and don't know anything about Ontario. We need your help in finding these trucks!

### 8 Week countdown till Ont. '89!

Our ATHS National Convention and Truck Show is just 58 days away. The Ontario '89 Committee is putting the finishing touches on its plans. With your help this can be the biggest and best Antique Truck Show ever held on the West Coast. How can you help? Volunteer for George Gunther's Team, which will unload trucks, set up the parking lot, handle security and take care of crowd control. Contact George at (213) 429-1597.

Bert VanDyke can use help locating trucks. (714) 947-1821 Steve Sackett can use help with truck show registration. (714) 247-6716 Jim Wantland can use help parking the show trucks. (213) 943-3972 Howard Kirkland can use help procuring raffle prize donations and goodie bag items. Contact Lisa Mc Cann (213) 630-5914. Ken Lund can use advertising help from people with contacts at local Radio and TV Stations. (714) 794-2616

Looks like enough work for everyone! These last few weeks will make the difference between a record breaking show or a so-so affair. Let's get out there and hustle gang! Remember it will be several years until the National Show is on the West Coast again and even then it may not be in California. So it could be ten years or longer until we have another National in our area. Let's make this one count!

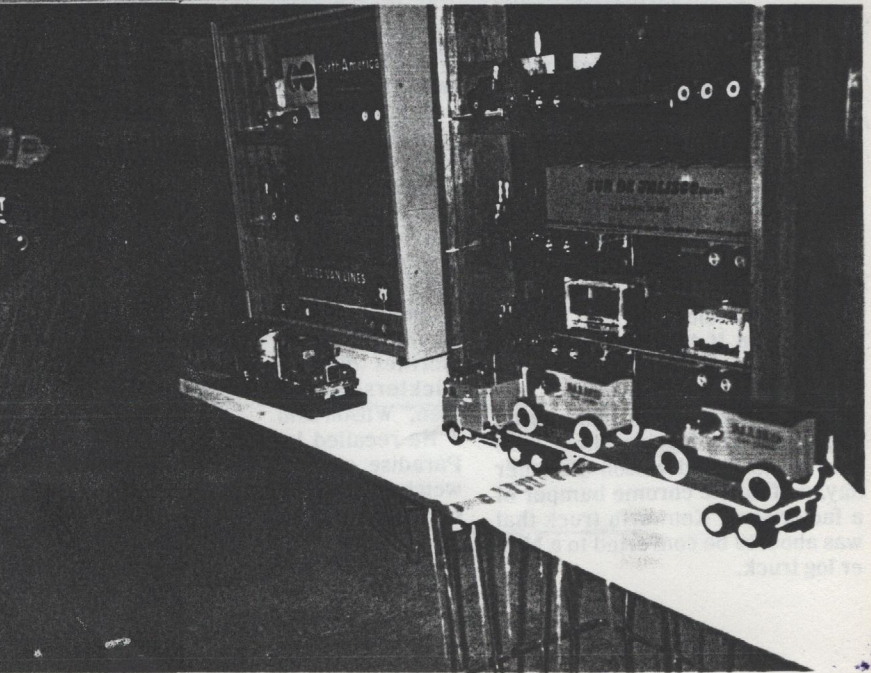
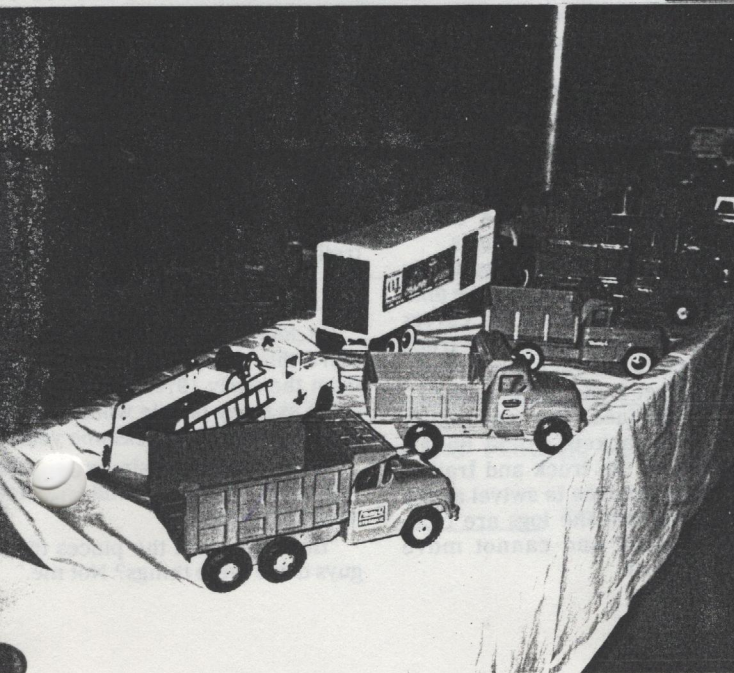
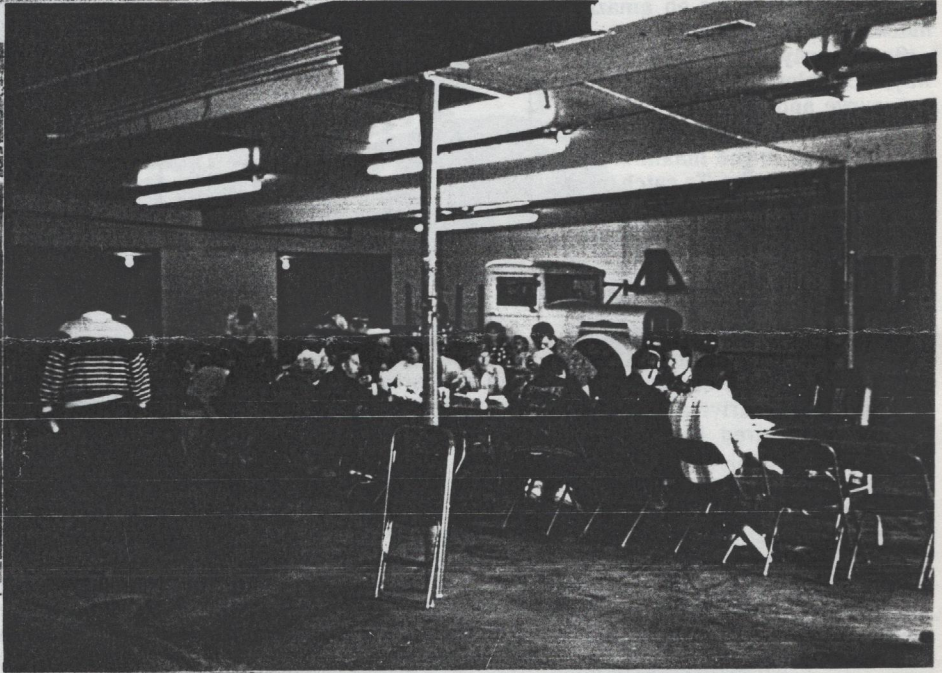
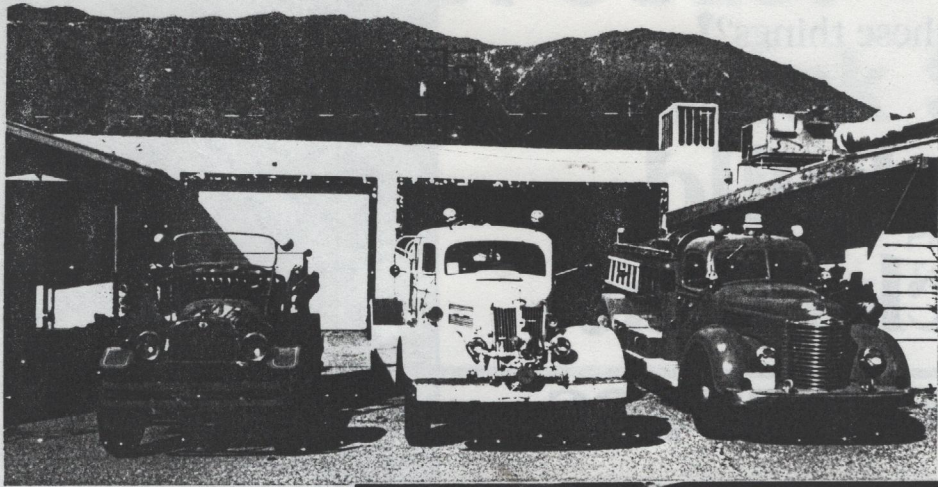
### '89 Chapter Election Postponed!

Because of the added work load of the upcoming National Convention your Chapter Board of Directors has not yet organized the '89 election. Things are going just fine with the Chapter running under the direction of the '88 officers.

### West Coast Toy Tractor & Truck Show!

The second annual West Coast Toy Show will be held in Escondido, March 19th. from 10:00 to 4:00pm Sunday. See information sheet included in this newsletter. Should be bigger this year!

1989  
Bob and Chris King's Rubidoux Yard



'I'd sure a lot rather build 'em than have to drive 'em. Have you seen the places those guys drive these things?'

— Lou Wilson

# How to build log trucks that just love curves

ANDERSON — It's an amazing machine, the log truck.

On freeway or mountain highway, it can blast along as fast as any car, curve and straightaway alike, even (assuming the grade isn't too steep) loaded to the maximum legal weight of 40 tons. To catch a log truck when the driver is in a hurry is no small project, even for the Highway Patrol.

But the really amazing thing about the log truck is its ability to snake around curves so tight it seems to tie itself in a knot. And no matter how steep or crooked a forest trail, anyone driving there had better be prepared to meet one around every bend.

In the woods of Northern California during nice weather, log trucks seem more common than pine cones. But a brand-new, ready-to-haul rig is not easy to find.

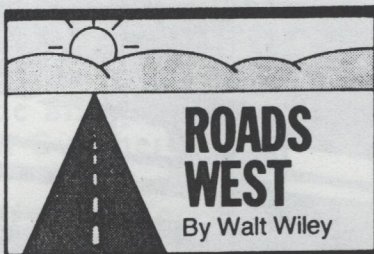
There are a couple of Oregon makes, but the Miller rigs made in Lou Wilson's Page Equipment Sales factory here in Shasta County are the only ones made in California.

Wilson buys piles of plain steel, plus wheels, tires, fittings, and all the stuff to put together such components as air brakes and hitches.

From that, his work force of 35 assembles stubby but massive four-wheel log trailers plus all the stuff that must go on a plain-Jane cab and factory-fresh truck chassis to turn it into a huffing, puffing, roaring log hauler.

And even if they have to work hard to earn their keep, log trucks don't have to look plain.

"We're going to put this one on display at the logging show here next month," said Wilson the other day, patting the chrome bumper of a factory-new Kenworth truck that was about to be converted to a Miller log truck.



Walt Wiley writes regularly about people, places and things in Northern California

In a nearby building, a worker was applying a mirror-smooth coat of paint to the trailer that will go on display with the new truck.

Wilson, 65, trim, energetic and given to wearing a narrow-brimmed canvas hat, has been in the log truck business some 40 years, ever since he came back from World War II and went to work doing maintenance work at a sawmill in the Butte County woods.

In 1953, he moved to Anderson and opened his own welding shop, of which today's factory is the direct descendant, he said.

In the meantime, log trucks have gone through quite an evolution from the little 5-ton trucks with 150-horsepower gasoline engines common in the '40s to today's heaviest highway trucks with diesel engines churning out more than 400 horsepower.

"But the loads weren't smaller. If anything, they were bigger. The authorities didn't seem to be such sticklers on weight limits back then," Wilson said.

He recalled loads coming into a Paradise sawmill where the logs weighed more than the legal maximum for truck and load combined.

Overloaded or not, the rigs were crude. In order to keep the brakes



Bee/Walt Wiley

Lou Wilson runs the only factory in California that makes log trucks. It's in the Shasta County town of Anderson. He's been in the log truck business for 40 years.

from burning up, trucks were fitted with tanks so water could be dribbled on the brake drums.

"Every now and then, you'd give the brakes some water and the brake drum would just shatter from the change in temperature," Wilson recalled.

In contrast, today's rigs have a "jake brake," a device that sounds like 10 machine guns firing in unison as it applies engine power to slow the truck. They also have on-board scales that tell the driver precisely what the load weighs.

But one thing the old rigs had in common with the new was the ability to slither around tight curves that would send an ordinary truck tumbling into the ditch — or worse.

The secret is the "compensator," Wilson explained. The logs ride in U-shaped brackets called bunks, one each on the truck and trailer. The bunks are free to swivel as the truck turns, but the logs are chained in tightly and cannot move back and forth.

On the truck, the bunk is mounted directly above the drive axles, while the frame extends a substantial distance behind the axles. There the trailer is hooked on through the compensator, a long sliding steel pole that forces the trailer to steer into the exact tracks the truck is making.

"The logs pull the trailer, and that hitch and compensator just steer," Wilson explained.

He said a new rig today will cost about \$100,000, and he made 60 trailers for such rigs — and outfitted somewhat fewer complete trucks — last year.

He hopes to make as many or more this year. "But it's a far cry from the early 1970s when we had twice as many people working here and we made 210 trucks one year."

Still, it's a good business, he said. "I'd sure a lot rather build 'em than have to drive 'em."

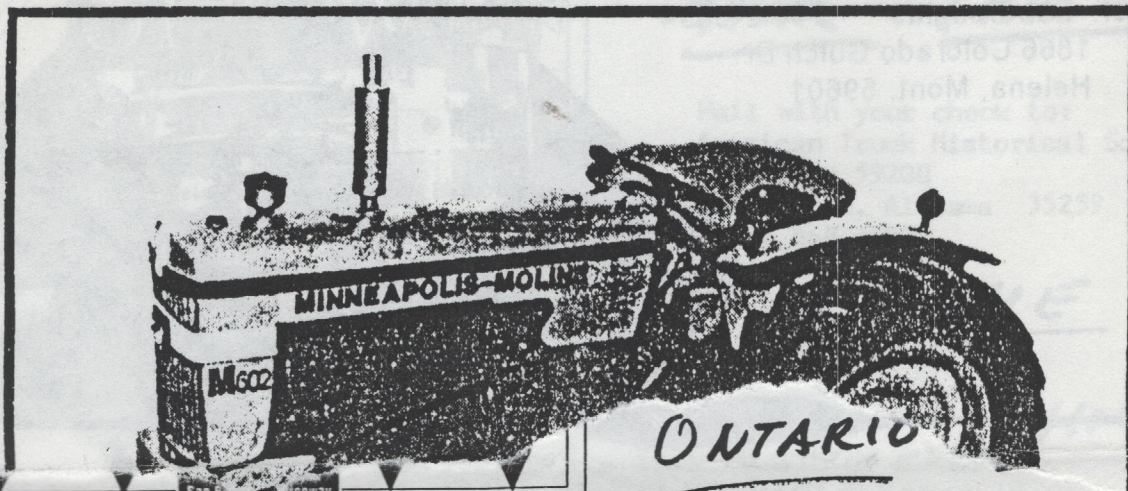
"Have you seen the places those guys drive these things? Not me."

1989

# West Coast Toy Tractor & Truck Show

Dealer Setup 7:00 !!  
Please R.S.V.P.  
Tables - \$15.00

Bring Your Trades and Enjoy!



Fee \$5.00 per antique truck    Dash Plaque for each truck    Security provided

Description of Truck(s) you will bring for the Show:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>MAKE</u>	<u>BODY STYLE</u>	<u>VEHICLE LENGTH</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Registration for \_\_\_\_\_ trucks at \$5.00 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Check attached here or included with Convention Registration Form enclosed)

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Anticipated Arrival Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Map of the area and receipt will be sent to you.

Office Use: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ received by \_\_\_\_\_ on date \_\_\_\_\_

FOR SALE

1953 REO 4x4 Army Ambulance

Contact: Vincent Manocchi (714) 983-8810

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1954 IHC Woodie Station Wagon  
33,000 miles, very clean, one of a kind!  
Contact: Bob Douglas 442-8834  
1866 Colorado Gulch Dr.  
Helena, Mont. 59601



The American Truck Historical Society's  
10<sup>th</sup> Annual

**ANTIQUE TRUCK SHOW**

**SATURDAY • APRIL 29 • 1989**

▶ FREE Admission to spectators  
Time: 9:00am to 4:00pm  
Where: Red Lion Inn, Ontario, Ca.  
Open to Antique and Special Interest vehicles only  
Vehicle Entry Fee: \$5.00

Contact for more information:  
Roland Smith 714-683-4563  
Bob King 714-780-2044  
Sponsored by The American Truck Historical Society as a part of their National Convention, April 27-29, 1989

Take Vineyard Ave.,  
Ontario Airport  
Exit off I-10  
San Bernardino Freeway

PLEASE USE THIS FORM



TO PRE-REGISTER YOUR TRUCK

Mail with your check to:  
American Truck Historical Society  
P. O. Box 59200  
Birmingham, Alabama 35259  
(205) 868-6503

FOR THE ONTARIO SHOW!

Fee \$5.00 per antique truck    Dash Plaque for each truck    Security provided

Description of Truck(s) you will bring for the Show:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>MAKE</u>	<u>BODY STYLE</u>	<u>VEHICLE LENGTH</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
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1989

# ATHS NATIONAL ANTIQUE TRUCK SHOW

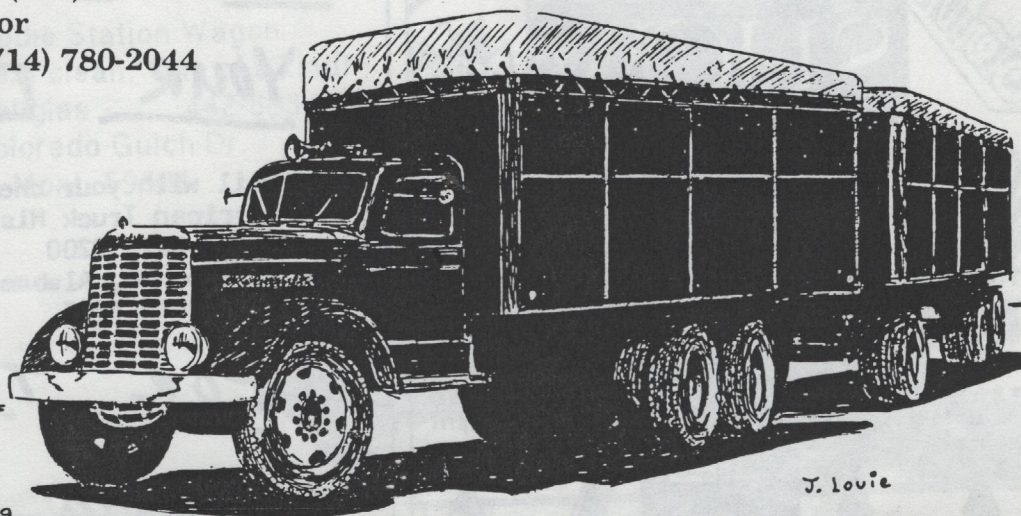
at the RED LION INN, Ontario, Calif.  
Saturday, April 29, 1989

For Information Please Call:

Roland Smith (714) 683-4563

or

Bob King (714) 780-2044



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## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

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