



A Trip To The Past or A Blast From The Past





Into southern California we go



A Trip To The Past or A Blast From The Past

Rather than march along with WW II, this would be a grand opportunity to relate something more about life in my fair city of Los Angeles, as a sort of history of Los Angeles but with a delectable emphasis on transportation, my experiences and memoirs from the sixties to the new millennium. We lived in the same old Victorian house for close to 4 decades, beginning in 1962 when the Big Red Cars existed.



I grew up near downtown Los Angeles, California, in Boyle Heights. We were not even 10 minutes from the civic center so I guess you could call me an inner city boy. We did not have many things while I grew up, and sometimes it was pretty rough. Attended Dolores Mission, St. Vibiana, learned to play trumpet at Bosco Tech, Our Lady Queen of Angels Middle School, Hollywood High, Loyola High. Higher learning were Los Angeles City College, East Los Angeles City College, Cal State L.A., USC.

I hope you will find this report enjoyable and unique.

However, the uniqueness is not as self portrait, it is the aspect that I hope shows how people lived, that compared to today is a life on a different unique dimension. I've taken the liberty to utilize some pictures from the internet for both historical and educational purposes. I would like to begin with some stories going back in time circa the nineteen forties and fifties.



I ran into this photo of Little Tokyo, June 10, 1939, by chance, as I was searching for smog pictures. Many buildings are still there but renovated. In front of the Hispano Broadcasting Co. with the sign Tony Sein are a line of P-cars on 1st St. followed by a PE 600 class Red Car. These P-cars were the first generation PCC streetcars from the streamline era, circa WW II. Note the windows. Next generation had distinct little windows above them. It is the 300 block of East 1st in historic Little Tokyo. Righthand side is Miko which can mean restaurant or hotel in Japanese. It could also be the Miyako Hotel at 258 E. 1st. Wartime Los Angeles had its share of turmoil, race riots, blackouts, smog and deportation of

Japanese-Americans. My father worked in the San Pedro shipyards before being drafted into the Army. My father used to tell me there were many more days of morning dew in the 40s compared to today. Somehow the arrival and explosion of people and war industry brought about a change in that even though many outskirts of Los Angeles were rural, ie. the suburbs, on July 26, 1943, Angelinos experienced the first big smog attack, so terrible and vivid with the air smelling like bleach.

In 1923, there were 430,000 registered automobiles in Los Angeles, a city really built on a desert. Most were 4-cylinder Model-T cars; not as much as today's 6,433,000 vehicles in urban Los Angeles, but for the next couple of decades there was a great expansion of people and vehicles. In 1942, an All-American Canal aqueduct was completed to provide water to the Imperial Valley, and is the largest irrigation canal in the world. One year before, the Colorado River Aqueduct had been completed as the largest public works project in southern California during the Great Depression. Three very good web sites to visit, at your leisure, that are involved in preserving and telling about the L.A. regions are [KCET Lost L.A. History](#) and the [Pacific Electric Railway Historical Society](#), and [L.A. as Subject](#), which is an association of more than 230 libraries, museums, official archives, personal collections and other institutions.

America was in a difficult postwar transition after 1945 that avoided a depression as the economy switched from a wartime to a peacetime economy. From the late 1950s and 1960s onward, the suburbs were the places which saw the greatest expansion, especially with the baby boom generation. That includes me.

The following on the top of the next page is an artist's concept of a future monorail for Los Angeles in 1954 that never materialized. It is found in the Novak Archive. In 1951 the California assembly passed an act that established the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority, a planning agency that later took over all the streetcars, rail buses and private buses. Automobiles and a nice low gas price made ways of traveling out-



side the city limits a charm. This is not to say downtown was turning into a ghost town, on the contrary it was still pretty vibrant as I recollect.

Here is a [link](#) to a silent video on L.A. traffic of the 50s followed by a picture of downtown, before my time. Yet, I remember well we had similar scenes in the 1960s, lots of them.



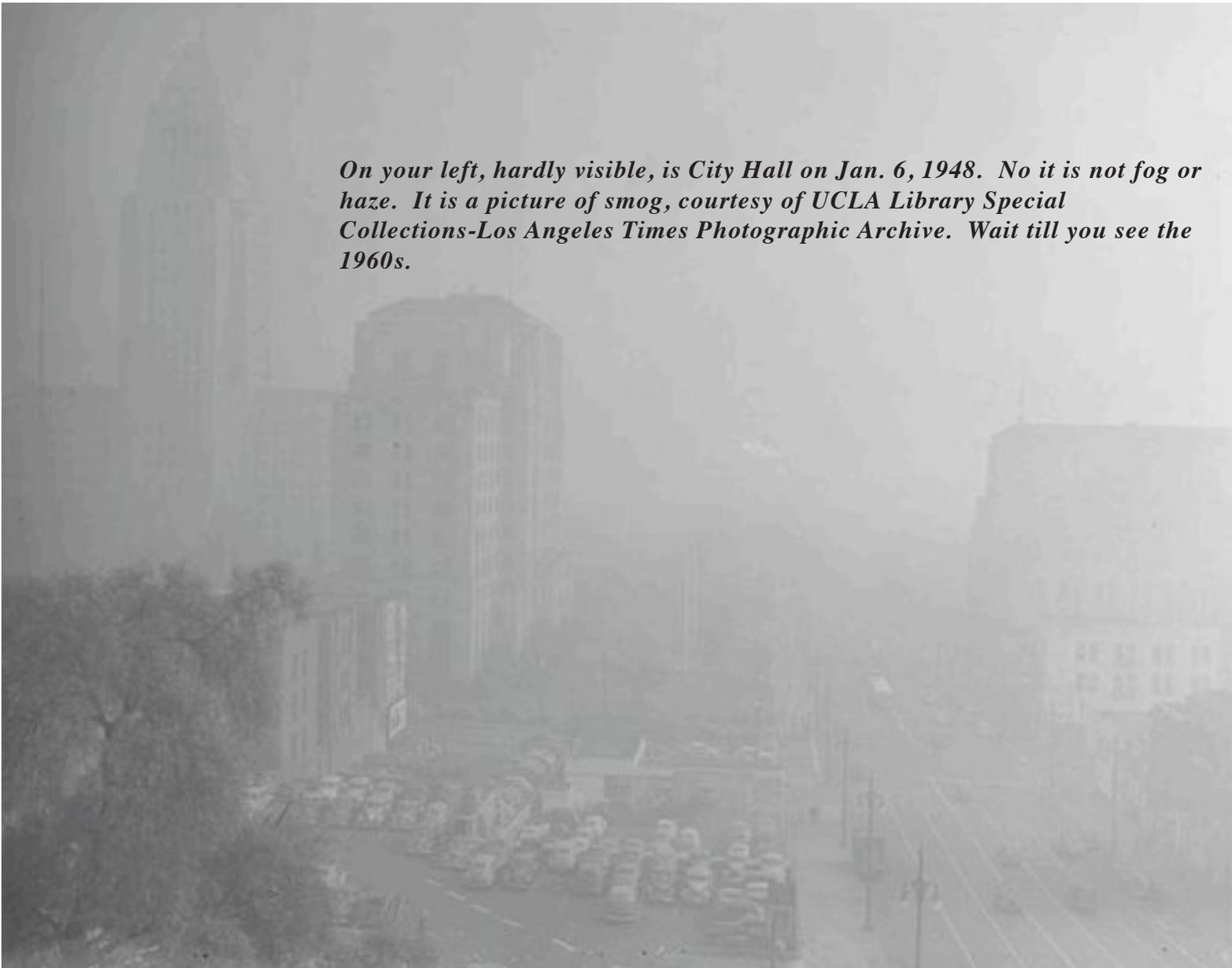
7th and Broadway, civic center of Los Angeles. Incomplete combustion from car engines is a culprit of smog. After a study by the Automobile Manufacturers Association, the first catalytic converters were tested in 1954, but it was too late for that Oct, Angelenos were enveloped in horrific smog for 18 days. And. that was repeated in Nov. leading to not only car accidents but looting and deaths. Notice the extra sidewalk in the middle of the street. That is where the streetcars stopped so you could board.



Streamlined electric streetcar, the P-car. Frontal view. It ran from Pico to East Los Angeles ending on Dozier and Rowan.



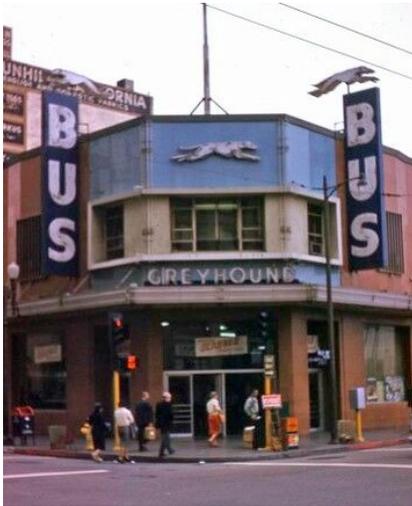
On your left, hardly visible, is City Hall on Jan. 6, 1948. No it is not fog or haze. It is a picture of smog, courtesy of UCLA Library Special Collections-Los Angeles Times Photographic Archive. Wait till you see the 1960s.





Picture at left is across the street from the Pacific Electric building. To the right is the old Greyhound station at 6th and Los Angeles streets.

Opposite page a PE car starts to leave its depot (the PE building) on elevated track. The Hollywood Red Car model pulls out of the Pacific Electric building, i.e.. the depot on 7th and Main. Tall building is the back side of the PE building. Downtown L.A. was a maze of electric wires up to near 1962. Between 1946 and 1964, the number of children in America doubled.



Before my time, (above) a brilliant 1940s Los Angeles. The Red Cars took people outside the city of Los Angeles and helped create the expansion of the Los Angeles suburbs. At one point in history there were 1100 miles of track, more than the track mileage of modern NYC. But, there existed no underground subway system, only a bus and outdoor rail system. In a way, southern California's systems played a major role in making what it is today, and I grew up in it all---after the Red Cars that is. Before I was born you could ride the buses for a dime, and there was no sprawling freeways. They came into existence in 1939; the first connected downtown with Pasadena.

On the following page is a snapshot of the building entrance on Main between 6th and 7th. In 1963, the last Red Car made it's final run, between L.A. and Long Beach. In 1963, freeway roads were all new and the cars had beautiful brand new whitewall tires. That was the fashion then. Disposal of tons of rubber tires was not yet a problem, too. Today's road resurfacing utilizes granulated tires in huge recycling projects in which rubber tires are cut into minute particles and are combined with



The Pacific Electric building in a vintage colorized view from the front, on Main St. Note where the PE Red car is coming out or possibly entering.

Entrance to the old PE building after the Red Cars were replaced. Today, an underground rail system exists in downtown.



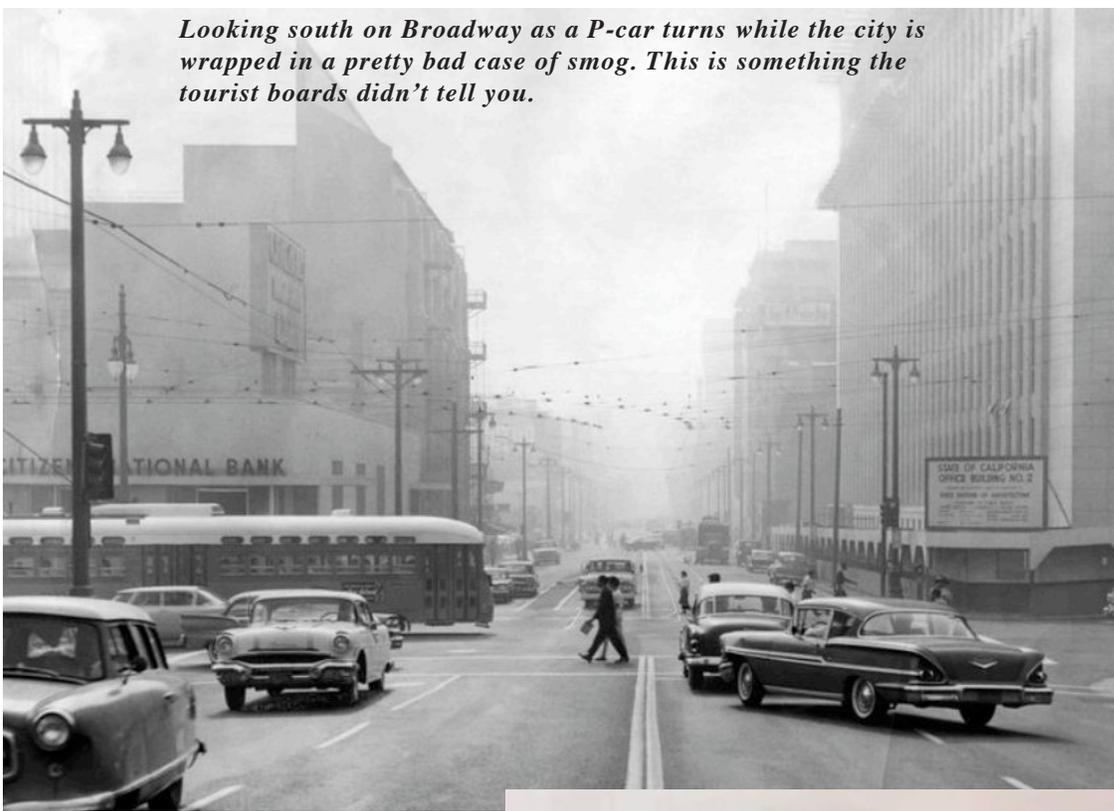
conventional asphalt to form a new recycled product of street resurfacing. They help extend the life of the road and it also is a less noisy surface. The pop. of L.A. in 1960 was 2,479,015. It became the third most populous in the nation.

I remember we went down to the PE building a few times and took a special MTA bus to San Pedro or Disneyland or Balboa Park. Those buses were unlike the regular buses, for they had high cushiony chairs. All leather. On our journey, we would leave early in the morning and I remember once it was rather cool, a little drizzly and when the buses drove out they left us with what seemed to a kid a rush of wind. It was summer. Other regular bus lines utilized the depot. There were about 61 million cars in California in 1960. Neighboring [Hollywood](#) in color in the sixties.

A tough old breed, the GM but the longer distance model. Windows were higher affording clearer views. You can barely make out the higher seats. Windows opened. They had neat little metal brackets that held the windows open at different levels. Bus is still in decorated MTA green, however note the bus emblem: no more MTA. It is RTD. I remember there existed a transitional period where the old bus schemes still remained. More on that later.



Looking south on Broadway as a P-car turns while the city is wrapped in a pretty bad case of smog. This is something the tourist boards didn't tell you.



Looking at a photo of the freeway system in Los Angeles mid-21st Century. Hollywood Frwy 101 to Los Angeles with City Hall on the right.



The freeway system in the civic center was new in the 1940s and 1950s. The bus of the period (left) were GM models with a 2-speed Allison V-drive transmission and a 6-cylinder engine. GM literally owned the bus market from the 1940s through the 70s. Note Bubble Up Cola. You can still buy Bubble Up and other vintage drinks and sweets and gum at Galco's Old World Grocery (5702 York Blvd.) off the 110 Freeway off on York, it is in the Highland Park District.



Downtown on 4th St. looking west in the 1950s, with 3 GM buses. MTA in green, Los Angeles Transit in orange, and to the right is a Pacific Electric bus in red and silver. Far center is the 11-story Hotel Clark, 426 S. Spring not on Hill as some alude. Will be renamed the trendy King and Grove Hotel.



MTA logo. That stands for Metropolitan Transit Authority.



Electric trolley buses also ran in Los Angeles. Numerous rail systems were abandoned and replaced by buses, which came into vogue in the 1950s especially bolstered by the new freeways of southern California. Yet, by the mid sixties they too were gone and replaced by diesel buses.



New silver liners that were entering service circa 1959. Like older GM models had air-ride suspension.



A new Greyhound and transit bus station was built in the late 1960s on 6th and Los Angeles streets. An acquaintance who likes transportation once thought the above station was built in the early 1970s. I told him nix, for I remember going to Disneyland and the buses pulled out of this new station to Disneyland in the sixties. Downstairs was a busy, noisy bustling affair full of action. Buses went to San Pedro/Long Beach or Santa Ana via Fullerton and Anaheim and points further east. That was normal. A few times a day, especially on holidays and during summer, they had Special Disneyland Flyers that went non-stop to Disneyland.



Silver liners augmented or replaced the old GM models. They brought a dynamic new look. This was the era of astronauts in gleaming silver spacesuits, the Space Age, and TV. I remember growing up and being attracted by these new TDH-5302 buses because of their silver corrugated sides. The advanced stress-skin aluminum had a neat tapered curve at front and they glistened brightly in the sun. They had geometric chrome side signals, and the taillights were modeled after afterburners of rockets; they were housed in streamlined nacelles. I am glad somebody captured the buses. The middle paint scheme is in new RTD colors which superseded MTA. They were also called fishbowl buses.



These GM buses were of superior technology and high quality construction.

A new silver liner. The Silver liners had a stunning new design – with a distinctive deco styling – with fluted brightwork siding. It was an imitation or emulation of the streamlined Art Deco railway passenger cars and the Greyhound buses of the 1940s dubbed Silversides, which had aluminum or stainless steel, however, the body had an entirely different shape, with slanted windows and new accent. The 1940s was an era of swing music, streamlined art and stainless steel. These buses were not streamlined in the 1940 fashion as with that art, the edges were much more curved. Everything from cars, refrigerators and toasters and furniture had that curve. Look at the streetcar below.



P-car near Sears on Pico. This line and its bus #26 that followed had the most passengers anywhere and it was not uncommon to see 2 or 3 vehicles in a row, all crowded with people to the hilt. The 26 line usually were given the newest buses first. In competition were line #83, the Wilshire line. In my mind, they came a close second although there are people who say the Wilshire line had the best and were just as crowded or even more. Both lines were the first to receive the new silver liners.

Bit faded but this is Boyle Heights.



I grew up in Boyle Heights. The picture on the prior page is First St. crossing Gless St. with the Santa Ana Freeway bridge in the back. Still there, but the Gold Line now runs through 1st. On your right is the edge of Pecan St. Park. Look right of the Carnation Milk truck. You see what looks like the edge of an empty field. Today there is a swimming pool now which is part of Pecan St. Park. I remember when it was a brand new pool and it was great in summer. I also remember when the park did not have grass and we played on dusty fields. About a block away is the grammar school I attended for 8 years, Dolores Mission. We were taught by nuns from Belgium.



The picture above is a GM Scenicruiser.

Although buses carried nearly 9% of inter-city passengers at their peak during World War II, the share has dwindled to just over 1%.

After World War II, we saw the building of the [Interstate Highway System](#). A lot went into the planning of it; the [pre-computer](#) days. It began in 1956, and competition from low fare airlines and the automobile, the market share of long-distance travel hit hard on both passenger bus and trains. In 1960, long-distance coach service had 140 million annual passengers. (Down to 40 million in 1990.)

The Silversides quickly became a big hit among drivers, passengers, fans, and Greyhound executives and accountants. It soon became and long remained as the new King of the Road – until the GM Highway Traveler PD-4104 arrived in 1953, and until the fabulous new GM Scenicruiser PD-4501 arrived in 1954. Greyhound was required by the [ICC](#) in 1955 to racially integrate its entire bus system. Initially ran on two 4 cylinder engines, in 1960 all new models had V-8s with a gold stripe on the body.

A lot of activity happened in the bus depot on 6th St. when it was new that historians have overlooked. Long-distance buses served the travelers, both Greyhound and RTD. Continental Trailways was a bus company that used to also serve folks. Here is a photo of how those buses looked in color. Their station was in the civic center of L.A. on Main St. between 5th and 6th.



Our spotlight is on a unique day of the year, and it was repeated for several years in a row. I do not recall when it started or ended, It always occurred during Spring-time. On March 17 to be exact, in honor of St. Patrick, Disneyland was open to Catholic schools, both grammar and high school. At that time there were no passes. Nor the advance reservation bit.

For us kids, it was a time of re-charging our batteries, a day of full anticipation, and adventure and fun. However, there was a further unique component to it all. What Disney enterprises did was to offer any Catholic school special lower prices to Disneyland with an advance order form to the 1-day event on March 17. We'd fill it out and get the money from our parents before a dateline. Later, a special package was mailed to our school with sets of ticket books. Each booklet was in color, had 1 admission ticket and several others divided by letters, from A to E. We called the A ticket boring. You went up the scale til you reached E. E had the best rides.

On St. Patrick's Day, everybody descended on [Disneyland](#), by car or by bus.



DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES !

Thousands and thousands of school kids in varied uniforms, although you were under no compulsion to wear it. You could dress any which way you wanted. High school kids were there, too. There was lots of green, as St. Patrick was Irish. You could say we all turned a little Irish that day.

If I am not mistaken, I think I remember seeing school buses in the parking lot. Today, the front of Disneyland looks like this (below). Shopping stores and restaurants (and a theater) mark the area where the parking lot used to be. Mind you, it was huge. You could bring your lunch and leave it at some private lockers.



Rides like the Matterhorn had very long lines. A ride up on a gondola or a trip through Inner Space or riding the train around the Magic Kingdom had lines that were less long. It's A Small World was relatively new in the late sixties. Previewed at the M.Y. World's Fair in 1964 for a two year run, it was originally conceived by the folks



at Disney in 1963--that is the year Loyola High of Los Angeles took the C.I.F. football championship under Coach Mario DiMurio, a 2 year winning streak--I had to give a plug in for my old Alma Mater, although I did not go there till the next decade.

All students riding on the RTD were given the chance to purchase a student bus card, so that your fare would be lower. Cards could be purchased for 50 cents, unbelievably. Had no picture. A card looked like the above. And, I believe the fare was 25 cents. For the love of me, do not recall the fare to Disneyland.

Our school was not wealthy, so there was no school bus. I utilized our public transit to go to Disneyland. I remember vividly we'd have to leave way early in the morning and winding up at the big bus station on 6th, I was amazed how so many people were already ahead of us. Eventhough we had no school bus, that didn't stop us. Thousands upon thousands rode the buses to descend on Disneyland. Leaving the park was less crowded and hectic as people departed at different times. Not everybody lasted the whole day.

In the bus station, everybody descended the escalator; it was full. Bus line 58 took us to Disneyland. There were 2 or 3 58 buses. A 58 S. A 58 F, for Freeway Flyer and

Color photos 1, 3, 4, 5 on the following pages show the inside of the new station where we boarded buses. They are from the nice collection of Scott Richards and I am grateful for permission. Uppermost photo is where the dispatcher would call out which bus was at which stall. There was one day I will never forget and it should be pencilled into the history of Los Angeles. It was the day all buses in the system were FREE. My God you think nobody would ride the buses because this is a city on wheels, but it was a day of adventure and a terminal that was super crowded all day. People literally came out to ride their buses. My dad and mom took my brother and I to far-away San Bernardino. We passed Pomona and I think Riverside. It was a couple hours trip. We saw the country surrounding a hard to pronounce Yucaipa. I learned you pronounce it You kai pa. It is a native American name. We saw farms and ranches and lots of green fields once we passed the suburbs. We left our house when it was still dark. When we got to the terminal it was already full of people going every which way. But, people were not dum, and those traveling like us chose the far reaches of the county. Some went to other long distances like Balboa. To me, it seemed we all stood in line for the same bus which had a super long line heading toward San Berardino. They seemed the longest lines. My mom packed a picnic basket. How I wish we had taken a camera. To this day, this day is hardly ever mentioned by anybody. Don't tell me all those people who were with us just disappeared. I have no idea at what time of the year we took the trip, but it was probably a Spring.

1



A bus going to Santa Ana via Fullerton and Anaheim, photo 3 below.



If only pictures could talk. Downstairs was a busy, noisy bustling affair full of action. Above color scene is of a parked Flxible bus #58 taken during the waning days of the terminal. Trips to San Bernardino and Riverside were a long distance affair in those days; as was going to Disneyland or Knotts Berry Farm. Disneyland was smaller than today; as an example, in 1969, 9.3 million people visited Disneyland. In 2005, 14.2 visitors and more people drove. We had these long distance buses. I remember they had stick shifts. Those were the days before the El Monte Busway and the Gold Line. I used to sit up in the front just to watch the driver do the shifting. To me it was always fascinating. The above bus does not have a stick shift and is going to Santa Ana via Fullerton and Anaheim-- a time when newer buses started replacing the stick shift buses, in this case an A/C Flxible bus.



4



A GM transit bus banking down a freeway entrance in green MTA bus line color. The freeway system that existed ran through center of civic center. A new DWP building is under construction in the background.

5

Imagine RTD buses lined up bustling with people. When a bus left it went up a ramp. The exit would see both RTD buses and Greyhounds waiting for the cop to signal us out and it was safe to leave. A lighted parked GM bus #60 on your right. Note the left side. The first seat had a high barrier and I used to like to sit up front and absorb the adventure. All seats on the long distance buses faced forward, like Greyhounds. GM buses lasted well into the 70s.



the normal 58 which had more stops. The 58 would also make a stop at Knotts Berry Farm, except the Flyer, I believe. There was some park with alligators in Buena Park. Also in Buena Park was Ripley's Believe It or Not Museum; both defunct now. Fifty years ago Buena Park was pretty different. My father worked at a giant company called Anderson's which made fine furniture and cabinets. He was a cabinet maker. Once in a while I remembering going there and used to see orchards and pastures with real cows. There were no homes or condos, at least not near Anderson's on Carmenita near the 5 Freeway.

Disneyland on Mar. 17 was a kaleidoscope of kids of every race and color in varying uniforms, when compared to other days. There were lots of kids in school colors and many nuns. I guess priests came too but for some reason but for some reason or another do not stick in my mind. The long-distance buses had one entrance

and one exit. Not all buses on St. Patrick's were long distance buses for there were not enough long-distance buses to handle the capacity. Every conceivable bus was utilized into service. Regular 58 service still ran. There were lots of 58Fs. It was not uncommon to see Disneyland Flyers in a row in the freeway, one after another, heading down the Santa Ana Freeway (the 5 Freeway) heading to Disneyland. That was a phenomenon in the history of Los Angeles.

A view of the new Greyhound and RTD Terminal in downtown L.A. on 6th and Los Angeles circa late 60s. It was quite impressive and had 3 floors. I know of no videos of the place in operation. RTD buses occupied the level below street level. Police patrolled to make sure vagabonds did not occupy the building even though it was literally in the heart of skid row.



A really bad day in smoggy L.A., typical in the 50s and groovy 60s on breezeless days. Anybody who was young used the term groovy. The British had something called **Mods** and you had to look cool. I also remember on such days we were not allowed to play outside. In both the public schools and private schools everybody was kept indoors, till we went home. In real color, the scene was not at all gray but a funny yellow haze that hurt your eyes. Lung problems would come later. It was that bad in the sixties.



In this picture is an early Flxible bus with no A/C.

Los Angeles was one of the fastest-growing regions in the United States. The **1960s** was an era of culture change, race riots, new color TVs, super 8 film, hippies

and long hair. Swearing and bad language was still frowned upon. It was an era of Black Power, Chicano Power, Kodacolor everywhere, free love, protests against the Viet Nam War, the Cold War and a growing problem of drugs among teenagers. But, I was too young for all that. Here is a piece of [popular culture](#), how childhood memories were pretty similar, with music of the period. And, this was posted on the web showing a [historical rundown](#) of teen experience, dressed and listened, showing the creative music and art potential in America. I also found this very interesting 14 min video. This is what I do remember watching as a little boy in 1966-67. They say it was the greatest single season in American TV history. We had Batman and Green Hornet, in color too.

During the 1970s, there were different paint schemes of the RTD buses. One set of buses, in light green, were called Spearmints and lasted into the mid-seventies. I do remember riding these buses on the #75 Venice line to Loyola High School. The only thing worse than this were the buses painted a full white; pretty ugly with no style.

MTA was first replaced by SCRTD in 1964. The Flxible bus (prior pg) is in the old 2 tone green color scheme of MTA, but with an RTD emblem. Those buses had windows that opened at an angle and actually let in little air. They were horrible to ride in summer. No air condition. But on a smoggy day, you did not want to open the windows. Wait a minute. How did we survive? A stuffy bus full of people on a crowded hot roasting summer day in a bus with closed windows to not let in the dirty smog? And no A/C. Can you imagine that during rush hour? Incredible. But people were tough and resilient.



A GM bus with 2-speed Allison V-drive transmission (VR or VS2) powered by Detroit-built 6V71 or 8V71 engines. They had rather poor air vents inside that ran the length of the entire bus, and they provided very little cool air. So no real A/C and the windows were no better. Actually, if I remember correctly, sometimes we could slide open the windows on the non-GM buses if we pushed them hard enough to let in more air. That you could not do on these GM silver liners because sliding them open was limited.



An excellent view of the longer distance passenger bus in a new colorful paint tone. Note the different windows and the 3 little distinctive lights on front of the bus. Those models entered service way back in 1952. The 3 lights were a tip-off this was not your normal transit bus.



A GM and a new look Flxible. Both had air-ride suspension and GM-made engines. The older GM-style bus on your left was built for 29 years and were dependable and tough. This is a picture from the transition era in Los Angeles.



(Top photo) From the early 1970s on, different paint schemes were seen. Framing an interesting piece of the period 1971 (check out the prices), we do find a bus that is more white. They lasted into the early seventies. Others were called Spearmints, although not by me. I don't recall where that moniker spearmint came from but, they resembled the colors of a Spearmint gum. I rode the #75 Venice line to Loyola High School and saw them on Hill, Broadway, Spring, and Main. The only thing worse than these buses were the buses painted a full white. (Bott photo) A view of a GM S8M-5303 long-distance bus (s for suburban). These had the optional GM 8V71 engine which began to be offered in 1966. Most had stick shifts, overhead baggage racks and high seats.



The transition era in L.A., probably from around 1968 to 1972 or 73. Bus 93 went to the San Fernando Valley.



Going through downtown on Broadway is another Flxible bus.

Date is unsure but it was either 1979 or 1980 when I rode this bus to LAX. LAX was not exactly long-distance but the RTD tried a new non-stop concept. Actually it was not fully nonstop. It had a few limited stops; one in Fox Hills Mall the other in Westchester someplace, I think. Note the high seats. But if I rem right, they were mainly almost empty. The ridership on them was considered low.



ANDREW NOVAK PHOTO

On display is a new beauty, a welcomed beauty. This is the new Flexibile transit bus with real air condition. Thanks to Andy Novak for the picture. Their refrigeration power was not dismal like the GM buses. The A/C unit was mounted above the rear window where the rear-mounted condenser and cooling fan were located. They still possessed the flare of the silver sides. Windows opened though. Sometimes we had a fight with a screaming bus driver telling the passengers to keep the windows closed. On hot days, sometimes you had a dodo head who slid open a window. Air-ride suspension was standard. Seats were comfortable padded foam. Light green I think. Years and years after they initiated service, the A/C still worked nicely. Had both 6V71 and 8V71 engines. Oh, by the way, it was sometime later when the RTD put some kind of little clips where the window slid open so that a person could not easily open the window.



A transitional time still in effect on a 45 GM. Production of these older GMs ended in 1969.



Regular GM transit buses were still in service in mid 1970s. Note the GM emblem in black. That signifies it is a first generation bus, 1959-1962.

End of an era.



A set of Flxible buses. They were built in either Ohio or Alabama. End of an era. Production ended in 1978. These are Ohio built buses; Alabama buses had only 2 headlights. Good bye Flxibles.



A GMC bus in the 80s.

The 1980s was an era of culture change, acid washed jeans, long hair of the 60s was out, pastel colors and designer clothes were in. This was the age of MTV, an

art of new music television, new personal computers, bright Neon colors, PAC Man, the fashion of female hair, the wearing of shoulder pads by women. There was no escaping the film hits of the era: *The Terminator*, *Back To The Future*, and the musical thrills and hits of **Michael Jackson**. This was an era of pulsing videos by Jane Fonda, and before we knew it, we were all into a fitness chase. There was always someone who did aerobics, 5ks, 10ks, dance class or into athletic gear. It zoomed into high gear when the **Summer Olympics** arrived in 1984. Also, people embodied what seemed to be part of an era that had more **patriotism**, as these **music hits** attest from that special era.



Marineland Freeway Flyer.

A new kind of A/C bus with tinted windows showed up in the late 70s. This is a special Marineland Freeway Flyer. The term Freeway Flyer began in the 1960s and was still used in the 70s but began dying out in the 80s as mainstream. Not sure why. Marineland was a vacation spot that does not exist anymore. Although we have Sea World but that is toward San Diego.

Right before the Olympics came to my fair city two things stick out in my mind. Cities not just L.A. were sponsoring what seemed 5 or 10 K races every week, with the Olympic **music melodies** all over the place. And, there was the perceived idea that the city was going to choke in its cars when the whole world would come to L.A. Los Angeles had about 70 suburbs. We were bracing for the onslaught of people, and we were told on television to please not drive. What?

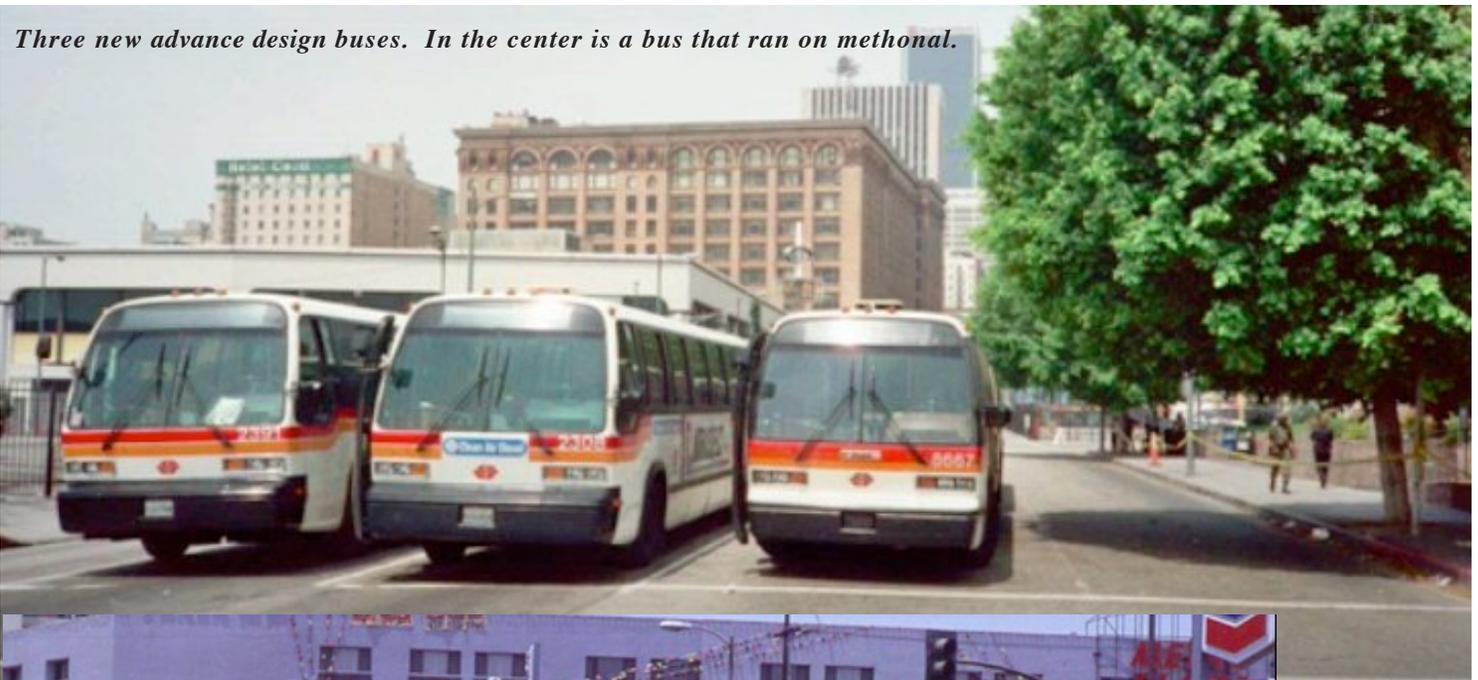
Southern Californians not use their car? We were, and are, a car conscious society. Caltrans predicted the worst to happen during morning rush hour and 2 to 4 pm. You had 400,000 ticket holders, plus 12,000 athletes who were in the mix each day. Athletes housed at 3 locations had to be transported to 20 training areas and 24 competition sites. However, the worst never materialized. A 3-hour opening ceremony on Sat. July 28 in a 92,655 packed Memorial Coliseum blazed with both the spectacular and the poignant, began the XXIII Summer Olympics and the start was on because people worked together in numerous aspects. The business sector did their part, offering a change of work hours. There was better ride sharing, even offering free gasoline for carpools. Six percent of companies changed to 4 day work weeks. The California Truckers Association made a giant effort by increasing night deliveries during the Games. We saw a fleet of 550 Olympic buses specifically for shuttle service to the Games *AND* park-and-ride. Volume was heavy for park-and-ride service, which had a \$6

Angels Flight above Hill St overlooking downtown.





A rare photo of a double decker bus beside a regular transit bus.



Three new advance design buses. In the center is a bus that ran on methanol.



When this type of Flexible Metro buses were running in 1998, there were 228 million guns in the U.S. and 208 million cars, and over half the robots employed in factories worked in the car industry. Pay attention to the gas prices.



one way fare. Trouble spot maps were distributed by Commuter Computer to its client companies (sorry, smartphones did not exist, yet.) It is pleasing to state but, people did listen and took their advise to try the [mass transit](#) system (basic fare 50 cents.) 29 new Caltrans freeway signs were put up in time for travelers who went to distant venues like the Rose Bowl, UCLA, the Forum, Santa Anita Racetrack, the Long Beach Convention Center, Pepperdine or the Anaheim Convention Center via express buses, at \$4, or went by \$2/ride downtown shuttle. Los Angeles County supervisors ordered county parking lots around the main RTD loading areas opened on weekends and at night for public use. People participated together in the City of the Angels.

In 1984, the RTD instituted a contest drawing with winners being given tickets to an Olympic event. It was free. There were many winners, and my dad and I won 2 times. We hopped an RTD bus to a water polo event held at Pepperdine University. And, we also got to see an Olympic boxing match; actually it was more than one that day at the L.A. Sports Arena. We did purchase tickets to a track and field event. You never saw a city in so much vibrant pastel colors. And, believe it or not the city cleaned itself up, too. I am not too sure what happened to the homeless people. There was no epidemic of homeless as we have today, but skid row was still there. The other day, a friend showed me a stat I could not believe. Three years ago (2017) marijuana stocks handed stockholders profits between 268% and 902% in 7 months or less. Stocks or no stocks, the smell of marijuana permeates Los Angeles as never before.



On display in 1989, a new 49-ton rail car. Actual light rail service began in 1990 to Long Beach. Total underground subways began to be added in Los Angeles in 1996. I remember also going inside a big old Red Car which was also on display although it was not running on a rail, but I think it had some sort of make shift vehicle wheels. Too bad I did not think of taking a picture. Original rail service was run by the Los Angeles County Metro Rail system but in 1993, it and the SCRTD merged to form the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA, comonly called Metro.)



Los Angeles infamous ozone-laden smog. There is about 14.5 million cars in the state of California today with about 6,433,000 automobiles in urbanized Los Angeles alone. The above picture is taken from the San Gabriel Valley, and shows the terrible smog. The photo is from the San Gabriel Valley Tribune.



Light rail in the future. Actually, the future is here. (Bott pic) Buses with TV and recorded sound.

Actually, it began with closed circuit television. Sometimes they gave you pop quiz contests. Most buses today have recorded sound and have a display of what time it is and the stop. The voice speaks when there are bus stops and when a person wants to get off. On some modern vehicles, you have video monitors. All that did not really exist in 1990s Los Angeles. Population of the city of L.A. in 2000: 3,694,820.

In 2010, the pop. of the metropolitan area of L.A. was nearly 13 million residents. Metropolitan city population is forecast to hit 4 million in 2018. Some stats say it will hit in the range of 18.7 million in 2018 if one includes and encompasses the 5 county suburb regions and outlying cities. There is great news. Drivers in L.A. use three times as much gas and diesel fuel as they did 50 years ago, however, certain vehicle-emitted pollutants have dropped by 98% since the notorious 1960s, although not all.

