

THE SIDE TRACK

NEWS

from the Toy Train Operating Society
Sacramento Valley Division

FALL

2001

President's Message

Talk about the fast track! Here we are with another fall season fast approaching. Our annual River City Meet is just a month away. The Long-Range Planning Committee has been meeting every month since January, and will continue to do so, until all the division goals, policies and by-laws are re-defined and put into a policy handbook. Perhaps the event(s) that occurred earlier in the year was an insight into problems within the Division. We have examined the financial records and reports, activities, committees, and identified problem areas. One of our challenges is the same that faces other Divisions: decreased membership and revenues.

One observation is that the monthly meets have become more relaxed and enjoyable. This is a result of the BOD implementing the results of the membership survey that told us socializing and trading trains is the preferred activity. The Show and Tell and Layout tours have proven very successful. I want to thank all those members who have participated.

The September meeting brought nominations for the special election to be held in October. Not only is the election for President but also for Secretary since Rod Bean is moving to Pennsylvania (how rough to live near York!). Please vote and return your ballot.

I look forward to getting back to my

original position as VP but want to thank the committee for all their dedication of time and effort.

Don Rosa, Acting Pro Tem

Membership News

Two long-time TTOS members have recently joined our Division. Pete Keesling from San Martin and Mark Boyd from Castro Valley have decided that Sacramento is a good place for toy trains. Welcome.

We also added a future member as **Jeremy Max Lionel Loventhal** entered the world at nine pounds, twelve ounces. Jules pointed out that at 22 inches, he's longer than a 1950 Lionel Hudson.

One last tidbit – an article in the July 17 issue of Woman's Day magazine listed 365 ways to save money. I'm happy to report that "stop buying trains" was not included.

George Ann Hornor, Membership Chair

"Show and Tell"

by Richard Zanotti

We continue to enjoy the special collectibles brought by members to our monthly meets. If you have any pieces in your collection that you would like to display, simply bring them to the next meeting.

MAKING TRACKS ON THE LAYOUT TOURS

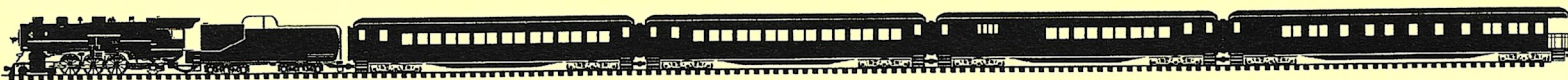
by Jack Ahearn

It mightn't seem so, but since our monthly Layout Tour Program started last year, we have been up and down the Mainlines of well over a dozen of SVD's most ambitious and smooth running model railroads. The rest of this year promises more of the same and now it's time to make the year 2002 really come alive with more fan trips aboard our member's pikes.

In regards to scheduling next years tours, as I stated at the August Meet, no one likes to be solicited for anything while anxiously searching the trading tables. To do away with such 'awkward' moments, a sign up 'schedule board' will be placed at our monthly meets. Hopefully, between now and January interested members will come forth and jot in the month most convenient for them to have a group of 'friendlies' come over and rave and cheer as your roster of great trains click off the mile posts. Equally important is to see 'works in progress' from which we can all learn.

Seriously, this is a good opportunity to show off all your hard work and receive kudos from under-

Continued next page ▶



Tours continued:

standing and supportive members. Those who have been through the efforts or, even better, those about to start but aren't sure their ready. All of us can learn from your heartaches and your achievements. So think about it, check with your spouse and enter your name on the month you most prefer. By doing so, in the next few months, you will have done several things: Ensure the continuity of the program, Allow Jerry Azzaro the ability to publish the full years schedule and most important of all.....as an active and willing member, you will directly contribute to making our Sacramento Valley Division, THE FUN club to belong and come to!

The Trains Have Their Own Building at the Freitas Home

by Jack Hornor

John Freitas invited us to his Carmichael home to enjoy his huge 3-rail O gauge layout following out meet on June 2nd. John's layout measures 15 x 20 ft. and occupies a



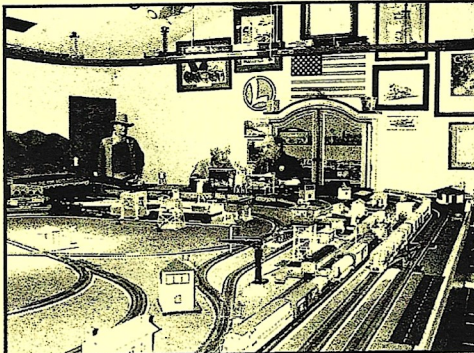
John dazzles SVD members with his action-packed layout

Upcoming layout visits:

September – Bill Cloughey, Sacramento
October - no tour – Scottish Rite meet
November - **Placerville Double-Header!** -
Carl and Kathy Locher, Fran and Roy Kilday
December - no tour - Holiday break

Contact **Jack Ahearn** for details or to arrange a visit to your layout.

20 x 24 ft. room in a building that was built especially to house the layout. John enjoys collecting and operating postwar and modern O gauge equipment. A suspended overhead loop installed by Jules Loventhal carries two additional loops of O gauge track.

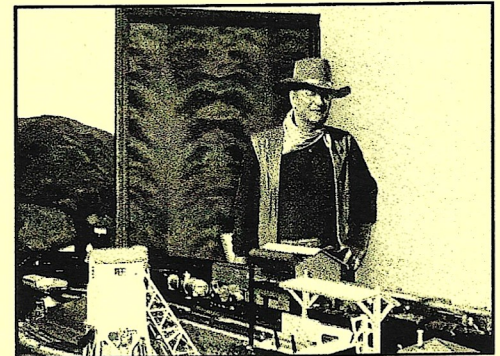


An overview of John's layout - note the overhead rail line

John's trains include an MTH Premier SP cab-forward (4-8-8-2) like the one in the California State Railroad Museum and several other MTH and Lionel locomotives and cars. One of the focal points is the SP Daylight passenger train in Daylight colors with the Daylight Northern type steam engine pulling the consist. There is a modern Hudson with Railsounds by Lionel. John leans toward Southern Pacific as one of his favorite railroads, as do many of us here in California.

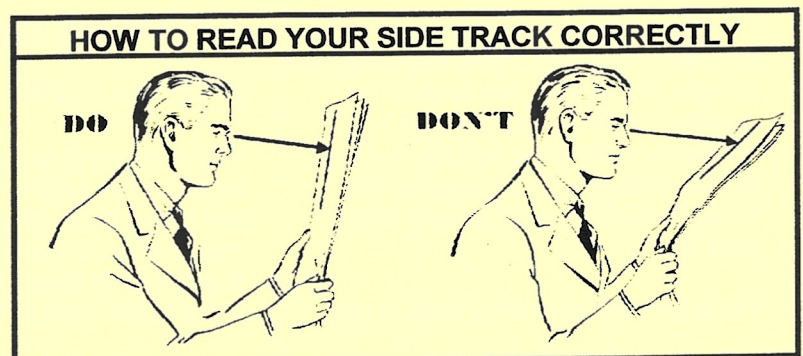
John uses the new Century 21 Atlas-O track in T-rail nickel silver, resting on cork roadbed. The layout surface is covered with indoor/outdoor green carpet on soundboard. This makes for a quiet operation which does not detract from the great sounds of the new Lionel and MTH locomotives.

John has some loops on Train Master Command Control (TMCC) and others on conventional control. With conventional control, the information goes to the track, and all engines on that track receive the same signal. With TMCC, the track is held at a constant 20 VAC, and information is sent to each engine independently. Theoretically, you could run several engines on the same loop at the same time, but in reality, that requires superb operating skills or a layout with miles of track for extensive separation. TMCC does offer advantages such as independent train operation



Marion Morrison (aka John Wayne) keeps a watchful eye. "Hands off them trains, pilgrim".

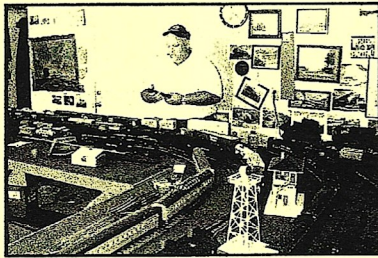
without blocks, more sounds, more features, more realism, ease of use, and freedom of movement by the train and operator. John has taken advantage of all of these. John still uses the Lionel Train Master CAB-1 hand-held control unit, but because not all of his locomotives have TMCC, he uses a combination of conventional and TMCC control which he separates by blocks controlled by electrical switches on his control panel.



Steve Gower's Scale 'O' Trains

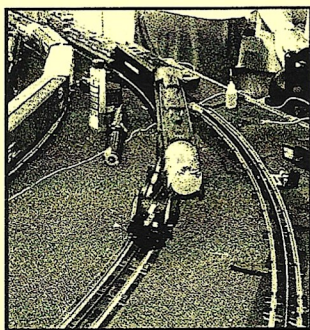
Editor's note: due to the change in editorship of the Side Track, this article was misplaced for a while. Our apologies to Steve.

Steve Gower opened his Sacramento layout to TTOS SVD members following our meeting on August 12, 2000.



Steve likes MTH trains, the bigger the better! In order to run his PRR Centipedes, UP 4-8-8-4 Big Boy, SP Daylight, SP cab forward and other O-scale locos, he needed large-radius curves. Steve built a 12 by 16 foot platform with an access hole in the center in his two car garage. He laid three loops of three-rail track, each with 72 inch diameter curves. When he

gets all three lines operating (one with a 30-car freight), the noise is most satisfying and the garage fills with a sweet-smelling fog from all those onboard smoke generators (the caboose smokes too!)



Even with 72 inch curves the large locos overhang the track, and Steve had to be careful to position the track to prevent collisions.

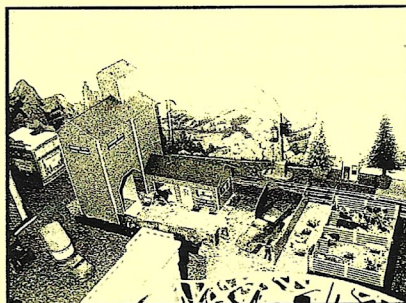
Eventually he plans an elevated track, but his next chore is to insulate the sidings he has installed so that he can "park" his big locomotives.



Barry Garland's Standard Gauge Built-Rite Empire



Jack Ahearn (left) admires one of Barry's electric-powered pylon airplanes



The Built-Rite Farm set on Barry's layout

SVD members were invited to visit Barry Garland's standard gauge layout following our July meeting. The layout, built along three walls of a spare bedroom, provides a backdrop for Barry's favorite train-related collectibles, the wide range of cardboard interlocking structures made by Built-Rite. Barry is extremely knowledgeable about these and other obscure paper/card-stock toys and train accessories. His prize is the Built-Rite farm set, shown at left. Barry and his wife Marge have several collecting interests, and many of them merge in Barry's excellent train room.

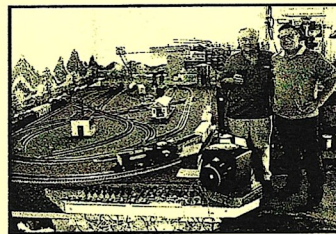


Built-Rite structures line the shelves

Doug Glascock's Highly-Compressed 3-Rail Layout

by Jack Hornor

When Meredith Glascock shopped for her latest automobile, she only looked at



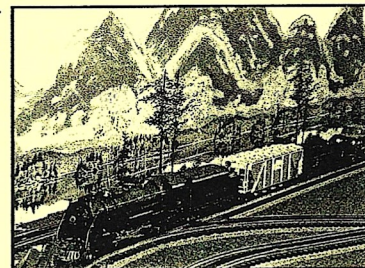
ones that were no more than 175 inches long, the space between the garage door and the foam

bumper pad on the front of the layout table.

In the remaining space, Doug has constructed a small, but very versatile, layout.

Amazingly, in his 5' x 10' layout, he has sixteen turnouts, including eight sidings, two reversing loops, and two continuous loops, one with a figure-eight. This complicated wiring presented a challenge to Doug and his helper, Jack Ahearn.

The track is Atlas solid nickel silver T-rail with Atlas switches and is laid on indoor-outdoor carpet. On the wall behind the



A Lionel freight rolls past Meredith's hand-painted backdrop

layout, Meredith painted a mural with distant mountains, blue sky and white clouds, then cleverly completed the background by



Jack Hornor calls out the switch number while Doug searches for the corresponding lever

using a scenic wallpaper border for scenes with trees. The rolling stock and trains are primarily Lionel, postwar to current, and are powered by older style Lionel ZWs. He is now at the stage of adding accessories and scenery.



Down the track

September 1: TTOS-SVD, Sierra II Center
October 6: River City Toy Train Meet, Scottish Rite Center, Sacramento
October 19-20: York Meet, York Interstate Fairgrounds, York PA
November 3: TTOS-SVD, Sierra II Center
November 16-18: Cal-Stewart Meet, Pasadena CA
November 24-25: GATS, Pleasanton CA
December 1: TTOS-SVD, Sierra II Center
January 26-27, 2002: GATS, Cal-Expo Center, Sacramento
February 15-17, 2002: Cal-Stewart Meet, Santa Clara CA



TTOS Sacramento Valley Division
Attn: Jerry Azzaro
291 Bella Vista Way
San Francisco, CA 94127-1811