

THE SIDE TRACK

NEWS

from the Toy Train Operating Society
Sacramento Valley Division

WINTER 2006

President's Message

by Jeff Silvera

Membership News

by George Ann Hornor

Hello all. I don't think I need to remind any member that any great club is built up by its members getting involved with the things that make it work. Whenever we have a job that needs to be done and a member comes to me and offers help, this is what keeps things moving forward and makes our club enjoyable for everyone. Without everyone getting involved, the club would not function. It would be too much work, plus not very enjoyable. I have always appreciated all the help offered by members. It is what makes our club work.

I have just returned from the Pasadena Cal-Stewart and the national BOD meeting where the plans for the Sacramento 2008 Convention are on track. At this writing our division is not involved. That would not make for a good convention from our area and division. I believe, as the great division that we are, we need to get involved and help with hosting this convention. I know that when it comes to my hometown I want to be involved and make it an enjoyable time for all.

The Cal-Stewart meet was a super meet; there were a lot of tables of trains for sale, some real nice layouts, train races, a demolition derby and auctions. The Southwestern Division does a great job with this meet, it's a lot of work for them every year.

As I write this our club layout is up and running in the Thanksgiving pageant at the California State Railroad Museum. Thanks to those members who come down and make it happen. As I said earlier, it's the involvement that makes it fun.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

We're happy to welcome seven new members this quarter. **Dale Olson** from Sacramento, **Robert Donoho** from Chico, **Howard Herron** from Suisun City, and **Leroy Wallace** from Fairfield are all new TTOS members. **Gordon and Stacie Derencin** and their family are TTOS members who recently moved from Southern Pacific Division territory to El Dorado Hills. I'm sure SP's loss is our gain. We're happy that former member, **Kenneth O'Gara**, has rejoined us. **George, Maria and Crese Lawrence**, are from Modesto and also belong to the San Joaquin Valley Division. George and Crese (age 8) have started building a father-daughter layout and are looking for ideas and advice.

Barbara Rohrs will be taking over as membership chair next year. I've made up the 2007 cards and will be helping her collect dues at the January meeting. Just to remind you – Division dues are \$15 for individuals and \$20 for families, due each January 1st. If you haven't paid by the date of the April meeting, we assess a \$5 penalty. National dues are due on the anniversary of the date you joined TTOS. You will receive a statement from them at that time. If for some reason, you do not receive the statement, please contact them directly. If your contact information changes, please let both the TTOS office and Barbara know.

To help everyone get off to a good start, I'm compiling a new membership roster to be handed out at the January meeting. Please let me know right away if you have changed your address, phone number, or e-mail address. You can call me at 209 744-0626 or send an e-mail to gahornor@softcom.net.

I am so pleased that Barbara is taking over for me, and I hope you'll join me in thanking her. I also hope you'll make her life easier by keeping track of your membership badge!



Show and Tell

By Richard Zanotti

The theme of our September Show & Tell was TRAIN PEOPLE AND STATION ACCESSORIES. **Mark Boyd** had some highly detailed telephone poles. He also had a model of Ward Kimball's GRIZZLY FLATS STATION that was made for the TCA Convention at Ontario. Mark displayed figures of Ward Kimball and Lou Redman that were made by Gary Levinas. Waiting at the station was a model of a Lincoln convertible limousine containing figures of JFK and Helmut Kohl. Also at the station were baggage carts full of luggage from the 1996 and 2006 TCA conventions. These carts were made by Pride Lines. Mark also had some Lobl figures and catalog [These were featured in the last issue of the TCA QUARTERLY.]. He also had the latest edition of "O'BRIEN'S GUIDE TO TOY TRAINS".

An operating Lionel signalman was playing on the job with his girlfriend, who looked a lot like Madonna. At least that is what **Jack Horner** would have us believe. He also had some models of Ertol taxis from the 1940's.

An interesting assortment of mystery figures was displayed by **John DeHaan**. Some of our members were able to identify them as being made by Barclay, Lionel, Lincoln Logs, and G Men. John also had a neat looking miniature Marx foot locker.

A wide assortment of figures was shared by **Clarence Hanks**. He had an interesting set of a man shoeing a Clydesdale horse and a set of barnyard animals made by Britains. Some of Clarence's pieces were very intricate, such as the man holding a lantern, and a hobo made by Bill McDermott in San Rafael. Clarence also had figures made by Barclay and Pride Lines.

I used a Bing island station, made in the middle 1920's, as a backdrop for some Lincoln Logs figures. They included: a conductor, an engineer, a passenger, and two mechanics carrying lunch pails. I had the conductor directing a green, 0 gauge Märklin Loco-

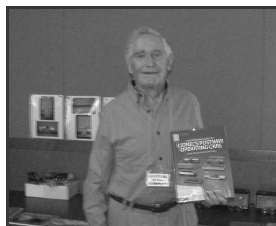
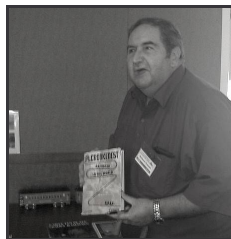
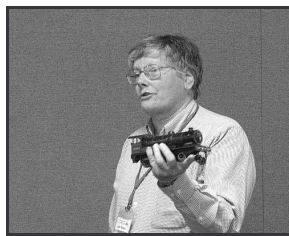
motive and tender from the 1930's while the engineer was lubricating the drive rods.

We did not have Show & Tell in October due to the Scottish Rite Meet.

Our theme for November was, RECENT FINDS AT THE SCOTTISH RITE, YORK, AND ON E-BAY. **John DeHaan** brought in a beautiful Bassett-Lowke clockwork, 0 gauge, 4-4-0 locomotive in British National Railways livery, in the original box. John figured that it was made after World War II, because that was when the British nationalized their railways. He picked it up in a little train shop in Edinburgh, Scotland (It is said that this shopkeeper keeps the shop open later when he knows that John is coming.) This locomotive is exceptionally well made for the post war era.

I was able to pick up at York my Pride Lines reproduction of a Voltamp interurban car. I had to wait a year for this car and be subjected to rumors Pride Lines president John Davanzo passing away (John wanted me to reassure everybody that he is alive and well.) The car has a reproduction of the original Voltamp two pole motor mounted on a truck with sprung axles. The original car was not cheap. It cost ten dollars in 1913 (by comparison, my grandfather bought a lot in the Bernal Heights neighborhood of San Francisco for a little less than fifteen dollars that year). The Pride Lines reproduction is true to the Voltamp original, except that it is made to run on three rail Standard gauge rather than the original two rail two inch gauge track. We ran the car on the club layout, and it was impressive.

Since I have been elected club treasurer, we will need a new Show & Tell chairman. I hope you will consider taking over the job. It has been fun doing Show & Tell over the years. *I would like to thank everybody who has participated. I hope that somebody will continue this program.*



YET ANOTHER WAY TO GET IN TROUBLE ON EBAY

Just when you thought it was safe

Identity thieves are hard at work. I sometimes wonder if they wouldn't do better by putting their efforts into making an honest living instead of cheating people.

The latest scam involves posting an item on eBay with a pornographic "gallery photo". The gallery photo is the one which appears to the left of the listing title in the category index. Say, for example, that you go to the "Toys & Hobbies:Model RR, Trains" category and are skimming down the page perusing the titles and (where provided) thumbnail gallery photos when you suddenly come upon an image of a young lady without her clothes. Whether you are titillated or outraged or just plain curious, you might click on the title or the image to see the auction page. However, when you do this you are rerouted to a fake eBay "sign in" page with places for you to enter your username and password. It looks exactly like the regular eBay sign-in page. Without pausing, you enter your data. Gotcha! You have just become another identity theft victim.

The thieves know their target audience. Almost all of these can be found in categories which are most preferred by males: sporting goods, guitars, toy trains (lucky us!). They are usually at or near the top of the page because they don't stay up very long before eBay spots them or a reader complains.

What's amazing about this is that they effectively hijack the eBay system, interrupting the normal progression from index page to auction page.

Catch-22: If you see one and decide to register a complaint, you will find that once you locate and make your way through the cumbersome reporting process, you are required to enter the offending item number. Of course, you don't know the number because it does not show on the index page and when you try to view the item you are redirected to the scam page. The only way to retrieve the number is to check the "properties" of the image by clicking on it with the right-side mouse button. You will find it buried in the string of numbers that appears.

eBay's security is second to none, I recently read that their security personnel number in the thousands. You might wonder why eBay doesn't go after these repeat offenders. That's not as easy as it sounds, because they're using the eBay accounts they've already stolen to collect more of them. What do they do with your stolen ID? Usually, they alter your personal information and then post a non-existent item for sale under your name, with the payment going to their address. You won't be aware of it until you get a suspension notice from eBay for not delivering the goods. -j.a.

IN WITH THE NEW –

Our new officers will assume their duties as of the January meeting. We all owe a debt of gratitude to them for stepping forward.

Geary Musselman, President
Brian Farnsworth, Vice-President
John DeHaan, Secretary
Richard Zanotti, Treasurer
Jeff Silvera, Past President

They're counting on the help and support of not only the outgoing officers but the entire membership.

Member Appreciation Day *February*

We will be honoring our out-going officers and other volunteers during the February meeting. As you know, we have been serving lunch at the February meeting, but this year we must be out of the room no later than noon so they can set up for a catered reception. The new officers will decide on an alternate date for our annual get-together, perhaps combining it with our summer picnic.



HOM€ LAYOUT TOURS

by Jack Hornor

September, Mike and Beverly de la Pena

What a great layout - Mike uses command control to run several trains at a time on one loop and on separate loops. This O gauge layout was judged a favorite by all of us who attended. Not only was the nearly finished layout with its enclosed bench work outstanding, the separate building that houses it was the envy of everyone. Several out-of-the-ordinary items caught my eye such as the operating ice rink, the six-stall turntable and new trains from the Czech Republic. The operating trains from every manufacturer range from postwar to modern, with many operating accessories from the same period. The visit was such a treat that several of the attendees asked for an encore, and Mike and Beverly have graciously agreed to host another visit next fall.



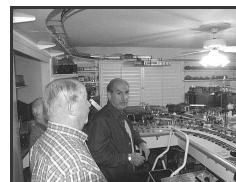
Frank Jablonski discusses the layout with Mike



Some views of Mike's layout. All four photos by Barbara Rohrs

November, Pete and Nancy White

A trip to the White House is always a rewarding experience, and the November layout tour was no exception. Everyone enjoys viewing his room-sized layout which features O and Standard gauges plus an overhead monorail and the Toonerville trolley -- a truly diverse collection. Their collections of antique toys, toy soldiers and Western memorabilia add to the fun. Nancy's Apple Hill Cake and other goodies were big hits, of course. The discussions about various toy trains, toy collecting, layout construction and operation made for a very pleasant afternoon. As usual, thank you, Pete and Nancy.



Our hosts Pete and Nancy White

Jack Hornor and John DeHaan admire the Whites' toy display

Part of Pete's layout

Pete (left) and Stan Salzman in the train room

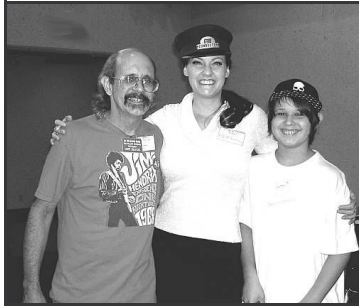
If I do say so myself, we have a fantastic year of home layout visits coming up in 2007. The dates aren't confirmed yet, but here are some of what's in store: We'll be traveling to Vacaville, where we'll see some of **Ira Keeler's** imaginative projects and remarkable restorations. **Karl Schmidt** also enjoys restoring antique trains and toys, and we're invited to see his collection and layouts. **Dave Ashman** will be ready to show us his new home and layout. In addition to the return visit to the **De La Pena's**, we're also invited to return to **Dean and Bonnie Busic's**; **Bill Wilson and Sandy Davison** have again invited us for lunch in Nevada City; and if we're still married after we remodel the kitchen, **George Ann and I** plan to invite you to return to Galt.

I'm exploring two additional activities and I would like to have your ideas about them. The Golden State Division has invited us to join them in running trains on their layout in the Vallco Fashion Park Mall in Cupertino. Some of us did this a few years ago when they were in Sunnyvale, and their hospitality really exemplifies the meaning of "Operating Society." They can simultaneously operate eight loops of O, one S and one Standard gauge, all at the same time. Wow. Learn more at <http://www.trainweb.org/gsttos/>. If you are interested, let's see if we can find a convenient Saturday for the trip.

Next, I would like to see our members with small, portable layouts set them up at one place and spend a day operating trains. I have talked to several members about this and already at least ten people in our division are willing to participate. The question is where and how we could make the idea work. I'm not sure Sierra 2 has enough room or electrical outlets, but hopefully someone will come up with an idea. This would give us all an opportunity to compare layout plans and admire each other's trains.



Cal Stewart Tidbits by George Ann Hornor



SVD president Jeff Silvera and son Sean enjoyed meeting the original Boxcar Betty

Friday night's party was a trip down memory lane for those of us of a certain age. The 40's style band was terrific and the swing dancers were once again a big hit. The trading hall was full on Saturday morning with a good sized crowd waiting for opening

time. Inside there were two huge hits – the \$253,000 prewar 433E Twentieth Century Limited set and calendar girl **Boxcar Betty** in person. The 71 year-old train was complete with the original boxes and wrappings, including the set box. Boxcar Betty didn't share her age, but her pink sweater was greatly admired.

On a sad note, funeral services for auction helper, **Eddie "Animal" Maggiora** were held on Friday. If you ever sat in on one of the Southwestern Division's auctions, you'll know this was a shocking loss. The TTOS home page has a tribute to him. Go to www.ttos.org and scroll down to the end of the page.



Boxcar Betty in her normal milieu

TTOS BOARD MEETING REPORT

By George Ann Hornor

The TTOS National Board of Directors met on Friday, November 17. I joined **Jeff Silvera** in attending the meeting as I carried the proxy for the San Joaquin Valley Division. Foremost in our minds, of course, was the status of the 2008 convention. Nothing had changed since the meeting at the Costa Mesa convention. Jeff referred to our letter stating we chose not to participate as a club, and the National convention chairman stated his intention to book the hotel and convention site soon.

There were other issues of interest to our Division. The Bay Counties Division is in the process of becoming active again under the direction of **Al Evans**. Organizational meetings have been held, and sixty-three people have expressed interest in joining, including thirty-three that would be new to TTOS. The Golden State Division is offering their assistance, including holding joint events. A new division, the Horseshoe Curve Division, has been

formed in Western Pennsylvania. They will be assisting with the 2007 Altoona convention.

It was reiterated that all Division cars must be approved by TTOS, and Lionel will only produce four division cars each year. The Board approved the motion to charge each division \$500 up front for the use of the TTOS name in order to offset National's costs. This would take effect in 2008. The Board also voted to allow a club to hold two public meets per year in which non-TTOS members are allowed to sell.

In other news ... the Board has decided that The Order Board will no longer publish a printed edition. It will be offered online only. The National office will be moving because the building they are in has been sold and will be demolished. **Norma Marlatt** has retired, and **Jane MacFarlane** is the business manager. The Standards Committee may be checking sales tables at all meets to ensure the restored stickers are being used as required.



DECEMBER FOOD AND TOY DRIVE A SUCCESS

Once again SVD members came through with a cornucopia of donations. This annual event provides food and toys for local charities. Thanks to all who contributed.



Rose Craighead arranges the display of donations at the December meet.

How to Mail the Side Track

-or-

Thank You, CALTRANS

By Mike Boyd

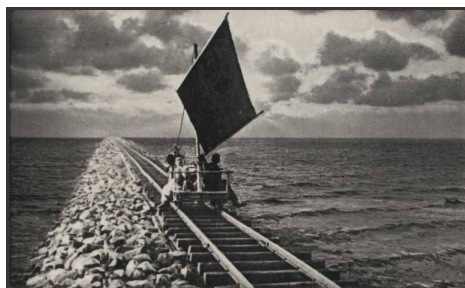
Due to bay bridge repairs at printing time of the last Sidetrack issue, Jerry, head honcho of the Side Track newsletter, would not be attending our monthly meet and needed some help issuing the edition to attending members and mailing the remainder to those who did not attend.

During the business meeting, our outgoing president, Jeff asked for volunteers to help with the aforementioned chore. After the deafening silence that always follows a call for volunteers had subsided, I reluctantly agreed to tackle the task.

Thanks to the ladies of our group who handed out the current issue and kept a list of names of those who received it, I loaded the remaining issues, a current mailing list, and a roll of stamps and headed home after the meet.

Being an early riser, I found myself in my kitchen at 4:30 a.m. Sunday morning with a fresh cup of coffee and pile of Side Tracks. As I folded, stamped, labeled and taped the issue closed, I gained an appreciation for what goes

on with this club activity and the effort that our members put into it to make it happen. It didn't take very long to finish the chore, and after dropping them into the mail that day, I even had a sense of accomplishment at what I had done.



A this time it appears we will be having a new board of directors or a new flock of officers if you prefer. I applaud them for tackling their tasks and offer any help I can give. I would also encourage those of you who have not tackled one of the duties that makes our club operate to do so, you might get a sense of satisfaction from it. And while I'm at it, I'd like to say thanks to everyone, past, present and future who selflessly give of their own time to make our division what it is. The variety of activities our division offers its members, I feel, makes it the best around.

One more thing, if any of you found coffee on you sidetrack, SORRY! Merry Christmas, and have a safe, healthy New Year.



Club Layout News

By Norman LaClair, Layout Chair



It doesn't seem possible, but the Christmas holidays are almost here again and that means that trains will be running around the tree once again. I think that most of us train club members already have our trains running on a permanent layout but there are those of us who run trains only during the holiday season.

It doesn't matter which operator you happen to be. It is always a very enjoyable and relaxing hobby and an opportunity to run a train that may not have been run for some time. Whatever you do with your train, please don't forget to OIL before you start your locomotives. And don't forget to put a little white lube on the teeth of the gears.

We all had a very nice meet at the Scottish Rite the first Saturday in October. We ran a large variety of trains on the layout that day. The meet was well attended by members as well as the public. As always we had a good attendance by the public at the layout even if the S gauge wasn't running. When the new Gargraves track was installed, someone crossed the wires when hooking them up under the table. Of course, bingo, we had a short. Paul Wells came to the rescue and found the problem after he got the layout back home. Well done Paul. I knew you would find the short.

At the writing of this month's Sidetrack we are getting ready to go to the Railroad Museum again this year. This will be the 10th year for the Museum Model Train Show on the weekend following Thanksgiving. It has turned out to be everyone's favorite show. Dave Thomsen and John Leins will also be at the show with their layouts.

So don't forget to oil your trains and oil the axles on that rolling stock.

Best wishes for a wonderful holiday season.

Sincerely, *Norman LaClair*

Thomas Sefton 1917-2006

(George Ann found this obituary in the CSRM docents' newsletter . His complete obituary appeared in the San Diego Union-Tribune on November 10.)

Thomas W. Sefton passed away early last November at his Mission Hills home. He was 89. The cause was pneumonia, which followed a long illness. As he presided for three decades over one of San Diego's oldest and largest banks, he indulged the child within by amassing renowned collections of model trains, railroad artifacts and vintage Laurel & Hardy films. From all indications, he took as much pleasure in sharing his hobbies with people as he did in collecting.

Mr. Sefton retired in 1990 as president of the former San Diego Trust & Savings Bank, which his grandfather founded in 1889. In late 2001, Mr. Sefton gave his extensive toy train and railroad collection to the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento. Consisting of about 7,000 toy trains and railroad-related accessories, only a portion can be exhibited at a time. "When Tom had it in his home, the owner of Lionel trains walked into a room to see it, and his jaw dropped," a friend said. Mr. Sefton's fascination with toy trains stemmed in part from a childhood in which he had few toys, despite his family's wealth. Referring to his father in a 1978 interview with *The Tribune*, Mr. Sefton said, "He thought I would be spoiled if I had too many things like that."

