

THE SIDE TRACK

NEWS

SUMMER from the Toy Train Operating Society
Sacramento Valley Division 2007

President's Message

by Geary Musselman

Here comes summer and a BUSY TIME for ALL.

Everyone's looking forward to the picnic outing and train trip on Sunday, July 1st. **Pam Richmond** is making arrangements with Niles Canyon Railway for this event for our club.

SVD is hosting the day, honoring the members in appreciation of their participation in our club activities for the past year. Here's hoping to see all of you there!

Just a reminder: this picnic is taking the place of our usual meeting on the first Saturday of the month July 7th, so please **DO NOT SHOW UP ON THAT DATE**.

Jack Hornor continues to do an excellent job with our Home Layout Tour program. We have recently been treated to the wonderful hospitality of **Jack Ahearn, Dave and Marian Ashman,** and **Bill Wilson and Sandy Davison.**

Jack A's skill at capturing the feel of the 1930s with his standard gauge setup is phenomenal. **Dave's** novel O gauge layout is a work in progress and we all want to see the finished product. **Bill's** collection of trains and his layout were outstanding. Those who did not attend really missed out. My one word comment is "WOW!" THANKS AGAIN GUYS!

SVD Picnic and Train Rides Sunday, July 1st

by George Ann Hornor

We start July with a bang! Our regular meeting place is booked for another event in July, so we're holding our annual outing and picnic at the Niles Canyon Railway on July 1st. The Pacific Locomotive Association operates four round-trip steam trains from the depot in Sunol to the Niles Station in Fremont. Niles Canyon and the Railway are rich in history, and **Pam Richmond** has set up a nice outing for us. You can board the train in Sunol or at Niles Station in Fremont. Because we know everyone wants to be riding, we decided to forego having lunch together. Instead, each family should bring their own picnic or plan to eat at one of the five restaurants around the Niles Station. The gift shop is in Sunol and the museum is in Niles. Time of the trip is approximately 30 minutes each way, round-trip approximately one hour fifteen minutes, or you can leave the train and return on a later one. For most of us, it is probably best to drive to Sunol and leave from there on the first train, spend some time exploring Niles, and return on the 1:30 or later train.

Departs SUNOL: 10:30 AM, 12:00 Noon, 1:30 PM, 3:00 PM

Departs NILES: 11:10 AM, 12:40 PM, 2:10 PM, 3:40 PM*
***3:40 train is One-Way - does not return from Sunol**

The Division will be picking up the tab for members and their immediate families. The suggested donations for your other guests are: \$5 for children age 3 through 12, \$8 for Seniors, and \$10 for everyone else. The NCRY volunteers would like to know how many to plan for, so we will have a sign-up sheet at the June meeting. If you missed signing up, you can call Pam at 916 689-3542 or me at 209 744-0626, or let me know by e-mail at gahornor@softcom.net.

You can find more on their web site at

<http://www.ncry.org/home.htm>



HOME LAYOUT TOURS

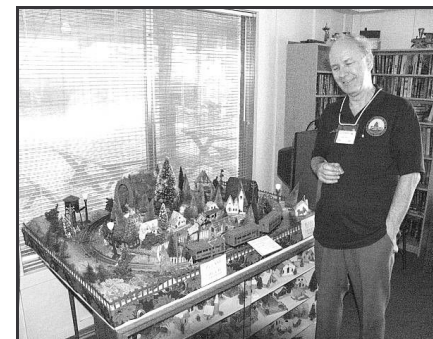
by Jack Hornor

JACK AHEARN - MARCH

I am sure it has all been said before, but Jack Ahearn is one of the great builders of smaller layouts in HO, O and now Standard gauges. Of necessity because he lives in a mobile home, Jack has mastered the art of constructing his very scenic operating layouts in small spaces. His 4x6, 4x8 and 6x6 ft. layouts often depict the toy train hobby as it was in times gone by or have a topical or holiday theme, and he always has a new one ready when we visit. This time, we noted the toy train operating bug had been picked up by his park manager, Paulette, who had recently had Lisa and Bryan of Jules' Toy Trains install a 14x14 ft. overhead layout in the club house. Plus she displayed her own 3x4 ft. O gauge.

This visit was a great example for our members who think they have no room for a layout. Jack tends to stay with prewar trains and accessories, and in keeping with that era, his trains run conventionally. He highlights the layouts with his hand-made scenery and keeps them interesting with plenty of details.

We all had a good time seeing the trains and munching cookies and visiting in the club house. .

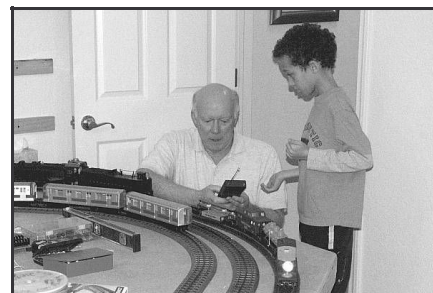


DAVE ASHMAN - APRIL

In spite of the April showers, the visit to Dave and Marian Ashman's beautiful home was an outstanding treat for all. After Marian's excellent lunch, we visited the first third of a great O gauge layout under construction. The track is Atlas O, controlled by Lionel's TMCC. DCS will be operated in the future, combined with the TMCC. We were able to observe trains and subways operated on the first of what will eventually be a three-level layout. The grades from level to level are long and only two percent so long trains can easily make the grades. Dave's collection reflects his diverse tastes and includes mostly modern Lionel and MTH, with a sprinkling of pieces from other manufacturers.

This tour was important to our members planning to build layouts, and we have been invited to follow Dave's progress during future visits. Right now, we plan to return at the completion of the second level and again after the final third level is finished. Of course, we all realize no layout is ever complete. After all, this is our hobby, and there will always be good things we want to add or change.

So thank you Dave and Marian, and as Arnold would say -- we'll be back!



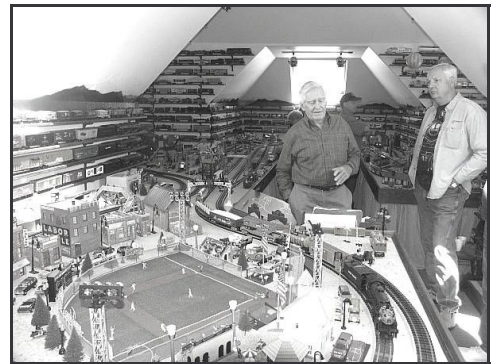
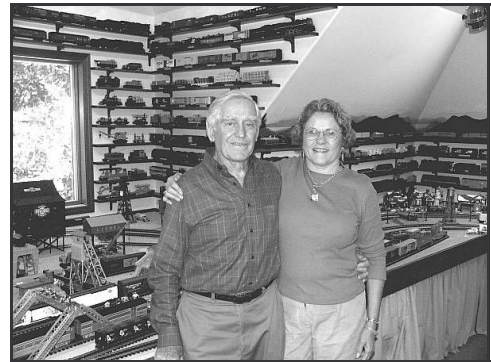
BILL WILSON AND SANDY DAVISON - MAY

What a pleasure it is to have Bill and Sandy in our Division. Saturday's layout tour was a treat in many, many ways. The tone was set by Sandy's delicious lunch (with the banana pudding just like Mother used to make). Once again we visited Bill's "The Achin' Back Railroad", plus we were invited to tour their home and wonderful grounds around the home where we admired Sandy's gardens with her appealing and whimsical figurines.

The layout room over the garage is large enough for two loops with O-72 and greater curves. The Gar-graves track, with pre-bent curves, is laid on Homosote roadbed attached to sub-carpeting painted in earth color. This is over plywood, but runs very quietly as the screws and clips do not penetrate the sub-carpet. He currently operates the loops with a post-war ZW. There are several sidings and businesses typically found in railroad operations. Carefully constructed and kit-bashed buildings and houses, all exquisitely painted, highlighted and detailed are highlights of the layout, but the star of the show is probably the baseball diamond. "Take Me out to the Ball Game" plays from loud speakers on the lighted field to entertain fans as they root for their favorite players.

Bill has a great collection of postwar Lionel and modern O-gauge engines are rolling stock. Especially outstanding is his collection of large 3rd Rail brass engines.

Thank you, Bill and Sandy.



FUTURE MEETS

Wow, the year is half-gone, leaving us remembering some outstanding layouts. The rest of the 2007 home layout tours are: June - **Karl and Jeanette Schmidt**, where you'll learn what restoration and innovation are all about; August - **Jack and George Ann Hornor**, where you'll see how to decorate your living room; September - **Dean and Bonnie Busick**; where we'll check the progress of his great postwar and modern layout; and finally November - where **Mike and Beverly de la Pena** have created a wonderland in Shingle Springs.

I thank all of you who have opened your homes this year. These visits are becoming more and more popular. Please let me know if you would like to host a tour. The size of your layout doesn't matter. We all learn from looking at other layouts and discussing common problems and successes.

-Jack Hornor



Show and Tell

By Bill Wilson

I want to thank all who have made suggestions for the Show and Tell program at our meets. Unfortunately, I misplaced the list at the last meeting (May 5) and I believe there were some additions to the list below. Those who did add items, please let me know so we can keep updating to the list.

I hope all are satisfied with Show and Tell. It seems to be a great way to pass along interesting thoughts on our hobby and display what members have done to develop their train related ideas. We all do have different train interests. Many of these are well displayed at our layout tours. Show and Tell gives everyone a chance to showcase their unique interests. Bring your interesting items and give us a short rundown.

Many thanks for your participation

SHOW AND TELL SUGGESTIONS

These are the suggestions I have to date.

1. French and British trains. 4/4/07
2. Russian trains.
3. Clockwork trains and toys.
4. Train artwork.
5. Unusual train related items. (example is steam engine tea kettle)
6. Cable, cog, incline and mountain railroads. 6/2/07
7. Odd scale items: OO, TT, etc
8. Factory errors.
9. Passenger trains separated by geographical area (west coast, east coast, etc).
10. Bump reverse, motorized cars.
11. Kit bashed locos and cars. 5/5/07
12. Patriotic train themes. Great for July.
13. Use of foam in construction of scenery. Could be a short seminar.

Please look the list over and add any you would like to see. Also, put a check by those you are really interested in. An updated list will be at each meet.

Club Layout News

By Norman LaClair, Layout Chair



The layout crew has been doing a fantastic job as always. We attended the Great Train Show at Cal Expo on January 13 and 14. Eighteen club members came in and ran trains for a large crowd of attendees. **Carl Curtis**, a member who transferred into the Sacramento Valley Division, brought his made-over baggage car of the eleven car set of Milwaukee passenger cars from 1973-74. Carl took baggage car #9522 and added a motor and power truck and put window ports in the end of the car. Very nice job, Carl.

During my several senior moments, I forgot to add **John Leins** to the list of members who came to the shows and ran their trains. So as an apology to John I will mention his name now ... **John Leins, John Leins, John Leins, John Leins, and John Leins**. John is always a participating member and also brings in his own layout. He is one of the many members who drive at least 40 to 50 miles to

help with our layout at the various shows.

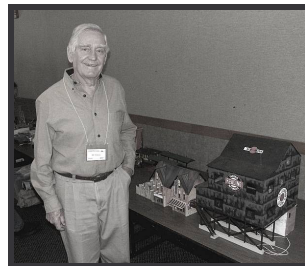
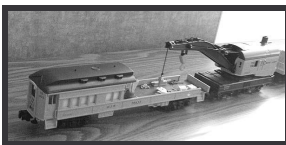
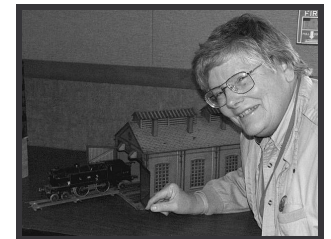
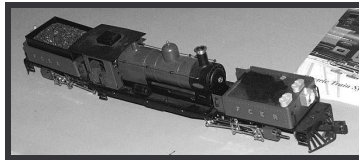
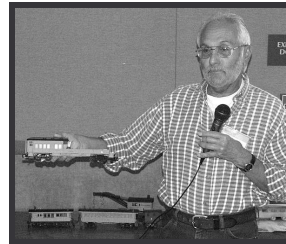
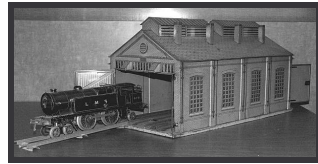
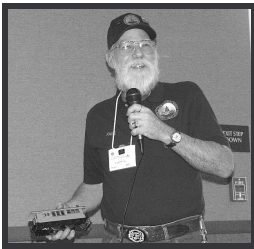
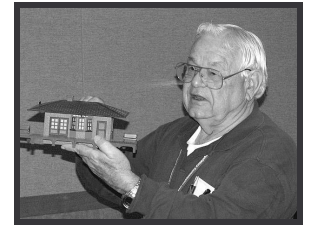
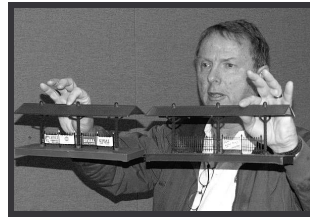
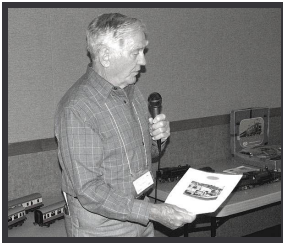
The members who came to the Cal Expo Show brought in a large variety of O, Standard, and S gauge trains. A few members also brought American Flyer pre-war trains. I for one really appreciate all of our members who come in and devote two days of their weekends to run trains.

If anyone else in the club has given thought to coming to a show and run your trains please contact **Norman LaClair** or **Paul Wells** and we will be happy to see that a track is available for you to use.

Thank you, and keep those trains running.

Sincerely, *Norman LaClair*

RECENT SHOW AND TELL HIGHLIGHTS



Parts and Repair Sources for Toy Train Lovers

By John DeHaan

For what it's worth, I'd like to offer my endorsement of two sources of parts and repairs that have been great help to me:

Mike's Trains and Hobbies: Still located in downtown Lompoc but often seen at the larger meets (when you can get near the booth). Great selection of parts – pre-war and post-war, all manufacturers. Will readily do mail or phone orders if you can't get to him in person. mike@mikestrainsandhobbies.com, phone: 805-736-6747, fax 805-736-1444

George's Train Service: George Caravas used to be at Tinplate Junction, now working out of his home near Calistoga. Does great repairs on post-war and pre-war trains of all types. He has a large stock of "used" parts and will try to do repairs and replacements with original parts when possible (and when requested). He is meticulous (and therefore not cheap) but if you want it repaired correctly, he does great things on our little treasures. Calls preferred (he rarely comes to meets): 707-942-5711. UPS shipments to: 2315 Grant St, Calistoga CA 94515

Hope this helps!



Meeting Notes

by John DeHaan, SVD Secretary

Minutes: 3 February

Geary Musselman called the meeting to order at 0950. Certificates for contributions to the SVD over the past few years were presented to: **Mike Boyd, John Shelton, Jack Hornor, Jerry Azzaro, Lee Deter, Norm LaClair, Tom Gibson, Paul Wells, George Ann Hornor, and Bob Milton.** A beautiful plaque was presented to past-president **Jeff Silvera** in appreciation for his years of service as president. **Bill Wilson** was announced as the new chair for Show & Tell. There was additional discussion about the National meet and the role of the SVD. Further attempts would be made to secure a written agreement with TTOS National and to meet with TTOS National officers about their plans. Show & Tell was conducted on customized items and then lively trading commenced!

Minutes: 3 March

Geary Musselman called the meeting to order at 0945. He announced that **Randy Giroux** had declined an invitation to talk to the members due to recent ill health. There was brief discussion about the 2008 convention, and it was decided to meet with the National officers at the Cal Stewart meet. **Jack Hornor** offered to represent SVD at the National TTOS Board meeting on 16 Mar and report any issues. Guest **Mike Stanton** was introduced. **Bill Wilson** discussed plans for a summer (July) picnic event. A substantial majority of members in attendance voted for Nevada City as a venue (with its mines, historic buildings, railroad links, and accessibility. Bill will check further on dates and venues. Show and tell was conducted, the theme was buildings. The next meet was announced for 14 April and show & tell topic will be British and French toy trains. Meeting adjourned for train swapping!

2008 Convention



TTOS officers addressed SVD members at the 3/17 Cal-Stewart meet. From left: Steve Latta, Don Kyle, Gary Keck, Randy Giroux

At the Cal-Stewart Meet on 17 March, a sizable contingent of SVD TTOS members met with TTOS National Officers: **Randy Giroux** (Convention chair), **Gary Keck, Don Kyle** and **Steve Latta.** They offered an explanation for the way in which the agenda for the August 2006 National Board meeting listed the Sacramento site selection and said that an apology was sent to **Jeff Silvera** (posted at a meeting but never re-printed). They did express dismay that we have not responded to their overtures in a timely fashion. We learned that TO DATE there had been NO arrangements negotiated for the 2008 Sacramento Convention. Randy said he would be on the phone the week of 19 March to find a hotel and convention site. Members warned him that Sacramento was a popular place and he would almost certainly be too late to find a venue now (less than 16 months away) in Sacramento itself. It is not known if they will consider other nearby venues – Chico, Reno, Stockton?

TTOS bylaws mandate a national convention every year. If a local division does not step forward, then National will host it (as they have done several times in the recent past). They do want to maintain the west-east-west rotation for national conventions. Since the 2007 meet is in Altoona, a West Coast venue was needed. They reported that no West Coast division came forward for 2008 (other sites for 2009 and 2012 have been offered). They selected Sacramento because of its central location and relatively low prices, and local special amenities such as the railroad museum and other museums. National will arrange for staff and pay for the site venue, main event administration, the three convention cars, and brochures. Chairs from the local division are needed for: table sales, tours, security, auction, and display layouts. A share of the profits of the meet (if any) will be offered to the Division only if the Division participates with logistical support. The Division car profits (if any) would be credited to the sponsoring division. Sales of division cars have reportedly been slow the last few years. Any design would have to be created, approved, and negotiated with Lionel by May, with no guarantee that it could be made in time. There is presently a one year lead time for design issues and a six month lead time for production. Reportedly a \$500 deposit will be required to begin the process for a Division car. TTOS did suggest that their rental of a site usually provides for a Sunday rental, and if we wanted to host a public train meet that day, we would retain any profits since the venue would be paid for. Giroux promised he would send a policy guideline to our Division ASAP and would keep us informed of any developments for our evaluation at the 14 April meet.

Other notes:

Plans to convert the TTOS Order Board to a digital format only have been derailed by numerous protests from those members who do not have access to a computer or the Internet. Discussions are under way to combine the Order Board with the TTOS Quarterly as a single mailed publication. There has also reportedly been no new office location found for TTOS National HQ.

May 25 Letter to SVD Members from Don Kyle, TTOS Secretary

We received this letter on May 26, along with a request that we publish it. It's worth noting that TTOS National has reserved the Sacramento Convention Center and a block of rooms at the Holiday Inn.



Toy Train Operating Society

Don Kyle – TTOS National Secretary – Webmaster
251 Autumn Eve Street
Henderson, Nevada 89014

702-232-2263 9:AM – 10:PM PST
sndtrx@earthlink.net 24/7

May 25, 2007

MEMO

TO: Sacramento Valley Division TTOS
FR: Don Kyle – TTOS National Secretary
RE: 2008 National Convention

Dear Sacramento Valley Division officers and members,

I would like to appeal the Sacramento Valley Division to have a change of thought in regards to participating in the 2008 National Convention scheduled for Sacramento. I'm in complete agreement with you that it was a poor decision by the board and our Vice President to have discussed the 2008 convention without first having contacted your division. For this, I apologize for all.

The upcoming TTOS National Election will most likely bring a completely new board, a board that will be faced with many challenges. How do we turn around the continuing decline in membership and revenue? By working together as a team and listening to our members. One item that was ignored for some time was alternating East vs. West coast shows. TTOS needs great places of interest that will be a draw for all members. The excitement for Altoona 2007 is unbelievable, and the same would happen for Sacramento in 2008. With an area so rich in railroad history and toy train enthusiasts, members from across the country will want to attend.

For this I would like to ask your division to support the 2008 convention. TTOS National has secured the Sacramento Convention Center and the Holiday Inn at 300 J Street, adjacent to Old Sacramento. We will take care of all the financial details and organization of the trading hall and tours. All we ask is for your support in helping with the door, accompanying tours, and being a liaison to the Sacramento area suggesting what will be best for the convention. Everything is open for discussion. Sometimes we have to think past the benefit to ourselves and consider the effect on the organization as a whole. Sacramento would continue the momentum built up in Altoona, and from Sacramento, back east to Chicago in 2009. TTOS needs Sacramento in 2008.

TTOS is really at a point where we need help, and I ask you for this. Would my schedule have permitted, I would have liked to visit your division in person. Running my own business here in Las Vegas, Nevada takes most of my time. Thank you for your consideration.

I invite you to contact me by phone 702-232-2263 or email sndtrx@earthlink.net

Wishing your division the best,
Don Kyle
Secretary – Toy Train Operating Society