

THE SIDE TRACK

NEWS

from the Toy Train Operating Society
Sacramento Valley Division

SUMMER

2012

Come for the trains. Stay for the people.

Jerry Azzaro, editor

President's Message

by John DeHaan

Well, summer is here and people are back from York and Scottish Rite and are now buzzing off to the National meets for TCA, LOTS, LCCA, and especially TTOS in Santa Clara! I hope your schedule allows you to take in several of these. Plans are moving ahead quickly for the TTOS National Convention August 8-11. National has opted NOT to direct mail convention brochures but instead to send out postcards reminding members to check the website (www.ttos.org) for information. (This will save some \$4,000 in printing and postage.) If YOU don't have internet access, please call a friend who does, NOW! They have great tours lined up (Roaring Camp, Kelley (Historical) Park, Billy Jones Wildcat RR (1/3 scale), Tech Museum, and Winchester Mystery House!) so it will be fun. Some of our members have already volunteered to help Golden State, and more help is needed, so get in touch with **Bob Krivacic** if you can spend a day or two there. Go to the Golden State website at www.gscto.org for a list. You might get to be a docent (handler, cat-herder) on a tour and get to do something fun for free! We are working with the Convention folks on arrangements for our layout to be there, but space limitations are a concern. If you have been part of our layout crew and can help set up, take down, or operate during the convention (probably the 10-12 dates), let **Curt Darling** know ASAP.

About our own incorporation... Attorney **James Kroll** has the signed Articles of Incorporation and will have filed them by the time you read this. He has also drafted the required bylaws, which your Board has reviewed. We will be incorporated as a 501(c)3 non-profit, so there are requirements for an annual meeting (easily handled at our November or December "monthly"), more detailed financial records and minutes (to be published as part of an annual report), and a quorum (with proxies) at some meetings. It will mean some more work for your Board of Directors (oooh, how official sounding!). Your present officers have agreed to stand as the Board of Directors for the time being. We will continue with our two-year terms, so elections in November will be crucial. I am awaiting delivery of the final version of the bylaws (developed along with those of CenCal and San Joaquin clubs, to save costs).

Bill & Sandy Wilson have put together a "fun day" for us in Nevada City (see details on page 10). This will be in addition

to our July meeting and is scheduled for either July 14 or 21. The final decision will be made at the next regular meeting on June 2, so be there! We are planning now for our big Scottish Rite meet on 2 October. Any questions – see **Jeff Silvera**! The Redwood Empire Train Show is at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds September 21-23. Our layout has been invited, but we need enough volunteers before we say yes or no. See me or Curt if you want to take part. On the long view, the LOTS annual meet will be in Reno in August 2013 coinciding with our National meet. They will be at John Ascuaga's Nugget while we are booked into the Grand Sierra. The plans are under negotiation but tentatively, they will organize the tours and we will handle the train show (the Grand Sierra has better facilities for the show). They would like to do a Sacramento tour (CSRM, Old Sac, etc.) and maybe some layout/collection visits. I will try to keep you apprised.

We were sorry to learn that **Andy DeSmet** had a heart attack recently but glad to hear he is on the mend after "stent" surgery. **Don Gueffroy** is doing better in his recovery from his December auto accident. He faces extensive rehab as a result of his spinal injury. Both would appreciate getting cards from you.

Keep playing with those trains!

Membership News

By Tim Taormina, membership chair

Membership Renewal--Last call for those few of you who have not as yet renewed your membership for 2012. Please send your renewal fee (\$25 Single or \$30 family--this includes the \$5 late fee) to **Tim Taormina** at **5509 DanJac Circle, Sacramento, CA 95822**.

New faces joining us since our last issue include **Skip Willaman, Carl & Kathy Rudolph, and Jack & Lizette Dieres**. Our club now numbers 118 members!

We enjoyed helping **Jack Horner** celebrate his 77th birthday at our April 7th meeting.



Home Layout Tours

by Jack Hornor, SVD Vice President and Layout Tour Coordinator

Tom Alger's O Gauge Layout - April 7th, 2012



If there ever was a dream layout and a dream place to have it located, we certainly found it in our visit to **Tom Alger's** layout on April 7, 2012. Tom has a separate two story heated and air conditioned building away from his house with the entire 48 foot by 12 foot room layout upstairs. There are four connected but separate operating loops with, can you even believe it, 40 foot straightaways. There are three levels, a subway below, on the main level are the four loops, the grand central station, a turntable and multiple sidings. To finish it off the third level is a town with an operating trolley loop. The track is Atlas O and is powered with two MTH Z-4000's. The control is Legacy, DCS, TMCC and conventional, all on all of the loops simultaneously. All radii are O-72 and handle the largest locomotives, which he has with a Big Boy, a Challenger and others. The engines and rolling stock are mostly modern Lionel, MTH, Atlas, 3rd Rail and others. The scenery, towns and countryside are well done. Fellow SVD member **Justin Wescott**



helped him build a monster-size Grand Central Station with eight tracks in it. So far Tom has spent four years in construction and there is still a little to be done to finish the whole layout - however it looks and runs sensationally.

Tom and his wife **Judy** were great hosts. We would all like to thank the Algers for a entertaining and fun afternoon.

Future Tours

In November we'll return to the home of **Pete and Nancy White** to enjoy their layout and collections. This is a wonderful time of year to visit the Whites, whose home is always decorated in the spirit of the season. Other visits for the remainder of the year are tentative, we'll let everyone know as soon as they are confirmed.

EDITOR'S NOTE

He did it again.

Our own "**Boxcar Jack**" **Ahearn** has gone and done another comprehensive set of themed interviews, like he did for last year's "Flyer Feature" issue. This time he interviewed SVD members who favor Marx Trains, and you will find these interviews throughout this issue with the "MARX MAGIC" tag attached. Jack also serves up some delicious Marx-flavored web links in his "Web Picks" feature.

We hope you enjoy this kind of reporting. It sure makes putting the Side Track together a lot of fun.

-Jerry

JACK HORNOR

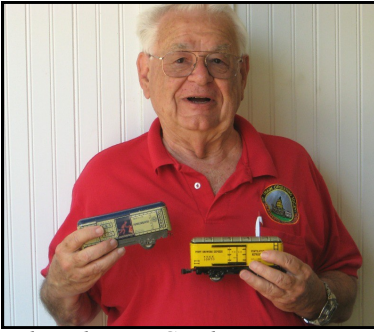


Photo by Jim Groth

“**Lil’ Jack Hornor**” (Jack H’s words) got a fairly early and impressive start on his life long love of toy trains. Jack was a bright child but had to endure playing with childish toys and inanimate objects for his first thirty-six months. That indignity to the future nuclear engineer was generously compensated for on his third Christmas, when presented with a magnificent and exciting Marx, top of the line, red and silver M 10000 train set!*

By the early 1940’s the novice railroader had acquired another Marx master piece. That multi-colored Commodore Vanderbilt freight set was lengthened with his acquisition of many marvelous Marx six inch freight cars. Several years of limited ‘round-the-tree’ layouts was about to come to a close.

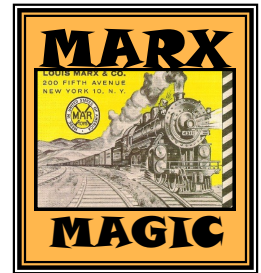
This longer train apparently awoke the young rail magnates recognition for the need of a longer right-of-way and perhaps some passing and service tracks, a rail yard and ideally, terminal facilities for passenger service. Alas, with minimal family voting rights, the

young railroader would have to accept a short Yule time lease on the living room floor for his rail operations. His family probably then heard his first utterance of; “some day”!

His view of that expanded floor layout, measuring the length and width of the family living room, was perhaps the genesis of what would lead to a life dedicated to meticulous layout planning. Early on he developed his skill of well thought out construction, systematic wiring and flawless operation. Jack has successfully applied all of his disciplined scientific reasoning into his model railroading. And I believe; the list of past and present layouts attests to that assertion.

Some may remember Jack’s Benicia four by six, double loop table layout with multiple interchange switching options. Two smoothly moving trains maneuvered around the twists and switches as if choreographed for a ballet and timed with the perfection of a fine Swiss watch. If I had attempted this, I likely would have created an “all trains on the floor” spaghetti bowl menagerie of near misses and maniacal mishaps!

Prior to the above intricate ferroequinistical achievement, Jack built another while living in Benicia... not a home layout, but a gift to the Camel Barn Complex of the Benicia Historical Museum** This four by eight, double looped layout was built, donated and placed on exhibit in the Museum. It was designed chiefly for kids (of all ages) to operate by means of creative, yet simple, designed circuitry. Three buttons would allow ‘kids’ to run trains on either one or both loops and the third would propel accessories into action. Again, the two train movement beneath a Plexiglas shield was another example of Jack’s high standard for smooth and unerring operation.



During the intervening years between Benicia and Galt, Jack played an active role with other members improving our Club’s modular layout. And most recently he played a very significant role in the planning and installation of the electrical circuitry phase of our new, ‘state of the art’ layout. His Club layout involvement also included regular attendance at many of the various train shows and the annual CSRM Thanksgiving Show.

Another testimony to Jack’s standard of perfection can be seen in what at first may appear to be a simple shelf layout. The simplistic appearance of Jack’s nostalgic Toonerville Trolley point-to-point operation has all the creative planning and innovative appeal of his now almost iconic living room extravaganza. His Cab Forward huffing and puffing around the lower level and the colorful Marx ‘M 10005’ streaking around the dogbone design of the upper level are just two of the many hallmarks of the “G.A.S.P.” model railroad.

For newer members who have not yet experienced the wonder and wow of viewing the eleven by fifteen foot, tri-level, six train operation of the Galt, Amador and Southern Pacific railroad, you too will **GASP** when visiting one of the many exciting toy train layouts in the area!

When asked, Jack sums up his overall view of all Marx in just one gleeful word: “Fun!”

*Comparatively, ponder a three year old being given a Lionel or Flyer Santa Fe diesel, A-B-A train set!

** The Camel Barns Complex can be visited at www.beniciahistoricalmuseum.org/Default.htm

*** A full photo feature story about Jack’s large living room layout can be seen in the May, 2002 issue of the TTOS BULLETIN. The February 2003 issue of Classic Toy Trains also includes a colorful photo feature story of this layout.

BETTY MUSSELMAN



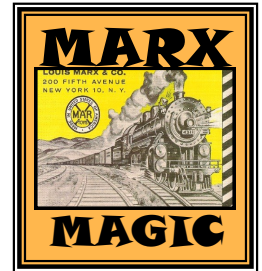
We all know of the typical dad who buys a Christmas train set “for his son.” In recent years societal and economic trends have resulted in a lot of single mothers asking. “what kind of train set should I buy for my young son?” Question; what mom, after placing a train set under the tree, would play with it and continue playing with more and more trains for ever after? Answer: **Betty Musselman!**

Betty presented her son **Geary** with a Marx wind-up when he was three or four. Perhaps she was surprised that she had as much fun with it as he...if not more. After a few years, she bought him a “non Marx” but was happy to see that it ran on Marx track along with his earlier set and all the other cars she bought in between!

During Geary’s younger years, he and Betty were an unusual mother and son team who would often travel downtown Christmas shopping for toys trains and accessories. Purchasing decisions for Betty were easy...through out all the years, she only bought Marx trains and accessories...lots and lots of them!

After joining our Sacramento Valley Division, Betty met and visited **John and Mary Leins** and got her first look at big time Marx railroading. John’s Marx metropolis inspired her to make more and more buys at our monthly and River City meets. Adding to those sources, she’s also discovered eBay and rang up a bunch of purchases through them.

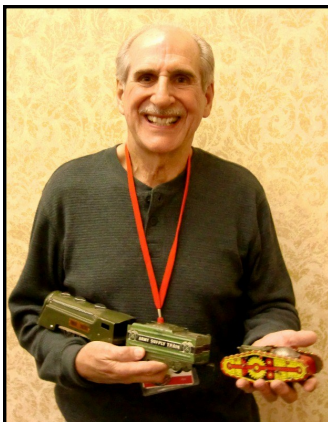
Indeed, when asked how many Marx trains, whistles and bells, etc. she had, I got sort of an odd delayed look as if she was surprised that there were still more to buy. After a bit of eyebrow twitching and quick mental math, she rather dryly responded: “I guess two or maybe three hundred.” Of all her train sets and accessories, she points to the whistling Girard station and the very popular Army Supply Train as her favorites.



As for layouts, there is the three-by-five that Geary built and she showed off at last years CSRM annual show. In the future, she will be leasing trackage rights from Geary’s soon to be built ‘L’ shaped, fourteen by eight double level pike. I suspect once she starts placing all of her trains and accessories on her son’s layout, he’ll be right back at the drawing board! And just wait ‘til she does find the one train set she’s still hoping to find...surely Geary will have to add more tracks for Betty’s Marx “General” set!

Finally, her one word response describing her long love for Marx; “WOW!”

STAN SALZMAN



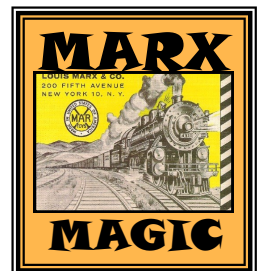
Stan Salzman, unlike most toy trainiacs, got a rather late start onto the mainline of model railroading. In fact, he didn’t even leave the Yard until the mid 1970’s. However, he soon acquired a Marx Commodore Vanderbilt at one of our meets, built up a head of steam and coupled onto a string of classic six inch freight cars. Soon he was highballing down the three rail road to more engines, lots more freight and passenger cars and a lot, lot more accessories!

Speaking of accessories, Stan’s favorite for looks, reliability and vehicular safety is his #1420 Marx Crossing Gate Shanty. The operating cross arm operates flawlessly and the guard looks like he’s right out of Central Casting!

Over the years, Stan has constructed several pikes, mostly of the low acreage variety, known to many of us as four-by-eights. Last year, “for the kiddies”, he allocated some space in his home’s den and built a Christmas layout for the “kids”. . . yeah, right. On it, he ran his favorite choo-choo; a Marx Military Supply Train. The kids watched with childhood awe as it raced around the Christmas tree. Stan also watched... with adult awe!

When asked if he was planning a Yule Season layout for this coming year, he at first sounded a bit hesitant, then quickly responded with a resounding affirmative. His accompanying look seemed to imply I was nuts for even asking. I was then informed that the 2012 seasonal edition of the “kids” layout would feature a bi-level pike built within the square footage of a ping pong table. I’m sure the trains and accessories will keep the kids and Stan watching and shouting with glee as the trains on the two levels whistle and ring out all the joyous sounds and sights created by Louis Marx!

Asked to sum up his thoughts and feelings about Marx trains, he replied; “play value!”



DAVE THOMSEN



What kinda guy is **Dave Thomsen**? Dave's the kinda guy, that if you're in the hospital and he comes to visit ...he'll likely bring along a 4x6 ft. layout for you to watch and enjoy!

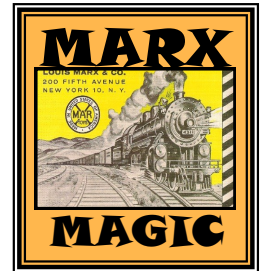
And when it comes to the hundreds of layouts he's always brought to where ever he's been...they're all different but paradoxically, they all alike ...bright, cheery, colorful, animated, fast moving and typically very, very Christmas-ey! That is to say; they look like Marx trains and accessories ... even if they're not!

His constant theme of "all toy all the time" probably stems from the first Marx set he received in 1950. A wind-up freight set with six inch cars and a figure eight loop for them to wind - and unwind - around. And like many of us "kids" Dave soon created his first accessory; an A.C.C. tunnel. Let's all look back and remem-

ber how we took an American Container Corp. cardboard box, cut out openings at each end and wowed as our train roared through one end and sped out the other! From that we learned a very basic lesson about scenery; put anything, anything on a bare plywood board...and it will be a 100% improvement. We learned it ... Dave perfected it.

Perhaps a secret of Dave's layouts, which always evoke looks of a nostalgic childlike innocence, is the overall simplicity that he presents to the viewer. Dave's animated and snow packed layouts, streaming with people, cars and anything else that looks toy like, prompts those watching him to exclaim. "Wow, no wonder he's always smiling!"

Another paradox of Dave - although he states that only about thirty percent of his trains and accessories are Marx, then goes on to list all the Marx sets and accessories he has or has had over the years! He "for instanced" off the following Marx items: A wind-up loco and freight set, a Santa Fe 4-6-0 freight set, an M 10000 cream and green set, the large Glendale hand cranked whistling station, a barrel loader, *lots* of signs, light towers, crossing gates etc ... plus several other Marx train sets he "found"! I asked, "if that's only a third...what in the world is the other two-thirds?" He smiled broadly.



JOHN and MARY LEINS

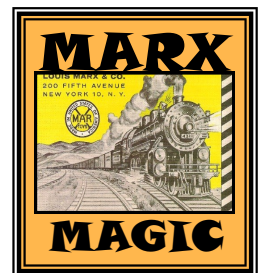


1939 was a great sales year for Marx Commodore Vanderbilt locomotives and an even greater year for a three year old boy named **John Leins**...he found one of those Vandy sets under the Christmas tree! And you can bet that he was down on all fours with his head slanted on the floor watching the toy locomotive's headlight look just like the real ones. What a wonderful way to start out in life!

More than that, he remained fascinated with toy trains and seven years later, the ten year old doubled his roster with the addition of another train, headed by a wind-up loco. But it would be another four years until he hit the big time; with an electric powered steamer heading up a string of Marx six inch freights! John was on his way to three rail heaven...but like for many of us, real life got in the way of model railroading.

By the mid nineteen eighties, John apparently learned to become multi-tasked and returned to his love for Marx trains and all those colorful six inch cars and exciting accessories. How much so?...Check out the Winter 2011 issue of the Side Track, wherein his current 'empire' was ogled by wide eyed T.T.O.S. members during one of Jack Hornor's many successful layout tours. The photos of that spectacular model railroad ring out and glow with all the lights, whistles and bells that could possibly be squeezed into the five-by-ten foot toy train fantasia!

Just how deeply are John and wife **Mary**, involved with presenting the joys of toy trains? Well, let's look at it from this prospective; during their fifty six year marriage, they have jointly spent one third of their Thanksgiving weekends at the annual California State Railroad Museum. Each year, they've shared with many thousands of families, the creative fun and togetherness that can be found in our beloved hobby!



When asked to sum up their one word reaction to Marx trains and accessories, I'll let you, the reader decide which one replied with; 'Interesting' and who summed it up with; 'Fun!'

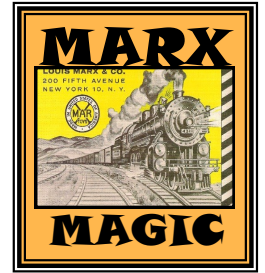
MY REAL LIFE REMINISCENCE... A MARX TRILOGY

Jack Ahearn



A Toy Train on Real Tracks

I was 'bout six or seven... soon to be eight. I snuck thru the secret hole in the railroads chain link fence that every kid in the neighborhood knew about. Quickly scrambling up the embankment, I looked up and down the main line's shinning rails... gee whiz...no trains coming. Suddenly I saw something unbelievably amazing...part of a toy train! I picked up the small black car and wondered how it got there. I guessed some kid brought his trains up here to play with... Wad'd he think...dat he could use their tracks? Musta been a real jerk! I figured he was chased away by the railroad cops (they always spoiled our fun) and fled leaving that car behind.



At first, I was gonna take it but then I thought; maybe da poor jerk will come back lookin' fer it. I kinda felt sorry fer him... 'specially when I realized it was the car that went behind the locomotive. How could a locomotive run without coal? Since there were still no trains coming, I headed for home, leaving the little black car behind.

Many times, since that day in the early 1940's, I remember that little black car and wondered if that jerky kid ever returned to look for it...or, if after all these years, what I now know to have been a Marx "coffin" tender...could still be there?



A Kid Can Hope and Dream...Can't He?

To us ten-going-on-eleven year-old kids...our Brooklyn neighborhood Woolworth's in the mid 1940's was more than a store... more that playground and even more than a dream factory. We could spend an hour or so just looking around at the many wonders...especially around Christmas time. One word described it all... Wow!

But this reminisce isn't about the Big Day but a few days afterward and about a hope and a dream. I was going through the back entrance of that five and dime to see what 'after Xmas mark downs' they might. I noticed some employees moving boxes and stuff across the street to Woolworth's store room. Never paid much attention to it, but now a lot of left over Xmas items were being carried over to it. It looked like fun to watch so I crossed over and peaked through a blank spot in the soaped up window. Just a bunch of boxes and display racks...but, but...waaaaaaait a minute, I couldn't believe what I was looking at!

There it was, in a corner...the small train layout from the store, nothing on it now but the tracks. I remembered watching the trains, two of them running around those tracks. I knew they were Marx trains by the rounded and colorful look of them! The astonishing thing to us kids was that one circle of track ran above the other. The top train was on shiny black metal trestle beams just like the real "Elevator" (El) trains a few blocks away.

I heard the guys mumbling about "saving all this junk" and they should just "dump all the holiday things." Holiday "things" . . . "throw away"? "Hey Mister," I shouted to the nearest guy, "are you gonna get rid of it all?" He looked at me and started and ended his sentence with "beat it kid!" I knew I wouldn't get anywhere talking to them so I left. Secretly, I returned to that soaped up window day after day for a few weeks. I wanted to see to see if there was any hope that I would be around to grab the small Marx layout when they..."dumped all the Holiday things."

What I felt then as a kid...is about the same as going to a train meet now. You know what I mean; our hopes and dreams over all the years...haven't really changed much...have they?



Trains, Girls and Confusion!

When I was thirteen or fourteen...going on fifteen, I found myself on one of those long walks, the kind without an intended destination. I looked around the unfamiliar Brooklyn streets, all bedecked with Christmas decorations. Reading the family names above the stores with their sidewalk fruit, vegetable and breads stands, I realized I was in a neighborhood a mile from mine, which in the late 1940's was predominantly Italian.

Then I saw it: a good old Woolworth's! I walked into the familiar looking and candy-corn smelling store and felt at home. I passed the lunch counter with all the Coke menu signs and headed right for the toy section. Wow, they had a large area set aside for toys

Trilogy continued next page . . .

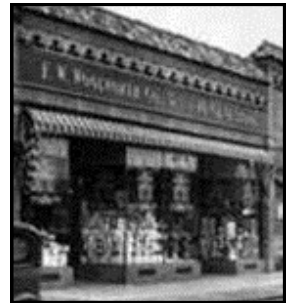
and trains... I never saw so many trains and accessories on display. I edged right up to the darkly varnished counters and stared into the little glass bins. They didn't have any trains running but lots and lots of tunnels and bridges and all sorts of crossing signs and lights. They were bins and bins of them...mostly all in boxes but a lot out on display. I couldn't get over how much stuff they had and I could tell they were all of the same kind...all the boxes had that little circle of writing and a big X in the center of the trademark. So what, to me trains were trains...lots of them! What I liked most about Marx: their track cost only nineteen cents instead of Lionel's twenty five cent ones.

I guess I was gawking at the displays for almost an hour when I heard a low, gentle voice ask; "Hi, can I help you find something...or are you just looking?" It was the "just looking" that told me I was about to be told to shove off. Sigh. I turned and saw the voice came from a young sales girl. The kind that got after-school jobs at the five-and-dimes. She looked pretty young, about my age...in another year or two. She didn't ask me to leave but I felt an urge to be nice and polite. "No ma'am, I mean yes ma'am, uh young girl, lady, miss - I was just leaving anyway."

I was back on the aromatic street. Wow, they even have sliced pizza stands. I wondered if she liked pizza. She sure looked Italian; her long black hair glistened and olive complexion glowed! Gads, she must have thought I was a nut, but what was I supposed to call her? She was a new kind of female to me. There were only two kinds; little girls who jumped roped and never said anything that made sense Or, the mother kind, the short stubby looking ones that always wore cloth coats a shade darker than black, carried a cloth shopping bag and wore a dark kerchief or a babushka on their heads!

But this girl-woman-lady was a different kind. I never noticed one like her before. Even those in my freshman high school class weren't like her . . . I wondered why not . . . they were the same age and everything. Confusing, very confusing, everything's getting so confused lately. I should have never come to this neighborhood . . . but hey, maybe I'll come back sometime and ask her if she likes pizza. Of course she likes pizza - she's Italian, stupid!

I then noticed a lot of people staring at me...talking out loud to myself. Sheeeeeeeez!



Announcing the 2012 TTOS National Convention in Santa Clara, CA

Wednesday August 8 thru Saturday August 11

[Hyatt Regency Santa Clara](#)

(This is the same hotel TCA uses for Nor-Cal)

Dedicated reservation web site: <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/ttos>

Phone number for assistance 1-888-421-1442

Room rate is \$139.00 per night Single/Double Occupancy.

Planned schedule of tours: (subject to change)

Wednesday August 8 ~ Roaring Camp Railroads – Ride the Redwood Forest Steam Train and the Santa Cruz Beach Train (whole day)

<http://www.roaringcamp.com/>

Friday August 10 ~ History Park at Kelley Park - With 27 original and reproduction homes, businesses and landmarks, History Park highlights Santa Clara Valley's past. Complete with paved streets, running trolleys and a café, this 14-acre site has the charm and ambiance of times gone by.

<http://www.historysanjose.org/wp/plan-your-visit/history-park/>

With this tour we will also visit The Tech Museum; The Tech Museum is a hands-on technology and science museum for people of all ages and backgrounds. Offering the unique Silicon Valley experience. Hands-on science & IMAX! (10am to 3pm)

www.thetech.org

Friday evening layout tours ~ Five Fantastic Layout stops!

Saturday August 11~ Winchester House and Billy Jones Railway. (11am to 4pm)

<http://winchestermysteryhouse.com>

<http://www.BJWRR.org>

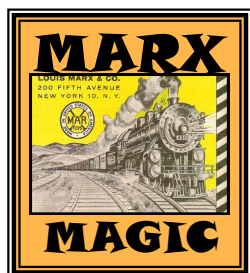
Thursday evening: Welcome party and silent auction

Saturday evening: Banquet

BOXCAR JACK'S WEB PICKS

Jack Ahearn combs the Internet, looking for great train stuff to share with us . . .

Louis Marx: Toy Maker and VIP Friend Maker



Louis Marx seemed to get around quite a bit and rubbed elbows with some pretty impressive folks...such as **J. Edgar Hoover, Lyndon Baines Johnson** and a General named **Ike!**

LOUIS MARX and J. EDGAR HOOVER:

Excerpts from an NPR “Fresh Air” interview concerning Pentagon Papers; Nixon vs. Ellsberg Re: FBI denying Nixon’s request to investigate Daniel Ellsberg:

“ . . . **Hoover doesn't want to do this** for a lot of reasons, one of which is they're going to get caught. Second is that Ellsberg's father-in-law is a friend of his who gives a lot of toys to the FBI. His name happens to be Marx, M-A-R-X - **not Groucho, not Karl, but Louis Marx**. And Hoover won't do it. Nixon goes ballistic, and that's when the Plumbers are created to do the work that J. Edgar Hoover wouldn't do.”



[Click on the photo for full text :](#)

LOUIS MARX and LBJ:

Excerpt from “The Last Days of the President ...LBJ in retirement” by Leo Janos.

On the night before Christmas, 1971, Lyndon Baines Johnson played the most improbable role of his varied and controversial life. Protected from public view behind the gates of his Texas ranch, and no longer suffering the cloying presence of a battalion of White House reporters, Johnson donned a red suit and false beard, climbed aboard a small tractor, and drove to the hangar adjoining his airstrip. Assembled inside were the families of his ranch hands for what had become a traditional ceremony over the years: receiving greetings and gifts from LBJ. This time, they were so stunned at the sight of the former President ho-ho-hoing aboard a chugging tractor that they greeted his arrival with disbelieving silence. **Undeterred, Johnson dismounted the tractor and unloaded a bag of toys for the children, sent to him for the occasion by an old friend, New York toy manufacturer Louis Marx, father of Patricia Marx Ellsberg.**



[Click on the photo for full story:](#)

LOUIS MARX and GENERAL EISENHOWER:

Louis Marx, the Toy King, said he had never received one good idea for a toy from a General. "You're on pages one, two and three of every newspaper," **Marx said to Eisenhower** in 1946: “You're the political Coca-Cola”.



[Click on the photo for full text:](#)

Web Picks continued next page . . .

... **Web Picks** (continued from previous page)

These are some really great and colorful sites to visit. Along with the articles and pictures they also provide links to sites which offer more exciting photos and insights into the folklore and history of Marx Trains!

The above several items reveal only a teasing of the wide ranging events in the life of Louis Marx. For those interested; there are even more surprising revelations found by simply “Googling” his name. His long and varied career tells of many amazing and inspirational experiences. To all who knew and loved him, he was the epitome of the American experience; intrepidly creative, industrialist extraordinaire and benevolent humanitarian.

Here are my Personal Picks for some really great Marx Train and Accessory websites!

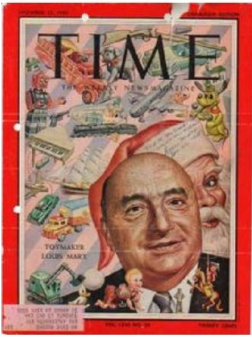
LOUIS MARX

Biography, photos and YouTube videos of Marx accessories.
Click on the Marx logo to visit.



THE MARX VIRTUAL MUSEUM

An on-line museum of Marx toys.
Click on the Time Magazine cover to visit.



MANY MARX ACCESSORY PIX

A Yahoo Images collection of user-submitted photos of Marx items - over a dozen pages of them! Click on the Marx elf to visit.



ALL GAUGE MODEL RAILROAD PAGE

... featured in the Winter 2010 Side Track, but well worth a return visit!

Many Colorful Marx features; repair, restoration, painting. Also many pages of other features, videos, stories and related links. Click on the tunnel to go there.



FAUX TOYS

The web page says that the company is closed, but it remains on-line. Christmas floor layout, nicely done site...interesting graphics and link icons. Note the “wraps” like the Marx “Hiawatha”. Click on the Marx rotary snowplow to explore.



ROBERT GROSSMAN CO.

Marx Parts for repair and restoration. Also featured are many links to train and toy museums. Click on the wheel logo to look around.

A SUMMER SVD OUTING by Bill Wilson

Here is some information on the proposed trip the Nevada City/Grass Valley trip.

Date: Either Saturday, July 14th or 21st. Time: Starting at 10AM

Locations: The first stop would be at the **Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum** located at 5 Kidder Court, Nevada City. They have a web site: www.ncngrmuseum.org. This is a small but quite interesting museum with a restored engine that ran on the Colfax--Grass Valley narrow gauge line. Other cars, a shop and history can be seen. We can arrange a docent to talk about the museum and lead a tour.

Cost is free but donations are encouraged. The location is off Hwy 49/20 at Gold Flat Rd. Easy to find. I figure an hour to hour and half would be adequate.

The second stop is the **Empire Mine State Park**. The Mine is quite interesting with a gift shop and lots of California Mining history. There are Mining artifacts and a scale model of the complete mine, which was huge. There are also wonderful grounds to visit as well as great gardens to see, lots of interesting items for all the family. I can arrange for a docent which is recommended to get the full effect of the tour.

Cost is \$9 per person. The Park Service can also arrange a British Pasty sit down lunch at the Mine Club house. Cost of this is \$24 which includes the \$9 Mine cost. For a fun day, I would recommend adding the lunch.

I suggest we plan on arriving at the mine at noon, have lunch, and start the docent tour at 1PM. The tour would last about two hours. You can find more info at their web site: www.parks.gov.

To tie down on this outing, I suggest we make this an agenda item at the June 2nd meeting.

Do we do this? What date, July 14 or 21? How many want to go? How many for lunch at the mine? Other questions?

Show and Tell

By Jeff Silvera,
Chairman

For our May 5th show & tell, **Jerry Azzaro** brought a Junior Engineer's outfit with a small American Flyer cap, probably from the 1950s. **Don Rosa** brought a Giant Orange stand like we used to see up and down highway 99. He had **Dave Thomsen** paint and decorate it for him, a very nice job. (Click [here](#) for the site to check out a Giant Orange Stand.)

Jeff Silvera brought a hand-painted NASG hopper car that was made for the 1977 "East Meets West" S convention.



Famous Last Words

Collected on the Internets

"Watch this!"

"It's not loaded."

"What does this button do?"

"It's probably just a rash."

"Are you sure the power is off?"

"The odds of that happening have to be a million to one!"

"Which wire was I supposed to cut?"

"I wonder where the mother bear is."

"I've seen this done on TV."

"These are the good kind of mushrooms."

"It's strong enough to hold both of us."

"This doesn't taste right."

"I can do that with my eyes closed."

"I've done this before."

"Well, we've made it this far."

"That's odd . . ."

Meeting Notes

by Phil Fravesi, SVD Secretary

March, 2012

There was no March meeting for the membership due to a conflict with the Cal-Stewart meet, March 3, 2012.

There was a special Board meeting during the Cal-Stewart meet to discuss the situation with the finances of National and incorporation of the Division. The meeting was conducted by **President John DeHaan** with **Jack Hornor**, **Jeff Silvera**, **Bryan Stanton** and **Phil Fravesi** in attendance. There were several Division members present.

Three Divisions have filed for incorporation. There are two Divisions currently going through the process and John will look into shared expenses with the attorney handling the process.

A motion was made to incorporate by **Phil Fravesi**. The motion was seconded by **Bryan Stanton**. The vote was unanimous to incorporate.

We also voted to pay the Holiday Inn one year in advance and pay the balance to Scottish Rite for the October meet.

Meeting adjourned.

April 7, 2012 General membership meeting.

John DeHaan announced that the incorporation process has been started. He also reported on a Board meeting on March 25. Incorporated divisions with TTOS in their "name" will still be liable financially.

The new National officers have been installed with **Don Kyle** as president.

National will resist bankruptcy as the total obligation would triple in excess of \$100,000.

Members are encouraged to pay their National dues.

There will be more updated financial reports going forward.

The insurance has been paid so Scottish Rite is covered at this time.

2012 National Convention in Santa Clara is still on schedule for Aug. 8-12Th.

There are liabilities to Lionel, Bachman and the printer. The estimated liability is \$41,000.

It was suggested that the Division make a donation to National paid directly to a vendor. Also, printing the Newsletter in black and white for one year to save money and use the USPO to print and mail the newsletter. Other clubs are doing that and the cost is relatively inexpensive.

A motion was made by **Pete White** and seconded to make a donation to a critical creditor. John will get the definite dollar values owed to each creditor. The motion carried.

Meeting adjourned.

May 5, 2012 (Minutes taken by **Jack Hornor** for **Phil Fravesi**)

Meeting called to order at 9:30 AM by **John DeHaan**.

Guest: **Joe Lawson**

Returning member: **Jack Dieres**

Update on **Don Gueffroy**: It will be some time before he returns home. He has some locomotives that he wants converted to Command Control. **Mike Raymond** has volunteered to do the conversion and it was suggested that the club take donations at a future date to help with the cause.

Andy DeSmit suffered a heart attack, doing OK. Cards welcome.

The 2012 TTOS National Convention will be held at the Cal-Stewart hotel. The announcement is on the TTOS website. Members are encouraged to register at the hotel.

There was a discussion regarding the Club Layout at the National Convention. It was decided that the layout would not be at the Convention due to the big commitment of many volunteers over many days, all out of town.

Bryan Stanton sent a check payment of \$5,000 to pay National's bill to the publisher of the Bulletin.

Another division has paid \$5000 toward the Lionel cars.

The official purpose statement for incorporation was discussed. John is going to check with the attorney regarding basic incorporation vs. 501(c)3. Our club may have difficulty qualifying as a 501(c)3.

Our Division is splitting the cost of incorporation with SJVD and CCD

Scottish Rite May 26, layout needs help with set-up at 7AM, operating and tear down.

Possible outings for the Division: **Bill Wilson** is going to gather more information regarding a trip to the Nevada County Narrow Ga. Museum and the Empire Mine State Park. Possible dates for the tour would be July 14 or 21, 2012

There will be a June meeting followed by a doubleheader layout tour at the **Craigheads** and **Wellses**.

August meet cancelled due to TTOS Convention.

Jerry Azzaro has suggested a club outing to the Western Railroad Museum. There have been many changes since our last tour there. The museum will be on the National Convention tour schedule also.

The November meeting will feature a guest lecturer.

CSRM starting new docent class 6/23/2012, Contact **Jack Ahearn**.

The meeting was adjourned.

Down the track

Upcoming events of interest to SVD members (SVD events are in **BOLD**)

June 2: SVD Meet - Holiday Inn, Elk Grove* **

July 7: SVD Meet - Holiday Inn, Elk Grove*

July 14 or 21 (TBD): SVD Summer Outing, Nevada City

August: No SVD Meet - see you at the convention

August 8-11: TTOS National Convention, Santa Clara

September 1: SVD Meet - Holiday Inn, Elk Grove*

September 14-15: Flyer Fest West, Elk Grove

*Meetings begin at 9:30 AM

** followed by a Home Layout visit

TTOS Vision Statement:

The future of the Toy Train Operating Society is predicated on one simple fact. We must attract new membership. The TTOS National Club will focus on developing, in conjunction with the divisions, viable recruitment and retention plans and provide support both at the divisional level and the national level towards these goals. Potential new members are typically attracted to our hobby by experiencing our toy trains in full operation and witnessing the camaraderie that comes from sharing our passion and hobby with others, not unlike the original direction our founding members envisioned. This will be our primary focus.

Membership First – both new and old is our goal. Happy members are proud members and typically these members want to share their experience with just about anyone who will listen. Everyone likes being a part of a successful organization. TTOS National will plan and design all efforts with this in mind.