



The DERAIL

The Official Monthly Publication of the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club, Inc

May 2011

Volume 42, Issue 05

President's Message

Bob Werre

I want to start this month off with a mention of Steve Sandifier's great clinic on melting things—solder that is. As a young teen, I had heard about working on brass engines and soldering wire, so I purchased one of those 88-cent soldering irons. Unfortunately nobody told me about using flux, so I spent most of my time chasing down balls of molten solder wondering why it wouldn't stick to anything!

But to continue, for that meeting we had a very good turnout I find it interesting that the mix of members is ever changing, which is a good thing.

Of course, all the new club shirts were delivered, so I think we can call that project a success. Thanks again Peter for getting that project completed. I hope those who attend the Lone Star Convention in a few weeks will be wearing theirs. Also Ron Burns gets a –'that-a-boy' for the first one to wear his at the Chili Cook-off put on by Division 8 on April 9th.

Steve Sandifier also assembled a rough draft of the club membership roster. He'll have final copies to distribute at the next meeting, so there is no reason not to contact your fellow members when needing some help or gathering a crew for your next operating session.

In the future I would like to see members who provide (paid, trade or volunteer) help to other members listed in a special "contractors" section of the membership roster. In this way members can help each other for things like DCC installation, custom track building, locomotive painting, background painting etc. Not everybody has all the skills necessary to build everything needed and the older we get the tougher it is to crawl under or over the layout. In addition to those semi-pros, perhaps a list of our hobby shops who often support our efforts. We could also include a listing of the 'fringe' suppliers like the Hobby Lobby chain, Texas Art etc.

I will not be able to make it to Lubbock for the Lone Star, but I'm expecting to attend the National Convention in Sacramento this year, as it's combined with the National Association of S Gaugers Convention this year. Attending the National Convention is an experience that you should partake in whenever possible. The clinics, the tradeshow, and the friends you can make let you know what the hobby is all about. Additionally this year you can attend one of the two or three best railroad museums in the country, plus you can hang with a bunch of S Scalers too! . I do hope fuel and other convention expenses do not prevent you from attending.

This brings up some thoughts about the consideration of gasoline costs for our local events. Although the recent Chili Cook-off was a Division event, the turnout left a lot to be desired. The chili was really good, the weather was great, there was some train watching, so the feeling was gas prices might be affecting attendance. If that's the case, it also will have an effect on the Fall Tour. So this is the time to invite your fellow members and non-members to car pool to these events. You'll have a better time and collect some gas money! This might be a good time to introduce yourself to our Facebook page as a conduit for car pooling possibilities.

This spring has been a busy time on the Great Plains Northern. Last week I got out my video camera and spent some time capturing some train movements on the layout. If you're so inclined, check out my videos by doing a search for Phototraxx on You Tube. Besides that, I've been having a love/hate affair with my airbrush when working on two brass diesels and two real wooden cabooses.

I do hope you're enjoying our spring and will join us at Bayland Park for our next meeting as I know Don is trying hard to find interesting clinics.

2011 Layout Design & Operations Weekend

Chuck Lind

Tulsa, Oklahoma, held their annual operations and design weekend back on March 18-20. Dom Formanek and Chuck Lind made the trip to Tulsa. They started the weekend with operating sessions on Friday evening, and the nice part was that those attending from out of town got priority on their choices so I received the layouts I selected. Friday was an HO_n3 layout that I found out was Ken Ehlers old layout that was moved and raised into his second story railroad room through a section of wall that was removed. The layout ran great with the new Blackstone engines. Don operated this layout on Saturday evening.

On Saturday they had six clinic sessions. Tony Koester held a morning and afternoon session going over multi-deck design and construction in the morning and Timetable and Waybill operations in the afternoon. Riley Triggs from Austin spoke about how to model more than your room can hold. He has worked with David Barrows and believes in the minimal layout with just track and using photos for industries, not my cup of tea but interesting. Keith Robinson spoke about designing a Frisco Model Railroad for operations. While I am not a Frisco person I was able to pick up many good ideas from his clinic that I can use on my Narrow Gauge layout. The final speaker was Doug Gurin he did two clinics on Humanizing

Railroad Prototype operations. He models the New York City dock area railroad during the Second World War. He wants his operators to not only operate the trains but also get the patriotic feel the folks had back during the war years. You have to do some roll playing when you operate on his railroad where you may be loading war supplies on one trip and taking care of wounded solders on the next train.

A couple of nice breaks and well as a sandwich bar lunch allowed up plenty of time to socialize as well as discuss the clinics. Saturday evening was additional operating sessions. I operated on a very nice N Scale layout, which was a little tough for this O Scaler. Finding the couplers between the cars was as big a challenge as reading the numbers but it was another great session. We opted not to do the Sunday sessions since we were looking at a 7+ hour drive back home. We did make a side trip to visit Ken Ehlers and see his new layout, bigger and better

than his last and close to being finished.



Station Stops

June 9-12, 2011 – LSR Convention, Lubbock

July 3-9, 2011 – NMRA National Convention, Sacramento, CA



Henri Morris

RAILWAYANA

Regrettably, I could not find a definition for Railwayana in Webster's dictionary, nor could I find one for Railroad (or Railway) Memorabilia or Railroadiana. The Oxford dictionary however, defines Railwayana as "Publications or other items concerning or associated with railways" – *plural noun*. I do not like that definition because it does not seem descriptive or detailed enough to accurately describe what to many of us, is either a stand-alone hobby, or one that adds passion and realism to our model railroads.

A more accurate definition of Railwayana to me, would be, "The art of collecting any artifact relating to either currently or formerly operating railways", and as I have seen while visiting many of your homes, I am not the only one that shares this potentially financially debilitating illness.

When the subject of railway memorabilia is raised, one usually thinks first of technical or engineering items such as locomotive lamps, gauges, whistles, bells, nameplates, number boards, etc. To the true railway enthusiast however, there are countless other items to be sought after and collected. These include but are by no means limited to, railway maintenance or right-of-way items such as engineer's watches, tools, lanterns, rail spikes, signals, etc., and also sundry items such as photographs, recordings, maps, timetables, glass, silverware and china relics from dining cars, advertising and promotional materials, stock certificates, etc.

There appear to me to be three main types of railwayana collectors. The first includes those who only collect railway memorabilia – nothing else. These individuals rode the trains whose nameplates they now treasure on their walls, or lived in the towns or cities whose station sign-boards are so proudly displayed. They haunt antique stores, old stations, loco sheds, scrap yards, etc., in the hope of locating the 'mother-lode' – the one item that everyone has been searching for, or maybe one that no-one even knew existed!

When physical visits to these sites are not possible, these collectors comb the internet and bid at auctions for the few items that are offered to the public. Note though that the word 'offer' here is a misnomer, because some items of memorabilia such as famous locomotive nameplates, have been sold for literally tens of thousands of dollars!

The second other type of collector includes those who have a model layout but who want to be able to attest to its realism. Here, every loco and piece of rolling stock closely resembles its full-scale counterpart, and the layout accurately depicts the scenery of the locale and era being modeled - and the collector has memorabilia pictures and other items to prove it!

The last type includes all of the above as well as those who want to relive memories. If one asks one of these collectors why he or she collects railway items, one thing always seems to stand out and is virtually sure to elicit a long discussion. It is the incredible memories that the item brings back – personal, cherished memories that regrettably, will never mean as much to anyone else in the future.

Personally, aside from my layout, I have a treasure trove of SAR items that I treasure, including rare books, recordings, playing cards, glasses, steam engine and tender number plates and even a passenger carriage destination chart – and every item brings back a memory.

For example, as a teenager, I was often able to talk my way into the cab of one of the Class 19D steam engines as they worked in and around the Cape Town area. These soon became one of my favorite locos and as the photo below shows, I have a number plate from one of them.



I got this many years after I had immigrated to the US and was on a visit to South Africa. While there, I visited a railway museum and on one of the employee's desks, I saw two identical number plates. I asked about them and was told that they were about to be placed on a locomotive in their exhibit hall. I then suggested that instead of putting one on each side of the cab – which I said would be a waste - I would gladly buy one and exhibit it in my home in the US for the many other steam enthusiasts who could not travel to see their superb museum!

Amazingly, my plan worked and after some cash ("No credit card please.") changed hands, I was soon on the plane home with a 25 lb. hunk of solid brass in my luggage. (Separately, it should be noted that the customs agent here was obviously not a train fan and was not amused with my find.)

I have many other items in my collection, including a special green, leather pillow from a Cape Town to Johannesburg passenger compartment, that if requested, I will tell you about in a future article.

One of the things I do on my railroad is a Summary of Operators Information.

Here is the summary of operations information for the West Virginia Western Railroad.

Railroad – West Virginia Western – H0 scale

Size – 22X30 – 660 ft.² – one helix – two levels

Owners – Peter and Susan Bryan – 832-237-4388 – Peterb@pdq.net

11810 Key Biscayne Court, Houston, TX 77065.

Track configuration:

Point to point railroad. Staging at each end – East/West railroad

Single track with seven major towns- 4 single industry towns

One large classification yard with all facilities – a division point

Train operations

All trains have some switching to do including through freights and passenger trains. Sequential operations. Sign up on board.

Locals and turns – 8 to 10 – 38%

Passenger trains – 4 – 25%

Through freights – 2 – 12%

Reefer, coal, and tank trains – 4 – 25%

Verbal track warrants and yard limits using FRS radios – no fast clock

Rail op computer switch list and manifest

Crew size

One Dispatcher – Optional
DCC – CVP Products

One Huntington Yardmaster
magnets, picks, 0-5-0

One Huntington Dog

One Kenova operator/switcher

Length of Session – 3 to 5 hours

Five Road crews

Turnout controls:

OS sections – powered with fascia toggles (tortoise switch machines)

Rest of railroad – Hand throws (mostly Peco)

Food – beverages okay train room during sessions

Drink holders all around layout – snacks provided

Railroad environment:

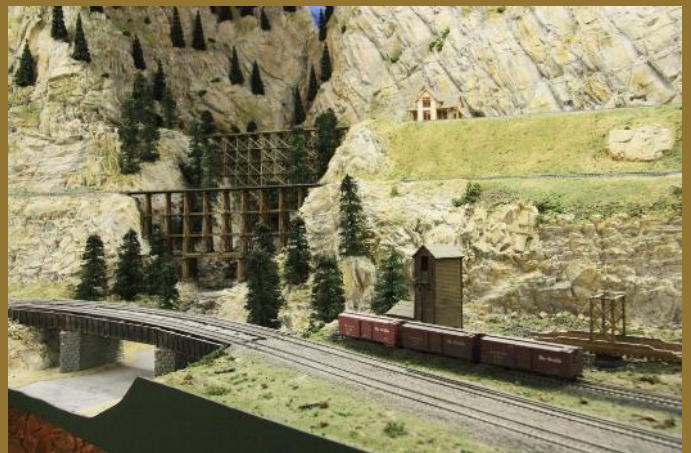
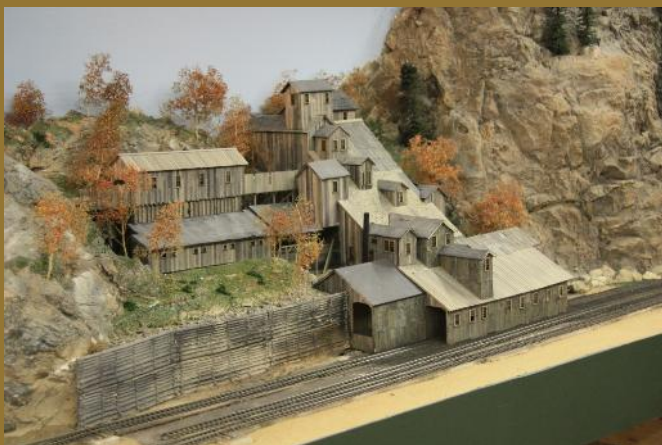
Upstairs – no wheelchair access

Fully carpeted and air-conditioned

Separate crew lounge, balcony, and restrooms on same floor

Rule #1 - Have Fun Rule #2 – There are no more rules

Guess the Layout!



Both pictures are from the same layout.

Answer to last months' Guess the Layout: Jim Lemmond

Pigs Can't Fly...but Layouts Can!

Don Bozman

Dr. Catalin Loghin has a teenage son Andrei who was our Division 8 youth award winner 3 years ago. Together they have spent the last 4 years detailing an 8' – 4" X 14' – 0" double decked layout. The railroad is packed with all the latest electronic bells and whistles. The DCC layout includes a computer interphase with Digatrax turnout controls and block occupancy detection. Individual trains can be identified with the use of transponders, and later they plan to add trackside signals. A dispatcher board control panel is on their laptop. Andrei has done all the scenery and built all the structures while his Dad did the electrical.

All seemed fine in the world, each enjoying his part of the hobby to the fullest. Many fine structures had been built and placed on the layout, the scenery was about half finished, all the electrical had been tested out and worked well, and the trains were running flawlessly. Then the family decided to build a new house.

Leaving the existing layout behind was not an option. Not after all the work that had gone into the railroad. So the new house had to have a train room.....a large train room that allowed for an expanded layout to twice the original size and also include the original layout. The benchwork was originally built in three pieces, so moving would not be too much of a problem. Putting identifying tags on about 70 wires (two times) underneath before cutting the three pieces apart did take a while. Passing through doorways and into a U-Haul truck would be a tight fit, but not impossible.

All was good until the new house was nearly finished, and it was discovered that the layout pieces were too big to make a turn in the upstairs hallway of the new house. Determined to find a solution, the builder was called in for consultation. Their solution was to use an upstairs double door going out onto a small balcony. But the balcony would be in the way, so the builder held off on attaching it to the house until after the layout could be moved. A crane was first considered, but a forklift was decided upon to lift the layout pieces up to the second floor.

In all my years.....and they are many, I've seen a couple of layouts moved and heard of several others, but I've never seen a layout fly, or at least hover 15 feet in the air moving from one home to another. But believe it or not, it just happened.



Flying Layout *continued*



Fortunately it was a beautiful day and not much wind. Everything was moved from the old to the new house with no significant damage thanks to the care taken by the guys helping with the move. Plans are to have the original layout reassembled and construction started on the expansion by the end of summer. The layout went first, but the Loghin family will follow shortly, and the flying layout awaits.



April Minutes

New Business:

Hearne will be having a Depot event this Saturday also.

Fall Layout Tours:

Derail: Bob Sabol

Craig Brantley invites us to send him updated info on our layouts.

Bob thanked all those who have contributed material.

The fall tours will run from the 3rd weekend of October through Meeting minutes April 5, 2011

LSR:

The website now has more convention information on it.

President Bob Werre called the meeting to order at 7:00PM and welcomed all.

Lubbock, TX June 9-12

Jom Lemmond announced the Chili Cookoff in Alvin has been moved to this Saturday from 10-2pm due to issues at the park.

NMRA:

The convention is in Sacramento, CA. July 3-9.

Vice president Don Formanek introduced the night's presentation:

Division 8: Jim Lemmond

Soldering by Steve Sandifer

Steve has been soldering for over 50 years and is still learning new techniques today. Basic solder melts at about 185 degrees F. Various heat sources include: soldering guns, many sizes of irons, and resistive units. Solder is going away from being lead based and to water solvable fluxes. Flux cleans off the oxidation to allow the solder to get into the "pores" of the metal. Flux also breaks the surface tension on the metal to allow the solder to flow and penetrate.

There is a chili cook-off planned for April 16, 10AM at the train station in Alvin.

The LSR convention will be June 9-12 in Lubbock.

Refreshments were thanks to Peter Bryan and Virginia Freitag. Angie Caulking volunteered to bring the treats next month.

Paste solder is a mixture of solder powder and liquid flux used mostly by plumbers. Paste solder can be used in most areas other than wires. Tip tinner's tin (clean/coat) the tip of your iron. Solder wicks/braids are used to soak-up or remove solder. The process of soldering wires involves heating the gun/iron first, then placing the tip on the wire to heat it, then placing the solder on the wire to melt it. Steve uses paste solder on rail joiners. He applies it to the cold rail and then applies the heat to melt it. Resistive soldering works well on track frogs where you need a lot on concentrated heat. It uses a carbon rod with a copper plated tip. Steve demonstrated his unit. Steve also built a cattle gate using .020" brass wire as a soldering example for modeling. Steve also showed a brass dynamometer car and a tender that he added details to via soldering. He ended the presentation by soldering tiny enameled wires to a surface mount LED with a small tip iron.

Treasurer's report, Gilbert Freitag:

Expenses:

\$25.96 GHTS expenses

\$2000 City of Stafford 2012 GHTS deposit

\$1928.10 Club Shirts

\$50 returned check

\$12 returned check fee

\$15 bank fee

\$19.49 GHTS table cloth material

Don said we still need a program idea for next month.

Income:

none

Old Business:

\$6997.98 Ending balance with all bills paid.

Peter Bryan will look into a second run of club shirts.

New Business:

Meeting adjourned at 8:40PM

Fall Layout Tours:

General comments:

Craig Brantley invites us to send him updated info on our layouts.

-Respectfully submitted, Gilbert Freitag, Secretary / Treasurer

The fall tours will run from the 3rd weekend of October through the first week of December. Tour info will online and with Goggle Maps.

The Houston R.R. Museum will be having a festival the Saturday.

Eagle Lake will be having a Depot event this Saturday.



San Jac RR Club Meetings take place
the first Tuesday of each month

Bayland Community Center

6400 Bissonnet St. Houston, Tx

[Click here for directions](#)

Visitors are always welcome!



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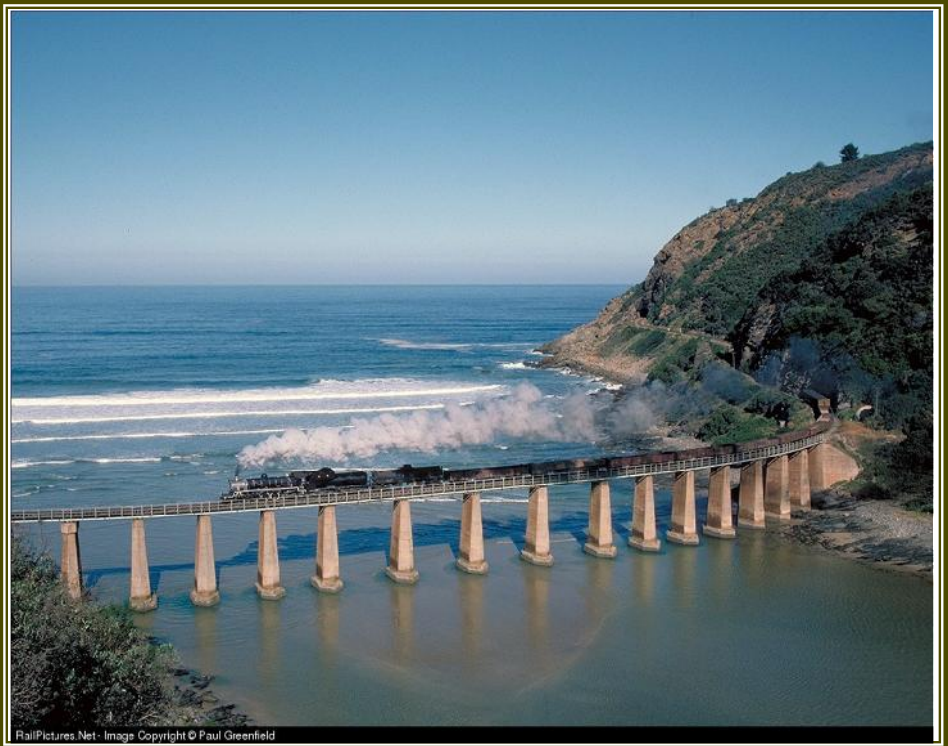
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Next Meeting

Tuesday

May 3

See You

There!

