



The DERAIL

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President's Message

Bob Werre

I'm going to start off my note by thanking to those who helped with the booth at the recent train show. I also need to express my disappointment regarding the lack of help for that same event. Luckily some folks from the Division 8 stood in so there was a live person at the table often wearing a San Jac shirt. I fear, without some active recruiting, that in just a few years our club will have Blake Bogs as it's only member!

I also will take this opportunity to thank Kelly Russell for agreeing to help by filling the Vice President's slot. Kelly has a couple of new ideas he's working on. Of course, we need to thank Don Formanek for his efforts this past year. Apparently Gilbert Freitag will remain as chief moneymen! Tom Cobb will become a director.

Craig Brantley has also published the Fall Tour guide. It's in a new format that hopefully will help with the location searches. Also, if you're planning your tour weekend please check with the San Jac Website (thanks Jim Lemmond) for any updates plus photos of most of the layouts. Lets give our hosts some visitors; after all

these folks have put in some efforts to improve their layouts, also some of the wives who help with some goodies (with a special mention to Mrs. Vanderwilt)! Also please follow the rules of good judgment and courtesy when visiting these layouts.

Since I'm writing this long before our November meeting, I realize that we're all entering a busy time of the year. The Fall Tour, several meaningful holidays will mean our annual Greater Train Show will be just down the road. From what I can determine the Big Texas Train Show had less than stellar attendance. We've all been made aware of another show scheduled just one week prior to ours, so our work is cut out for us. Our purpose is not to make a ton of money, but some profit sure makes the road ahead a bit smoother.

Thanks for a great year and for the confidence placed in your elected officials!



Installment #3 – Incidents

This is the third in a series of short articles that attempts to interject some of the real world issues that face the railroads and how we might consider these concerns on our model railroads.... this month: Incidents.

Many types of incidents occur on the railroads – graffiti and other acts of property damage, Rail Crossing accidents, damage related to weather events – flooding, tornados, hurricanes, snow, etc. But for purposes of for this article, let’s limit discussion to derailments – where a railcar comes off the track and the wheel rolls on the ballast. The severity of the derailment incident can vary from a single axle to multiple cars and understandably the train crew response is equally varied. A single axle that derails as a result of picking the point of a switch can sometimes be re-railed with the use of a wheel rerailer. I have seen forklifts being utilized in the plant environment to aid in the lifting of a car to get a truck back on the track. Then in more severe incidents, cranes are called in and the worst case, flatbed trucks or railcars are called in to remove damaged railcars. As you can imagine the response by the railroad for these incidents is also varied depending on the severity. Drug testing is usually called for following an incident, termination results in some cases. And the paperwork – oh the paperwork – internal documents, crew statements, police reports, injury forms, union documentation, FRA, AAR, DOT, etc. There could be follow-ups including re-building switches, yards, bridges, etc.

In the model railroad world – we can only go so far with this in order not to severely detract from the fun of an operating session. Any incident would have to be reported to the dispatcher, depending on the severity of the incident, the dispatcher may have to call for an MOW crew to assist the train crew in making re-railing cars and in the worst cases calling in the “crane”. This could be an MOW train that is dispatched to the incident location.

The train crew would have a form to complete that might detail the incident as to the location, number of axles, how cars were derailed, etc. Infractions of rules could result penalties like putting a quarter in the “rule” jar or be used as demerits that might determine eligibility for choice or prime trains. Serious infractions may result in decertification and require re-training.

Incidents can and will cause delays in completion of a day’s work for railroads of all sizes – but could it be an interesting way to add variety to our operating sessions...





FROM MY GARRATT

FLATONIA

South Africa is a large country – about one eighth the size of the US, and although the rail network was extensive and rail traffic – both passenger and freight, was prolific, there was only one railroad, the South African Railways (SAR), and it was owned by the government. At the time, the SAR was the largest employer in Africa and they ran their empire efficiently. Trains ran on time, passenger cars were spotless, had clean bedding, good food and even great coffee.

As a kid, I watched trains whenever possible and grew to love the sight, sounds and smells of the huge black steam engines, as well as the quiet humming of green and the red electric units, or the few gleaming blue electric units that headed the famous Blue Train from Johannesburg to Cape Town – a distance of around 1,000 miles.

I always felt an air of mystery as I watched the brown passenger cars traveling to unknown, but in my mind, romantic destinations, and grey or brown freight cars carrying – maybe gold ingots from the mines to some wealthy millionaire!

So imagine how mystified I was as a kid, when I saw pictures of US loco's and coaches with different railroad names and with diverse, bright and often multi-colors! I could not understand it because the concept of independent, privately owned railroads was completely foreign to me and even to this day, I am amazed at the number of railroads that this country supported.

We had evidence of this just a while ago at one of our meetings, when we were shown the following depiction of Houston - the city where "Seventeen Railroads meet the Sea".



Seventeen different railroads serving one city? Amazing! South Africa had only one railroad 'company' in the entire country!

These thoughts came rushing back to me last week while in Flatonia on business.



I stayed at the wonderfully quaint Olle Hotel (above) , and as I entered the town, the first thing I saw was the Flatonia Tower with a Southern Pacific Caboose next to it.



I had no idea as to why the tower was there and so that night, I started reading about the history of Flatonia.

The town was apparently established in 1873 right on the Galveston, Harrisburg, and San Antonio Railway (GH&SA), and was named after F.W. Flato, a prominent merchant. (I had assumed that it was named Flatonia because the surrounding land was so flat!)

The GH&SA began in Galveston, then went north to Harrisburg –a district of Houston today and from where Harris County gets its name – then ran West to San Antonio directly through Flatonia. Galveston was then the largest city in Texas, but after the hurricane inundated the island in 1900, San Antonio took over the number one position. The railway handled both cotton and cattle, and Flatonia became a central loading point for these goods going both East and West.

The GH&SA was apparently the successor of the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos and Colorado Railway Company (BBB&C), which was chartered in 1850 and 'died' after the Civil War. The BBB&C was the first railroad in Texas and was founded by General Sherman who coined the phrase, "Remember the

(Continued on page 4)

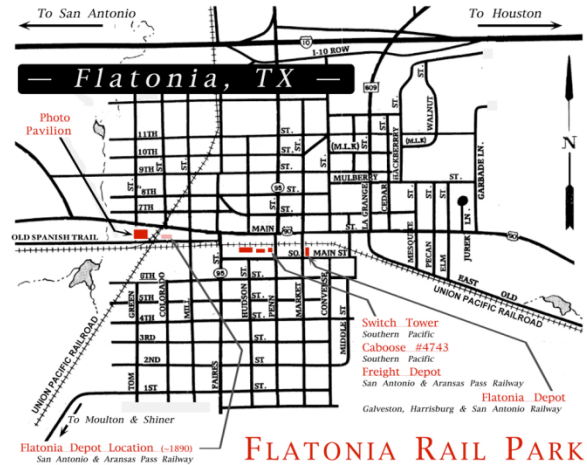
(Continued from page 3) My Garrett

Alamo!" at the battle of San Jacinto.

Separately, in 1884, the San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railway (SA&AP) was created with offices in San Antonio and an operational center in Yoakum. Unlike the East-West running GH&SA, the SA&AP ran North-South through Flatonia – hence the junction and the need for a railway tower.

In 1925, the SA&AP was leased to the GH&SA, which at the time was controlled by the SP, and both were later absorbed into the Southern Pacific system.

The map to the right shows the railroads crossing right in the middle of the town.



So through history, I have now begun to understand how in some instances, towns created the need for railways while in other cases, railways were responsible for creating the towns. Just as importantly, I am starting to understand how individual railways came into being - no government or state run entities, just industrialists building their own businesses. Each group with its own railroad, its own name and its own color schemes for trains. Individualism! Entrepreneurship! Capitalism at its best! What a concept!

Operators' Corner

Peter Bryan

Continuing our discussion of what helps us make our operations better, I have developed a questionnaire. I used this questionnaire for my first 20-25 operating sessions. Questions such as track work, turnouts, did they have fun, etc. This was very helpful to me and making the railroad operate even better. I still use this questionnaire for out-of-town operators as they may give me new perspective and fresh ideas for the West Virginia Western. As an aside, I recently had my 200th operating session, an average of about 25 operating sessions a year. I would have an operating session every Sunday evening if not for the fact that Susan I travel quite a bit.

Another factor in successful operations is having wide aisles. I know you hear this all the time, but it cannot be emphasized enough. After I got the general bench work idea from Richard Day of Richardson, Texas, I started building the West Virginia Western railroad with Don Bozman (who was here most every week eight hours a day doing all the bench work and most of the electrical and electronics). When we were getting ready to expand the peninsula another 3 feet from its temporary location, my wife Susan came upstairs and said "no way". I asked why

and she said she'd been to too many railroads where she felt like she was in a "dark closed-end closet". So we kept the peninsula where it was and now we have a good 6 feet of open space right where the most traffic is not only from open houses from the Huntington Yard and the Kenova Operators. This is great and I thank Susan every operating session for this extra space. I might add that the West Virginia had its first operating session 11 months after Don and I started construction.

Meeting minutes October 4, 2011

President Bob Werre called the meeting to order at 7:00PM and welcomed all. Bob stated that the Division will have a table at the Big Texas Train Show 10/8 and 10/9 at the GRB. We will need to fill a volunteer signup sheet and will share the table with San Jac.

Vice President Don Formanek announced the evening program: The T&NO Lockwood Extension, by Greg Johnson.

Greg presented a clinic based on the T&NO railroad on Houston's East side. Many photos of the Englewood yard area were shown as well as many industries along the line. Grain elevators, and many type of warehouses and cotton facilities were shown, some still present today. The main tracks in the area were laid in 1899 and grew as the city and industries in the area grew. Most of the tracks are still active today. Greg illustrated many industries and how they could be modeled and how to use the resource of Sanborn Maps for research. These maps were made for insurance companies to document the size of structures, what type of materials they were constructed of, fire sprinkler data, widow and door locations etc. These can be a valuable tool for modelers. Vintage railroad equipment was also shown during the presentation.

Upcoming programs:

November: Mark Couvillion: Rolling Stock Certification

December: Christmas Party

Old Business:

none

New Business:

Arthur Penny and Landon "Lanny" Woodruff both passed this month.

Arthur as a long time club member and Lanny as a familiar face at several of the area hobby shops. Both will be greatly missed.

Eddie Carroll will be having his Golden Spike ceremony this Saturday from 5-8PM for his new "giant expansion". Please email Craig Brantley if you plan to come so they can have an approximate head count of how many to expect.

Club Elections:

Kelly Russell was nominated as Vice President, and Tom Cobb as Director At Large.

Both were elected by voice vote...thanks for volunteering, you two. Kelly asked for clinic ideas and brought up the idea of a "throw-down" clinic in which several of us will be asked in a round robin format to talk for 5-10 minutes about our railroad or our hobby interests.

Website:

Jim Lemmond talked about the new website look and feel. There are still a few problems for those with Mac computers, just put the URL in a second time and things should work. The site also works from iPhones. Layout photos are online and their will be a "Changes and corrections" section to keep things current.

Derail: Bob Sabol

no report

LSR:

no report

NMRA:

no report

Division 8: Jim Lemmond

Decaling Clinic 10/24 10AM at the Houston RR Museum by Tracy Mitchell

The annual hamburger/hotdog picnic at Zube Park on October 1st had about 40 attendees. Due to a burn ban, hotdogs were replaced by cold cuts. Jim said this actually was much easier and may consider this option in the future.

Fall Layout Tours:

Craig Brantley explained the new fall tour format and had fliers available for those in attendance and to take to the area hobby shops. Google Maps will be available online for each week's open layouts. Photos of most layouts are available online. Check the club website for the latest updates each week.

Refreshments were thanks to Ron Burns and Virginia Freitag. Jim Hinds volunteered to bring the treats next month.

Treasurer's report, Gilbert Freitag:

\$6898.71 Beginning balance

Expenses:

none

Income:

none

\$6898.71 Ending balance with all bills paid.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30PM

-Respectfully submitted, Gilbert Freitag, Secretary / Treasurer



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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Don't Miss

"Rolling Stock Certification"

Presented by Mark Couvillion Tuesday Nov 2nd

The topic covers what he has found necessary to guarantee that the trains on the layout operate reliably for both operation and display. It will include how and why standards of performance are developed. See you there!

sanjac.leoslair.com

Do Not Use www.

Webmaster: Jim Lemmond

Next Meeting

Tuesday

November 2

See You There!

