



The DERAIL

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

May 2018

Volume 49, Issue 5

From the President

By Robert Barnett MMR

I thoroughly enjoyed Gene Mangum's presentation on making signs for his Mystic Branch railroad. Until I saw the article in last month's Derail and Gene's clinic I did not realize what an outstanding railroad he has built. Due to my involvement in activities at the Houston Area Live Steamer's track out at Zube Park I have not gotten to visit as many railroads on the fall layout tour as I used to (and would like to). So several excellent new railroads have come on line on the tour and I have missed them. I hope to remedy that this coming fall layout tour season.

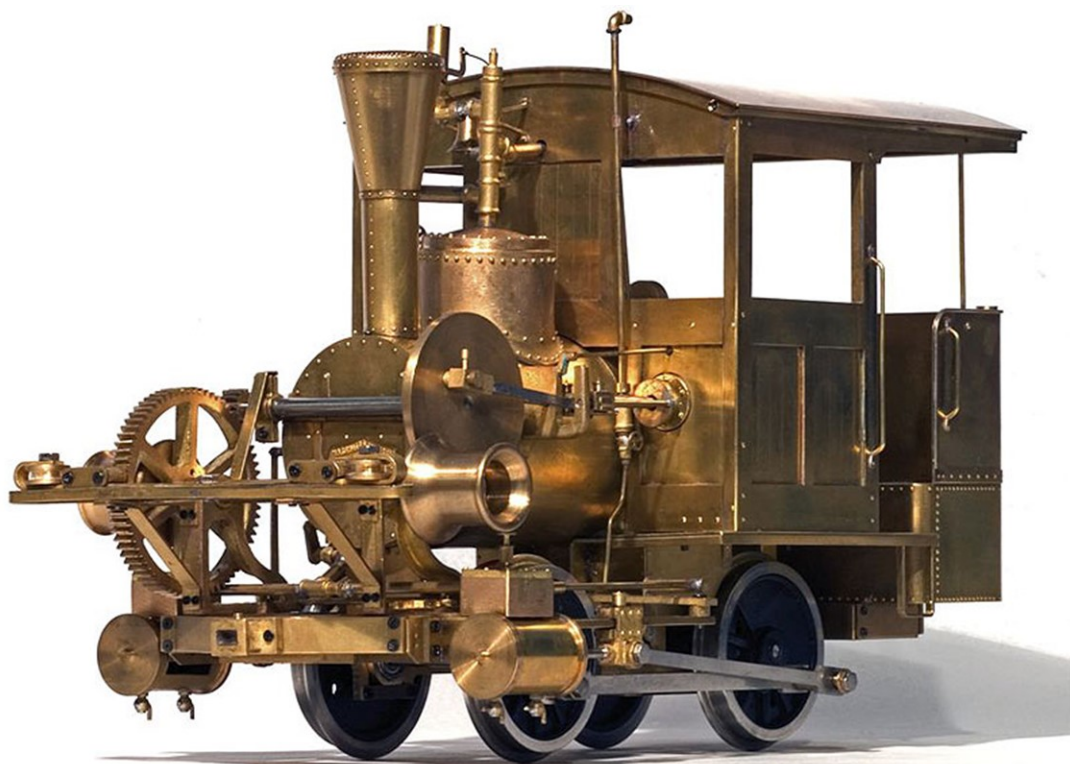
Gene stated he had only been a member a year or two and look at the excellent presentation he gave. SO..... to all our members:, you have an interest or talent in our hobby or you would not be involved in the San Jac Club. Consider putting together a clinic (Power Point is NOT required) and presenting a program on your special interest to the club.

So here we are in April and it is Bluebonnet season. I am looking forward to our upcoming trip to the Cotton Gin Museum in Burton on April 14th. The Central Texas Wildflowers should be out and the drive itself worth the trip. Looking forward to seeing many of you there. It will be a busy Saturday, with a Division 8 clinic in the morning at our usual Bayland Park meeting place, the Burton Trip and the Rosenberg Railroad Museum event that day. So, choose wisely, but come out and enjoy.

See you there.

Bob Barnett

The Falk



Picture used with permission of Allen Pollock, Missouri Locomotive Works

I had read about The Falk in *Live Steam Magazine*, *Tall Timber Shortlines* and seen pictures and videos of the engine on the internet. Flying Zoo had produced a brass model of it in HO_{n3}, the prototype was a standard gauge engine. I have received conflicting information about if Flying Zoo had produced the engine in HO standard gauge which is what I would have preferred. I have wanted to purchase a model of the engine for quite a long time.

At several of the National Narrow Gauge Conventions I had seen the model that Missouri Locomotive Works produced in “F” scale, 1:20.3. I was not an F scaler and did not want to become a “rubber gauger”. Talking to Allan Pollock with Missouri Locomotive Works I had found out that their production had ended and that they no longer had the item available. Later I had found out from him that a former purchaser of a Falk had passed away and the widow was selling the locomotive back. I could not pass up that opportunity so I purchased the engine last September at the National Narrow Gauge convention in Denver. I have now installed a track around the ceiling of our den and it is the Falk’s new home. I will be adding Airewire control, battery and Phoenix sound system to the engine. The sound is recorded from the original prototype engine that is now in a state park in California. The engine is still operational. The engine is a Gypsy type engine that had a separate steam cylinder to power the capstan winch. Some of the other Gypsy engines used a bull gear to power the capstan. The Falk was purchased by Noah Falk in 1884. It was built by Marshutz and Cantrell of San Francisco for the Dolly Varden Mill in Arcata California. When the mill closed, it was moved to the Elk River Mill & Lumber Co. It is a 10 ton 0-4-0 retired in 1927. It is now at the Fort Humboldt Historic park and I hope to visit it later this year. I would like to thank Rich Schiffman who had done most of the research in the preparation for the model to be built. He very generously downloaded two flash drives of information as well loaned me a 3” binder with A huge amount of information about Gypsy engines.

The nature of the activities involved when working on the railroad lends itself to all types of full sentences and phrases that include both railroad jargon and plain everyday words. Some of these may have worked their way out into the general public, but most are probably only known to railroad men. A few of these were used in my *Railroad Terminology* article from several years ago. Here's a few:

“Hurry up and wait.” – This one was usually said out of frustration. Typically, the railroad brass had probably told you (the conductor or engineer) that your train needed to get out of the yard fast and get on down the road. So perhaps you tried to hurry up a bit, even though that is usually not really encouraged and goes against a trainman's training where he is taught to do things slowly, deliberately, and therefore safely. So you might have made an effort to get out of town quickly, perhaps by rushing your lunch and skipping that phone call to your spouse. Then, you get about fifty miles down the line, and the dispatcher puts you in a siding where you wait. And wait. And wait. Your train was top priority back in the yard, but it's now over an hour later. Things have changed. Now some other train is top priority, or at least has more priority than yours. “Hurry up and wait.”

“All you gotta do is just show up.” – This is usually said with a small amount of frustration, but also usually with a touch of humor. Your train may not have much priority at the moment, due to the railroad's penchant for something called “crisis management”, whereby things seem to lurch from one crisis to another throughout a day's work. So your train is once again sitting in some forlorn siding in the middle of nowhere for hour after hour. But the happy thing is, you still get paid. So really, in the long run, it doesn't matter if your train doesn't even move an inch. If you showed up, you still get paid. One time on the Kingsville Division, a fresh crew was put on a northbound train at Brownie, which had been waiting to get on the ATSF. Twelve hours later, a railroad limo picked them up in the same place. (God bless those wonderful Santa Fe dispatchers. May they all turn to fertilizer in a place where the sun doesn't shine a whole lot.)

“We're coming at you like a herd of turtles.” – This is one of the more colorful sayings, and perhaps it's not really a commonly used statement, but it's worth including. This statement is apropos for when your train is so under-powered that you can't even approach the maximum track speed. I was once on such a train headed south from Brownie towards Liverpool, where a train was going to give us a roll-by inspection to save us from doing a walking one. We were making about twenty mph. The train waiting for us at Liverpool evidently was wondering what was taking us so long, even though on this stretch of arrow straight track, they could see our headlight way down the line, so their engineer came on the radio saying something like, “Train such-and-such, what's taking you so long? Are you still moving?” My engineer came back on the radio without the slightest hesitation, saying, “We're coming at you like a herd of turtles.” Enough said.

“Did the Eagle fly?” – This saying was probably unique to the Missouri Pacific, due to our corporate emblem being the bald eagle. What this question meant was, “Did the paychecks arrive yet?” This question was usually heard starting a day or two before the expected payday, because sometimes the paychecks would arrive early. On the North End between Houston and Vanderbilt, a lot of trainmen had their paychecks delivered to the depot in Angleton, because just about every job they might be working, even off the extra board, worked out of the town or through the town.

“Sit on the spot,” or simply, “Spot time.” – These statements also had a hand sign that substituted for the words. The hand sign was both hands held out in front of you a little above waist height with your thumbs pointing up. What the sayings and sign meant was, “At this point in time, there is no work that we can be doing, so we are just going to sit here until further notice.” The length of the wait would be indeterminate. If you were a switcher job, perhaps you would wait until after a train made its way into the yard, or you might wait until your conductor got back with a new switch list. Spot time. If you were a road job, you might be sitting there for hours. One thing you didn't want to hear from the dispatcher on the phone was any kind of uncertainty, such as, “Number such-and-such busted a knuckle at milepost such-and-such. I don't know when he'll be back together.” Sit on the spot.

Any statement that includes the word “parade”. – The term “parade” is only used during a situation where at least three trains heading in the same direction are going to be passing by back-to-back-to-back. If you are sitting in the siding, and the oncoming train mentions that they are “leading a parade,” that means you are likely to be sitting there a long time. Spot time. Might as well sit back and relax, but not for long for the head end crew, as you will have to be on the ground every time one of those trains goes by in order to look them over. It's all just part of the job. One time I heard somebody in one of these situations sing over the radio, “Seventy-six trombones in the big parade...” We got the picture.

“Look him over.” – Perhaps not really a unique saying, but it means something different to trainmen from what it means to three women in a bar watching some dude enter the room. What it means to the head end crew is to get down on the ground and look over an opposing train as he rolls by. Even if it's not an inspection point, you still need to “look him over.” For the rear end crew, it means for the rear brakeman on both trains to walk out on their cabooses' rear platforms and look over the other train. The rear end crew sitting in the siding never gets down on the ground, for if their train suddenly gets a signal after the other train clears up, they could be left watching the weeds grow.

“Get on the ground.” – This statement is just a euphemism for “derail”. Trainmen hardly ever refer to something as being a derailment, unless it's something really major with a lot of damage. Still, in such a situation, they might still use the sentence, “We got on the ground.” (For those unfamiliar with trains, the normal place for trains to be is on the rail—not on the ground.)

“The big hats.” – “Big hats” (or sometimes simply “hats”) was a term that meant railroad officials. It was known among the railroad trainmen that trainmasters and yardmasters sometimes went to St. Louis, where the company headquarters were, for meetings. None of these employees wore or probably even owned business style hats (picture a hat that Humphrey Bogart might wear when portraying a detective) in south Texas, so when they got to St. Louis, they would be issued hats to wear to the meetings. I'm not making this up.

“Called on the Carpet.” – This is one of those phrases that has probably found its way into the general public, however, it may have actually originated off of the railroad. What it means is that somebody was called in front of a high-ranking railroad officer (i.e., a “hat”). The officer would probably be somebody at the assistant superintendent level or higher, but I have heard of somebody being called on the carpet by a dispatcher. To be called on the carpet means you messed up big time, but not bad enough to be fired. You certainly would not want to make a habit of being called on the carpet.

“Making smoke.” – This phrase is commonly used to mean a train is proceeding at maximum speed, i.e., track speed. Sometimes, it means that the train is making maximum acceleration, even though it might not be up to the speed limit yet.

“Pull the pin.” – This short sentence means simply to uncouple the car. Car couplers have a “knuckle” that is held in place by a pin, which enables the knuckle to pivot open and closed. Sometimes, the phrase might simply refer to the physical action of pulling the pin, regardless of whether the car is coupled to another car or not.

“Ride a handbrake.” – This statement refers to a trainman riding a moving car for the purpose of applying a handbrake on the car at the appropriate time to stop the car. Chances are, the brakeman will simply stop the car when it gets in the clear, but sometimes a brakeman might ride a handbrake in order to stop a car at a certain “spot” or door on a loading dock, rack, or building. It takes a lot of experience to brake a car to a specific spot like that.

“That'll do.” – This commonly used statement, often heard on the radio, means to stop the train, string of cars, or locomotives. Its use implies that things are going smoothly and as planned. If you were to instruct the engineer to “stop” (using that word), he might think something was wrong, and he would therefore stop more quickly than normal.

“Bend the rail.” – This means the same thing as, “Line the switch.” In the old days before switch points, the rail was actually bent in order to match up with one of several routes.

“Big-hole it.” – This means the same thing as “Plug it,” which means the same thing as “Apply the emergency brakes.”

“Get some air.” – This would probably be said by an engineer when advising an engineer trainee, or if he has his fireman or brakeman running the locomotive. It means to let some air out of the train line using the brake lever. The engineer might modify the statement by saying the number of pounds he wants you to reduce it by. Five pounds might be an appropriate amount to get for an initial reduction, but if you were going downhill, you might get more than that.

“Highball both sides.” – This is usually said over the radio by the rear end crew to the engineer. It means that the train crew or railroad personnel looking the train over on both sides found nothing wrong.

“Highball the depot.” – Means somewhat the same thing as the previous item, but implies that there was only one person looking the train over from one side, in this case the station clerk at the depot.

“Protect the crossing” – This is not to mean that you are somehow going to protect a grade crossing from damage, it means you are going to stand at the crossing and flag down any vehicles that might be in danger of getting hit by your train.

“There's only two types of people on the railroad: those that have been fired, and those that are going to be fired.” – This is pretty self-explanatory. What it means is no matter how safe you work and how much you follow the rules, you'll probably mess up some day and get fired. If it's a relatively minor offense, then your being fired is for a specific time period, perhaps one year. The saying might be a way of warning you that you better stay on your toes, if you don't want to get fired.

I was lucky and never got fired, but that doesn't mean I never came close to being called on the carpet. And now it's time for one last saying I'm sure you are all familiar with: “Time to tie this thing up.”



"Railroad switchman in Proviso Yard by Jack Delano"

Modeling the WW&F Railway Station at Albion

Sometimes, projects start out simple enough, but somewhere things get involved and they become complicated! That is what happened when I built an O Scale model of the two-story station at Albion, Maine. This station is part of a signature scene in the town. It is a unique station on this railroad. It was originally 1 story but the roof was raised and the 2nd floor was added to provide housing for the station agent. My goal was to build a model faithful to the prototype and would set the tone for this rural narrow gauge railroad. Several months later, I had a model that more than exceeded my expectations!



Figure 1 - The 2-story station at Albion

The plan for the layout would include the northern terminus town of Albion. Full scale mock ups of several key structures were built from foam core. The mock ups helped in the planning and placement of the track and structures for the town. The photo below shows the Engine House and Station mock-ups during the early planning stage.



Figure 2 – Foam Core Mockups of Key Structures to Determine Final Location of Track and Buildings

The final plan resulted in the Albion station located just inches from the front edge of the layout. It would be the first thing visitors would see when entering the layout room. A detailed structure with interior and lighting was a must to anchor this scene. This would be harder than originally thought.

The starting point for most projects is a set of plans. In this case, a set drawn by Wolf-Jobst Siedler and published in Narrow Gauge in the Sheepscot Valley: Vol III by Gary Kohler and Chris McChesney. The plans included views of all 4 exterior walls and a layout of the interior walls for the first floor. There are also many historical photos of the station exterior in the book. But what did the inside look like?

Several emails were sent out to various groups on the internet to aid in gaining information on the interior. The great folks at the WW&F museum (www.wwfry.org) have some photos posted on their Facebook page. They are working with a team associated with the Albion (ME) Historical Society to restore the original structure. The site had a few excellent views of both floors during the renovation. Although there weren't views of all the rooms, there were enough to start construction.



*Figure 3A – Current Station Waiting Room –
Photo Courtesy of WW&F Ry Museum –
I am sure the plastic chairs weren't part of the
original 1925 furniture!*



*Fig 3B – Modeled view of the same area,
without the plastic chairs*

The exterior walls were constructed from basswood by laminating clapboard sheet to scribed sheet for the office and waiting room. For the unfinished interior wall of the freight area, strips of 1/16" X 1/8" were glued as "studs" to the back of the clapboards. The window and door openings were cut and trimmed before assembly of the 4 exterior walls. The end windows are a unique size and not available as commercial castings. The windows were scratch built later in the building process using glass microscope cover slips and strip wood. (An article on how to construct these windows was published in the June 2017 DERAIL.)

The exterior walls were assembled to form a "shell". The floor was laid constructed from pre-stained scribed wood. Strips of wood to form joists were glued under the floor. The floor was designed to fit inside the exterior shell.

Next came the interior walls for the first floor. They were constructed using the similar lamination and materials as used on the exterior. Fig 4 shows a bird's eye view with some of the interior details in place. The large area on the left is the freight and baggage area and the right side is the passenger waiting area. The small room in the upper center is the agent's office. The interior walls were painted white.

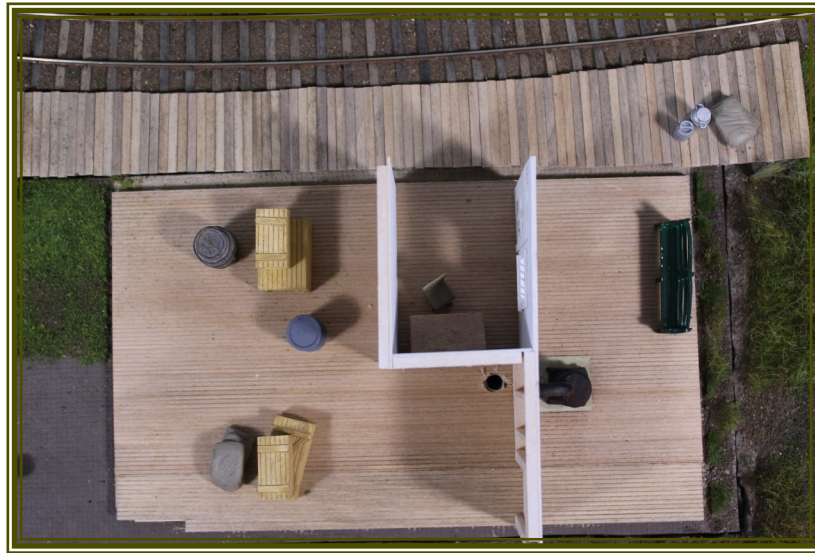


Figure 4 - 1st Floor Interior walls

Once the interior walls were glued to the floor, the exterior shell could be slipped over. LED lights were routed up through the floor in the freight room. The 1st story ceiling/2nd story floor were cut to fit from heavy card stock. The 2nd story was laid out using photos of the actual station downloaded from the museum's Facebook page.

The exterior was painted in the railroad's standard light green upper and dark green lower and trim. The colors are custom mixed based published formulas.

The roof was first built using heavy cardstock with wood bracing. It warped so badly that it was replaced with a new version constructed from styrene sheet. The shingles are hand cut from cardstock and painted black. (An article on how to construct the shingles was published in the Sep 2017 DERAIL.)

The roof is removable to allow access to the 2nd floor to service the LED lights and add new details. Adding details can be a never-ending project! The station sign is a photo copy of the actual sign reduced to scale on a home copier.



Figure 5 – Combine No 2 Waits at Albion

The completion of the station has given the people of Albion the ability to catch the train to Wiscasset. The agent has a modest apartment that is a short commute down the stairs to his office. Building this station provided an opportunity to learn and refine modeling skills that are being used on the rest of my layout. A big thank you to Wolf-Jobst, Gary K, Chris McC, and all of the hardworking volunteers at the WW&F Museum

THE SAN JAC JAMBOREE

by Bob Barnett

The San Jac Jamboree, or more precisely the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club's annual Jamboree is scheduled for March 3, 1990.

Many of us were introduced to the club via the Jamboree over the past few years, but not too many of us were around for the first Jamboree (or maybe second or third). I have wondered when the first San Jacinto Jamboree was held, where and who was in charge.

So, I decided to do a little research and attempt to give some recognition to the folks who have worked so hard over the years to make these events a success.

The San Antonio Model Railroad Association has advertised their upcoming show as the 14th annual SAMRA Jamboree to be held in San Antonio on January 20, 1990. We appear to be in a dead heat with our friends in San Antonio as this will also be our 14th Jamboree.

The attached list shows the date, location, and General Chairman for each of our shows.

The list would be much larger if we could include all the chairmen for clinics, registration, layout tours, etc. You will notice that ours is not quite an annual affair, or we would be up to 19. The Club has elected through the years to forgo producing a Jamboree in the years that Houston sponsors the LSR Convention. This occurred in 1975, 1980, 1984, and 1989. In 1982 no Jamboree was held as we were involved in an experimental date rotation the traditional date for the first five Jamboree was the last Saturday in February. We have wandered a bit, but in the last four years we are working our way back to a late February - early March date.

Ed Quin put together the very first Jamboree and chaired a total of four shows. Julius Lang, now a SAMRA modeler, Ben Pearlman, and Greg Johnson also chaired shows during the 1970's.

The Jamboree format has expanded in the 1980' s. Flea markets were added in 1981; and a full slate of clinics, some aimed at beginners and some geared for advanced modelers, has become standard.

Greg Johnson began the 80's with an outstanding show in November 1981 following this newer format. Cecil Stewart served as chairman for three fine Jamborees in the mid-80's. LeRoy King and Gene Ritter each chaired a show.

The Houston N 'Crowd began participating in the Jamboree in the late 1970's by bringing their modular railroad for public viewing. In recent years the All-Points North, Northwest Crossing, HSME, and N 'Crowd have all participated. David Poscovsky will begin a new decade of Jamborees as he chairs our 1990 show. There are also plans for more joint participation as the San Jac and other area clubs help Division 8 produce Division 8 meets, shows, etc.

So, come on out to the 14th Almost Annual San Jac Jamboree. We can use you as a worker. We will appreciate your business as an attendee.

SAN JACINTO MODEL RAILROAD CLUB JAMBOREE				<i>Editor's Note: The rest of the table was added for this reprint.</i>			
YEAR	DATE	CHAIRMAN	LOCATION	YEAR	DATE	CHAIRMAN	LOCATION
				1990	Mar 3	David Poscovsky	Corpus Christi School
				1991	Feb 23	Bob Barnett	Corpus Christi School
1972	Feb 20	Ed Quin	Airport Inn	1992	Mar 14	Norm Beverage	Corpus Christi School
1973	Feb 24	Ed Quin	Airport Inn	1993	Mar 20	Norm Beverage	Corpus Christi School
1974	Feb 23	Ed Quin	Airport Inn	1994	Mar 19	Norm Beverage	Corpus Christi School
1975 LSR CONVENTION-- NO JAMBOREE				1995	Mar 18	Norm Beverage	Corpus Christi School
				1996	Mar 16	Mike Cohn	Corpus Christi School
1976	Feb 28	Julius Lang	Albert Pick Motor Inn	1997	Apr 5	Mike Cohn	Humble Civic Center
				1998	Mar 28	Mike Cohn	Humble Civic Center
1977	Feb 26	Ed Quin	Albert Pick Motor Inn	1999	Feb 20-21	Dale Farney	Humble Civic Center
				2000	Apr 8-9	Cecil Stewart	Humble Civic Center
1978	Feb 25	Ben Pearlman	Albert Pick Motor Inn	2001	Apr 21-22	Cecil Stewart	Humble Civic Center
				2002	Apr 13-14	Cecil Stewart	Humble Civic Center
1979	Feb 3	Greg Johnson	Royal Coach Inn	2003	Mar 8	Mike Brignac	Humble Civic Center
1980 LSR CONVENTION-- NO JAMBOREE				2004	Mar 20	Rich Businger	Humble Civic Center
				2005	Mar 19	Rich Businger	Stafford Centre
1981	Nov 21	Greg Johnson	Astro Village Hotel	2006	Feb 11	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
1982 NO JAMBOREE HELD				2007	Feb 10	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
				2008	Feb 16	Carlos Garcia	Stafford Centre
1983	Feb 12	Cecil Stewart	Astro Village Hotel	2009	Feb 21	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
1984 LSR CONVENTION-- NO JAMBOREE				2010	Feb 20	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
				2011	Feb 19	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
1985	May 11	Gene Ritter	Astro Village Hotel	2012	Feb 18	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
				2013	Feb 16	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
1986	Mar 22	Cecil Stewart	Astro Dome Marriott	2014	Feb 15	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
				2015	Feb 21	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
1987	Mar 14	Cecil Stewart	Astro Dome Marriott	2016	Feb 20	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
				2017	Feb 18	Steve Sandifer	Stafford Centre
1988	Feb 27	LeRoy King	Corpus Christi School	2018	Feb 17	Steve Sandifer	Stafford Centre
1989 NMRA NATIONAL CONVENTION							

In this installment, we are going to take a look at the movement of perishable traffic on your layout. We will also take a look into the development of the refrigerator car and how the movement of this type of equipment impacted operations on the prototype as well as it will on your model railroad. We will focus primarily on the AAR ice-cooled Class RS cars, although some discussion will address the later mechanical reefers and specialty cars such as “express reefers” and “milk cars”.

When we think of refrigerator cars, we usually think of long trains of reefers such as the Santa Fe Green Fruit Express or the Southern Pacific Colton Block powered by modern steam or first-generation diesel locomotives in the mid-twentieth century. However, it was back in pre-Civil War days and thereafter that shippers started looking for ways to transport perishable products such as meat and vegetables. It was at that time that railroads developed cars such as ventilated box cars and insulated box cars while the shippers were mainly responsible for the development of ice-cooled refrigerator cars.

Development of the ice-cooled cars was directly related to the movement of three commodities: meat from Chicago packing houses, peaches from Georgia and fruit from the West Coast. Movement of meat products from the Chicago area to Eastern markets was what provided the stimulus for the development of the “meat reefer” by Swift and Company. The railroads were not interested in the development of such cars due to their extensive investment in the movement of livestock from producing areas to the slaughter houses in places such as Chicago. Thus, it became the meat shippers who actually designed and developed this type of freight car.

In 1878 Swift and Company hired an engineer by the name of Andrew Chase to design a car that could be used to transport their meat products to markets throughout the country. Chase’s design utilized a ventilated and well-insulated car with space for an ice compartment in the top of the car to chill meat packed tightly in the bottom of the car which also maintained a low center of gravity. This design proved successful and soon Swift Refrigerator Lines

was operating a fleet of 200 cars. By 1920, Swift Refrigerator Lines grew to some 7,000 cars and in 1930 this fleet became the property of General American Transportation Company.

Another development in the 1870s that led to additional ice-cooled refrigerator cars was the need in Georgia to move fresh peaches to market. A peach grower named Samuel Rumph developed a refrigerator car to ship peaches to markets around the country adding more cars to the national refrigerator car fleet.

The third contributor to the development of the ice-cooled reefer was Edwin Earl, a California fruit shipper who in 1890 invented a refrigerator car for movement of fresh fruit from the West Coast all the way to markets in the Eastern United States. His Continental Fruit Express was eventually sold in 1901 to Armour and Company in Chicago. By 1900 there were an estimated 68,500 private and railroad owned ice-cooled cars operating around the country.

While initially ice for refrigerator cars was harvested from frozen ponds or lakes and stored for use during the warmer months, the use of manufactured ice became the major source around the turn of the century. Pacific Fruit Express (PFE) was a leader in this process and operated eighteen of these plants throughout their system, the largest at Roseville, California. This plant could produce around 1,100 tons of ice a day and could accommodate some 250 cars for loading. A total of 1,200,000 tons of ice was produced annually in the U.S. at the peak of ice-cooled reefer movements.

When we speak of “ice”, there are a number of iterations of this general term. While meat cars basically used “crushed ice”, cars carrying produce and other commodities required various size pieces of ice which generally started out as 200-400 pound blocks called “cakes”. As these “cakes” moved down the icing dock or “deck” as it was often called, they were broken into various size pieces depending on the commodity being transported. In the end bunkers of a car went “chunk” ice (pieces up to 100 pounds), or “coarse” ice (pieces from 10-20 pounds) or “crushed” ice (pieces the size of a man’s fist).

Some agricultural products required what was termed “top icing” which was the placing of a two to four-inch layer of “crushed ice” directly on top of the commodity being shipped. This was usually in addition to the car being “pre-cooled” before loading. It was eventually determined that this process had little cooling effect and served primarily to prevent an increase in temperature during shipment.

Other innovations to create the optimum temperature for perishable shipments included circulating fans, half-stage grates in the ice bunkers, floor racks, hatch ventilation, heaters, and numerous other devices developed by shippers and carriers over time.

Over the years, railroads and shippers tried various types of refrigeration to keep shipments cool during transport. Everything from “dry ice” to “liquid nitrogen” and finally mechanical refrigeration in the latter part of the twentieth century. The introduction of the “plug door” by PFE in 1947 and later refinement by Santa Fe Refrigerator Dispatch (SFRD) in 1951 meant not only better insulation and more constant temperature in the cars, but also faster loading and unloading due to the wider doors.

While early wood-sided ice-cooled reefers usually required re-icing every 250-400 miles, the later cars could travel up to a day without being re-iced. With the later mechanical reefers, it was simply a matter of making sure that the fuel tank of the small diesel engine powering the refrigeration unit be kept full and the engine running accordingly until the car reached final destination.

So, what does all of this mean for the modeler who wants to move perishable traffic over his railroad. First, it depends where your layout is located geographically in the shipping process. If your layout is on the origin end, then you can incorporate everything from citrus groves to vegetable farms to produce packing houses. On the car supply side, you can also have car maintenance and cleaning facilities, ice manufacturing plants and ice loading docks. Along the route were located ice plants and icing docks, as well as minor repair facilities.

Railroads in the west, such as the Southern Pacific,

Santa Fe, Great Northern, and Union Pacific operated extensive gathering systems to supply empty cars and move loads back to classification yards to assemble in trains for Eastern destinations. In the Texas Rio Grande Valley, this would also be true for the Missouri Pacific and the Texas & New Orleans. In Southern states such as Florida and Georgia, railroads such as the Southern, Atlantic Coast Line, and Seaboard were major movers of perishable traffic from the South to Eastern destinations.

For mid-west modelers, there was extensive meat traffic from places such as Omaha, Kansas City, and Chicago. Trains operated by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy, the Chicago & North Western, and the Grand Trunk Western were major players in the movement of meat products. For modelers, this means there would be packing houses as well as icing plants and ice loading docks. Railroads would have to have classification yards to make up trains going to Eastern points.

If you model the destination or receiving end of perishable movements, then you can have all sorts of facilities on your layout. Meat packing houses typically operated “branch houses” in most major towns and cities, although some meat shipments went directly to large wholesale grocery distributors. Other shipments would have been consigned to a large public cold storage facility. You can also simply model a public team track, typically located near a railroad freight house as the destination for your meat products shipments.

Fresh fruit and vegetable shipments would be handled by produce houses, wholesale grocery warehouses, and again public team tracks such as the Grady Team Tracks operated by the Texas & New Orleans here in Houston adjacent to their Houston Freight House. Produce Row on the Houston Belt & Terminal also received large volumes of fresh fruit and vegetables and included numerous produce houses. A group of produce distributors would make for an interesting scene with lots of switching opportunities.

Two interesting specialized applications of refrigerated rail service are that of “milk service”

cars (AAR Class BMR) and “express refrigerator” cars (AAR Class BR). Class BMR milk cars are an insulated car with ice bunkers or ice boxes constructed or equipped for passenger service and used to transport milk in cans or bottles. Milk cars were most prevalent in the eastern and mid-west parts of the country.

Express refrigerator cars were used primarily for the movement of commodities with a refrigerated shelf life of less than seven days and include fish, flowers, strawberries and other similar products. Cars were typically fifty feet in length and had high speed trucks along with air, signal and steam lines for passenger train service. The typical paint color was

Pullman Green. These cars received expedited service from the railroads and make an interesting addition to passenger trains. At the high point of express refrigerator service in 1930, there were in excess of 3,200 cars on American rails. The Railway Express Agency (REA) was the largest operator of these cars and had some 1,800 cars in service into the 1950s.

Add some refrigerator car equipment to your freight and head end passenger car rosters. These cars are not only visually attractive with their bright colors, but also add an additional dimension to your operations with their special handling requirements and the unique service facilities they require.



Produce Terminal at Santa Fe Freight House on Chuck Hitchcock's Argentine Industrial District Railway



Packing Plant on Michael Borkon's UP Wyoming Third Sub

World Wide Web – Look what I found on the NMRA website: The NMRA Partnership Program.

The NMRA Partnership Program is a member benefit that truly has a tangible payback. We've partnered with model railroad manufacturers of all sizes, giving them exposure on our website in return for receiving generous discounts for NMRA members all year long. Some provide members with special codes, others prefer a phone or email order, but all appreciate the additional business from our members. And of course, our members appreciate the extra savings...savings that can actually pay the cost of NMRA membership!

CatzPaw Innovations - 3D prints of scale model items - 10% discount on all items not already on sale

Green Frog Productions prototype railroading videos - 10% off coupon

Hot Wire Foam Factory foam cutting tools - 10% discount

Jason's Brass Poles trolley modeling products - 10% discount

LARC Products backdrop graphics - 10% discount

Logic Rail Technologies electronics for model railroads - 10% discount

Micro-Mark modeling tools - 15% discount

MinuteMan Scale Models highly detailed models - 10% discount

Model Railroad Benchwork Custom designed benchwork - 5% discount

Modelers Decals & Paint decals, acrylic airbrush paints, tools and supplies - 10% discount

Monster Modelworks scale model building materials - 10% discount

Motrak Models hydrocal- and resin car loads retaining walls and bridges - 10% discount

MRC (Model Rectifier Corporation) 25% discount off their Light Genie DCC systems product

OK Engines/Streamliners kit basherd passenger cars - 20% off all complete car kits

Ram Track electronic devices and lights - 20% discount

RR-CirKits electronic circuits - 15% discount

Rusty Stumps details or craftsman kits - 10% discount

Scale Model Plans Scale Model Plans - 20% discount

Scalecoat Paint modeling paints - 10% discount

Scenery Solutions scenery materials and trees - free shipping on orders over \$25

Showcase Miniatures railroadaccessories - 10% discount

Team Track Models paper model kits - 10% discount

The Train Show, Inc. train show marketing and promotion - 20% discount

Train Installations, LLC model railroads builders - 5% discount on labor

Trainmasters TV / Model Railroad Hobbyist Store "how-to" videos - 10% discount

Unreal Details Magic Water realistic water modeling system - 20% discount

USA Airbrush Supply / Badger Airbrush airbrushes and equipment - 5% discount **plus** Badger will also donate 5% of the purchase price to the NMRA!

Log on to the members only section of the NMRA.ORG website to see all the details. There also discounts on many Museums and railroads like **Grand Canyon Railway & Hotel, Napa Valley Wine Train, Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine Railroad, Grapevine Vintage Railroad** and many more... Not to mention several Hobby Shops.

Check it out!



President Bob Barnett called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

There were three visitors, including John Hunt from Northwest Crossing.

One visitor, Carlos Faina, who is rejoining the club after several years, is looking for help designing a new layout.

David Currey introduced Gene Magnum for a clinic entitled "Signs for the Mystic Branch". Gene covered how he make various traffic and commercial signs for his layout. He included sources for DOT traffic sign standards. The slides from the clinic will be available on the San Jac website. A question and answer period followed.

Thanks to Chris Tolley and Laurie Lind for cookies and punch.

Treasurer's Report

The March minutes were approved as published.

The March 30 bank balance was \$15,349.08. Outflows were \$278 in GHTS expenses, \$18 income tax and \$50 for new nametag lanyards.

Texas State Railroad Trip

Richard Bartlett has settled on May 26 for the outing. He again circulated a sign-up sheet to finalize the class of ticket each attendee would like (First Class, Coach, or Open Air). On 26 May, TSRR will have the T&P #610 - 2-10-4 steam engine out of the shed on display.

Please e-mail Richard anytime at generepair2@yahoo.com with questions.

Burton Cotton Gin Trip

Gilbert Freitag has signed up about a 20 people for the trip on April 14.

Greater Houston Train Show

Since he missed the March meeting, Steve Sandifer took the opportunity to thank each of

the Show chairmen for their contribution to a well-planned, well executed and successful event. The club recognized Steve as *the* key person in this effort.

It was moved and seconded to give each of the modules at the show \$200 in recognition of their contribution in raising attendance. Final attendance was estimated at 1157.

Lone Star Region/ Division 8

Ray Byer said that Division 8 clinics are back to their normal times of the 2nd Saturday each month. Visit <http://www.texasgulfdivision.org/> for more information.

Old Business

Bob Werre took pictures of club members to update the club directory.

David Currey is researching projection screens for the club to buy. He will have a recommendation for the membership in June.

New Business

Denny McGonigle will investigate another club shirt order. He will have information in September.

Loren Neufeld mentioned a layout built by Gulf Coast Region members for the Boy Scout Jamboree in the late 90's to support the Railroading merit badge. It was used until 2010, traveling 20,000 miles and resulted in over 11,000 merit badges. The September 1997 issue of Model Railroader ran a short article by Loren on the layout.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26pm.

Respectively submitted,

Dick Louvet
Secretary/Treasurer



San Jac RR Club Meetings take place the first Tuesday of each month at 7pm

Bayland Community Center
6400 Bissonnet St. Houston, TX

[Click here for directions](#)
Visitors are always welcome!

www.sanjacmodeltrains.org
Webmaster: Brian Jansky



Officers

President: Robert (Bob) Barnett MMR
rbarnett@ljaengineering.com
Vice-President: David N. Currey
texasandlouisiana@msn.com
Secretary/Treasurer: Richard (Dick) Louvet
rlouvet@att.net
Director at Large: Chuck Lind MMR
chucklind46@gmail.com
Past President: Rex Ritz
icrex@yahoo.com

Derail Staff

Conductor: Bob Sabol
bsabol@stillmeadow.com
Engineer: Terri Brogoitti
tbrogioitti@stillmeadow.com
Brakemen:
David N. Currey
texasandlouisiana@msn.com
Don Formanek
locogearred@gmail.com
Brian Jansky
brianj844@gmail.com
Pete Leach
pleacht55@gmail.com
Richard Louvet
rlouvet@att.net
Al Partlow
alswitch@aol.com
Kelly Russell
krussl@yahoo.com

Next Meeting TUESDAY, MAY 1

“T&NO/SP Austin Division”

by

Al Partlow

Refreshments:

Virginia Freitag (drinks)

Kelly Russell (cookies)



Video Corner

Winter Rails “Night of the Flanger”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qx5jmtnekCQ>

