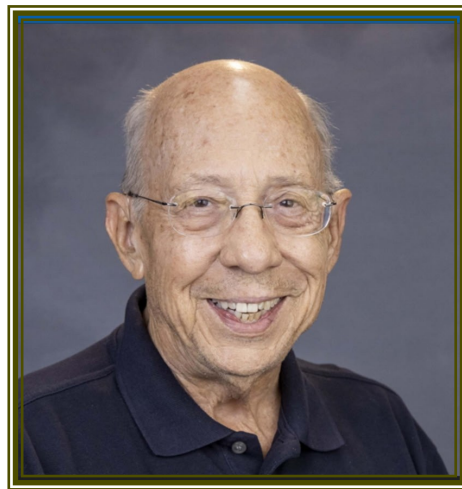


The Official Monthly Publication of the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club, Inc.

August 2025

Volume 56 Issue 8

Remembering Gene Mangum



A few of the SanJac members who showed their support at Gene's funeral on July 11th.

Memorial photos by Divina Gato-Hogno

Remembering Gene Mangum

The Computer Engineer: Around 45 years ago, I worked for a large local engineering firm called Turner Collie and Braden. I was in the Highway Engineering group. Down the hall was a group of engineers known as the application engineers, or the Computer Jocks to us Design production folks. One of them was a tall, wavy haired strong voice guy named Gene Mangum. As you might imagine there was an on-going dynamic between the production folks and the computer folks. The on-going argument should be familiar to us today similar to Microsoft always trying to get you to update your computer or system. The application folks saying “we’ve got this great new program and it will do all these things for you” and the production folks saying “thanks, but my project goes out in a week (or month) and I don’t have the time or budget for the change”.

This dynamic went on for years long after Gene and I left TC&B. Suffice it to say that Gene and his buddies won the argument. I can personally guarantee that every road, freeway, tollway, bridge and traffic signal you used in getting here today was designed using the new-fangled computer programs that Gene and his cohorts wrote, updated and modified.

The Model Railroader: Fast forward 40 years and the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club got a new member. He introduced himself as Gene Mangum. That’s funny I thought. I used to know a guy named Gene Mangum. Obviously not the same guy, he was much taller, had long curly hair and had a louder voice. After all, since I have not changed in 40 years, surely, he has not either. About a year later I visited Gene’s layout and in the corner of his office/layout room hung a Texas Engineering License and a UT Diploma. And the light bulb came on. O my Gosh, this really is the same Gene Mangum I worked with 40 years ago, and he has been a model railroader all this time and so have I, but we never knew it until now.

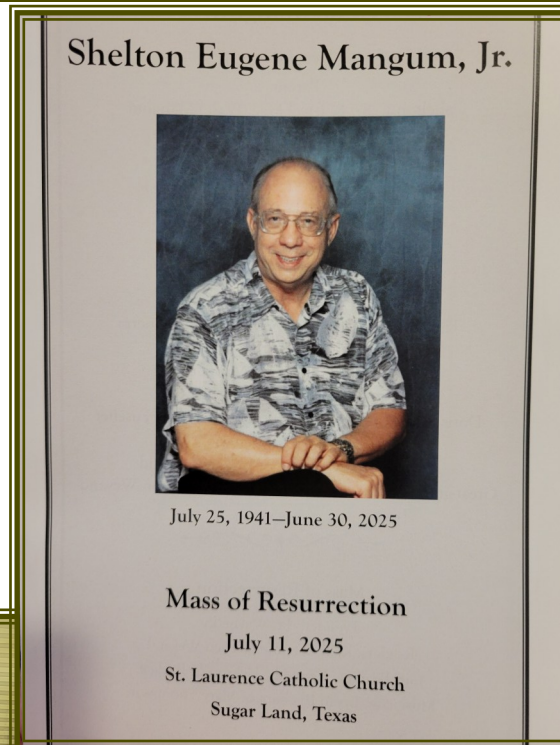
Gene went on to serve as president of the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club, as a Board member of the NMRA Lone Star Region and has authored numerous articles for the Derail and Marker Lamp newsletters.

The Mystic Branch: Gene’s layout was called the Mystic Branch. It was modelled after the famous “Kerrville Branch” of the Southern Pacific. I once had a contract doing design work for the Southern Pacific and my client was the Division Engineer named Fred Meyers. He and his cohorts joked you had to give up a day’s vacation to hi-rail the Kerrville branch. The scenery and abundant wildlife in that still remote part of Texas was well known to the SP folks. The main city was modelled after Gene’s hometown of Kerrville and the industries were named for people and places Gene knew as a kid growing up there. Gene’s wife Rita told the name came from Camp Mystic, the nearly 100 year old Christian youth camp that was located along the Guadalupe River. The camp has been made more famous by the recent flood tragedy. The attention to accurate detailing on Gene’s layout was stunning and he wrote numerous articles for the Derail, the Marker Lamp and was published in the Cow Catcher on various detailing topics.

It has been said that one measure of a person’s success in life is how much they will be missed, when they are gone. Gene will be sorely missed.

Bob Barnett

Remembering Gene Mangum



Memorial photos by Divina Gato-Hogno

Gene Mangum was a real joy to know, as well as being quite a railroad modeler. His attention to detail in his modeling was extraordinary. If there was ever to be such, he would be a prime candidate for the Honorary Master Model Railroader award. As a University of Texas graduate, Gene was on my *Texas Longhorn Special* distribution list, and at San Jac meetings and other occasions, he and I would usually have a brief conversation about Longhorn sports. I worked with him at a number of train shows, where we assisted each other on managing the clinic rooms. I never saw him perturbed about anything, and he always helped to keep things running smoothly, particularly with the computer projectors. He will be sorely missed.

David N. Currey

Gene was one of the good ones! He was always there with a smile and willing to accept challenges. When I was president, I was looking for a suitable replacement and with Gene serving as Vice-Pres, it was only fitting that he be considered. However not as quick with the affirmative reply, he finally gave in and accepted the challenge. Thanks Gene, you did a great job.

Gene was always tinkering with his layout and was very interested in my prototype operations vs switching ideas. We had several conversations as to what was too much and what was reasonable. He was the inspiration for a new position on the prototype model railroader that I added for the LSR Baton Rouge convention - the Product Load Manager. Gene had done a clinic on how he calculated the loads on all of his cars - so as not to overload a flat car with too much pipe, for example.

Thanks Gene, for the listening ear, the helping hand and your ever-present laugh...

Kelly Russell MMR

Remembering Gene Mangum

Gene Magnum, “The Greeter”, Remembered

Gene was the very first person to welcome me to the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club when I attended my first club meeting about 12 years ago. While I had retired from one job, I was still working professionally but was preparing for “total retirement”, eventually. I knew that I needed something to do in retirement that would exercise both halves of my brain. I was considering several options to keep my brain active. I had always had an interest in trains from when I was a boy but never had time for a hobby during my professional career.

Despite my busy work and associated travel schedule I tried to make it to as many club meetings as I could. Gene ALWAYS made the effort to say hello when he saw me at these events.

I read the Derail cover-to-cover every month. Gene wrote prolifically and in great detail about the “Mystic Branch Railroad”, presumably near his boyhood home, near Kerrville, out in the Hill Country. The way he described this railroad made it sound like it was, in fact, a REAL railroad vs. his “imaginary” model railroad. During a San Jac meeting Gene gave a clinic on the Mystic Branch RR. Once again, it was not entirely clear if Gene was talking about a real railroad or an imaginary model RR – and he was doing this DELIBERATELY! My curiosity finally got the better of me and after his clinic I went up to Gene and asked, “Is there or was there a real Mystic Branch railroad out in the Hill Country?” With a twinkle in his eyes and a wry smile on his face, Gene replied, “Well Jeff, what do you think?” With that simple reply, much like the mystery of Santa Claus, Gene kept me in a state of wonder.

I wrote articles for the Derail as well and invariably when I attended a San Jac club meeting after one of my articles got published, Gene was the first to approach me to tell me how much he enjoyed reading what I had written. Gene’s response was not just, “nice article, Jeff”, but rather he had made mental notes of specific aspects of my article that he found interesting or informative to further discuss with me. The fact that someone had read what I had researched and written about with such care and understanding greatly impressed me.

Gene had a passion for the Rosenberg Railroad Museum. A few years ago my wife and I, along with my nieces and nephews from my extended Houston family, attended Railfest, at the Rosenberg RR Museum. The kids had a blast, especially viewing the large G-Scale “garden layout”, and they got excited when an occasional freight train came roaring through! In the early afternoon hours Gene saw me and asked if I could help him out. He explained the he was short-handed and needed someone to run the Lionel train layout for an hour or so, “or until relieved”. [Now, mind you, I was a paying customer for Railfest, NOT a member of the Museum. Ha!] After agreeing to do this for him, Gene then explained that I needed to run the train at a prototypical speed and I needed to increase the locomotive speed when approaching this curve, or the loco might stall; and I needed to slow the train speed when approaching this other curve, or there could be a derailment. Such was the meticulous nature of Gene to help guarantee my success! I never did get relieved that day (LOL) but enjoyed interacting with children and adults alike who came over to watch that Lionel train go around and around in a circle. Taking my cue from Gene I greeted everyone and welcomed them and even let some of the children run the train, utilizing the guidance that Gene had bestowed upon me.

While I do have many different interests, model railroading has become an increasingly important aspect of my life, now that I am totally retired. Since I learned of Gene’s passing, I have often reflected how my current life might be different had Gene not taken the effort to personally welcome me to the San Jac Model Railroad Club, way back when.

RIP, Gene – you will be greatly missed.

Jeff Williams

Remembering Gene Mangum

I did not know Gene prior to his joining San Jacinto Model Railroad Club. Gene soon became active, including presenting clinics about his layout. Listening to his clinics, I found them to be professional, researched, and presented with clarity. I then asked Gene to submit articles to the Derail, and he agreed to share his knowledge.

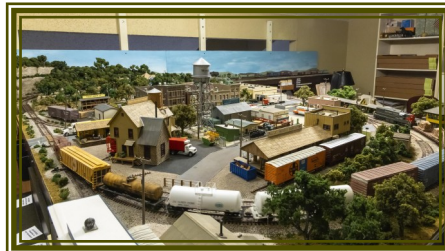
When Gene became Club President, his monthly President's Message enabled me to see his ability to effectively run the club.

I will miss Gene as a friend and fellow train enthusiast.

Bob Sabol

Remembering Gene Mangum's Mystic Branch

Photos by Steve Sandifer MMR



Train Show Advertising Volunteer Needed

Gene Mangum has served as our advertising person for the Greater Houston Train Show. This included notices to the various model railroad media, ads in the Cowcatcher, info in train shops and to train clubs, and even to places like Texas Highways and local broadcast media. We need a new volunteer immediately to take over that task as deadlines for some media are upon us. Contact [Steve Sandifer](#) to volunteer.

A Modeler's Toolbox – Bigger (Non-Power) Tools

By Pete Leach MMR

Not all my tools are small and inexpensive. Occasionally, I'll splurge and treat myself to a tool that costs a bit more than an X-ACTO® knife or a bottle of glue. Here are 3 of my favorites. My Dremel motor tools are not on this list. I don't use them very often. (Yes, I have more than 1!) I may discuss these at another time.

I purchased a Dremel Multi-Vise years ago to mount on my hobby workbench. They are available for less than \$50. It clamps easily to the edge of my workspace. There are several adjustments to allow me to hold something in just the right place. The soft plastic jaws are great for holding wood and styrene.

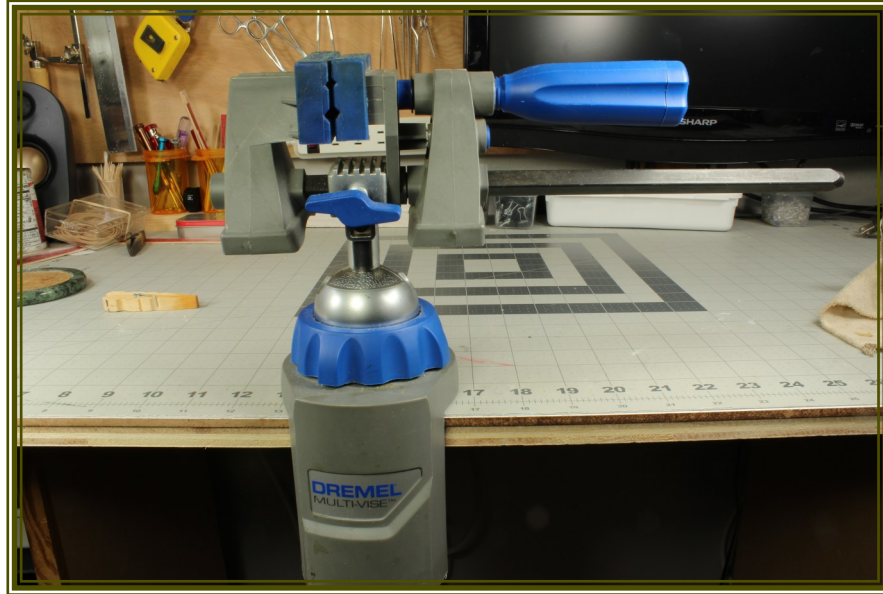


Figure 1 - This hobby vise clamps easily to the edge of my hobby workbench. It can be adjusted to hold different materials at various angles. And it can be moved out of the way with the turn of a screw!

One project that was perfect for the multi-vise was when I needed to produce a LOT of wood shingles. After slitting some 1/64" thick plywood to 1/4" widths, four strips were bundled together between wood paint stirrers and clamped in the vise. A razor saw was used to cut slits halfway through the plywood resulting in strips of wood shingles.

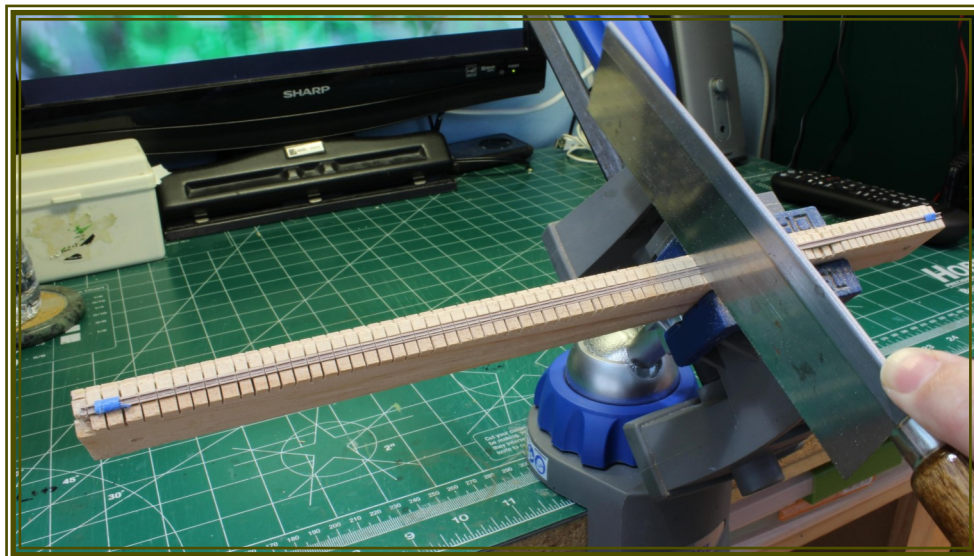


Figure 2 - The Dremel vise came in handy when I was cutting wood shingles.

In modeling Maine, I found I needed a whole lot of wood shingles to cover the sides and roofs of many buildings. This was a great way to produce them cost effectively.

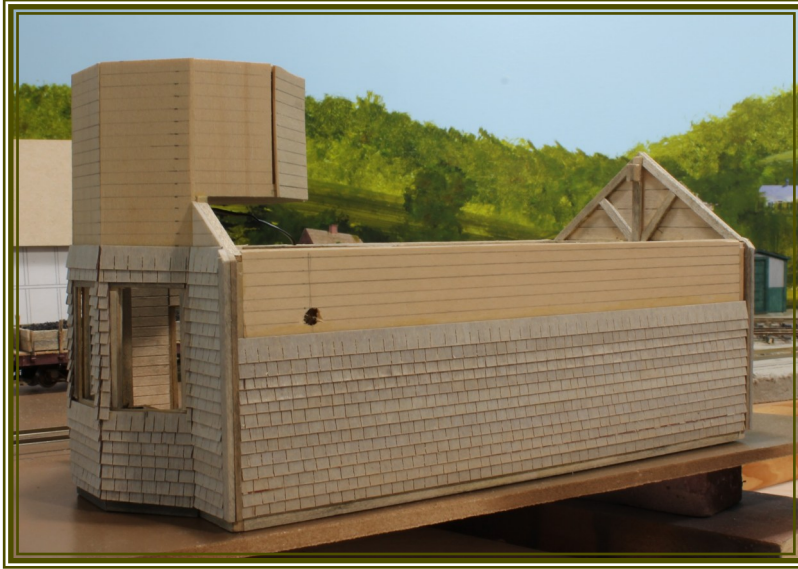


Figure 3 - The strips of wood shingles are glued to the station body. They can be stained and weathered once installed.

Another one of the more expensive tools I have on my workbench is the NWSL Chopper II. They may be out of production but can still be found in some hobby shops and on various on-line stores for under \$100.

I had an earlier version with a hardboard cutting surface that wore out. The newer Chopper II has a replaceable cutting mat. The key to getting a good cut is 1) use a sharp blade (standard single-edge razor blade) and 2) change the mat surface regularly. Although new mats may be purchased from NWSL, a standard 4" square cutting mat will work. As it wears, it can be rotated 90° and then flipped over to use the back. That gives 8 new cutting spots per mat.

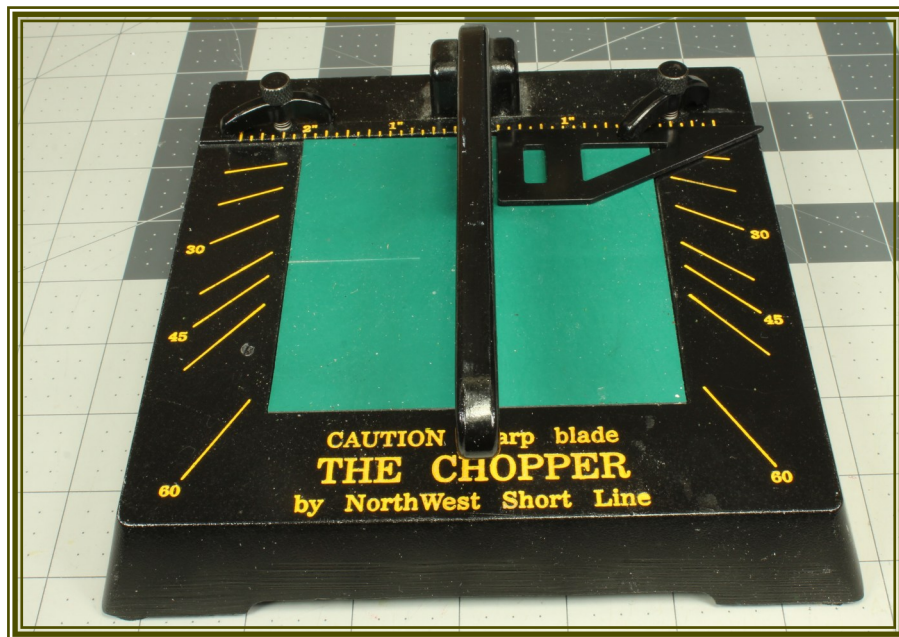


Figure 4 - The Chopper II is cast metal and has a replaceable cutting mat. It is more durable than the original version.

The Chopper comes with a couple of stop guides that clamp onto the tool to aid in cutting angles and duplicate size parts. I use it to cut wood and styrene strips to a specific length.



Figure 5 - Repeating cuts are possible using one of the supplied angle-stops. They clamp easily using the built-in thumb screws.

By far, the most expensive hobby tool I've purchased is the Ultimition Sander with the add-on Repeater. I got mine at a convention in Pittsburgh last September for under \$300 (gulp!) The tool is a hand powered disc sander that is mounted on a precision machined bed. It includes a guide that with accurate angles machined on the face. Turning the crank a few rotations is usually enough to clean up the edge of a strip of wood or styrene.



Figure 6 - By far this is the most expensive non-powered tool I own. It can be mounted to the workbench with bolts or a C-clamp. The repeater attachment is the long metal bar sticking out towards the camera.

I splurged and added the Repeater. It replaces standard angle adjustment with a long bar that includes an adjustable stop to help create duplicate parts. I used it on a recent project to help me produce identical angles and lengths on strips needed for a scratch-built structure's roof rafters.

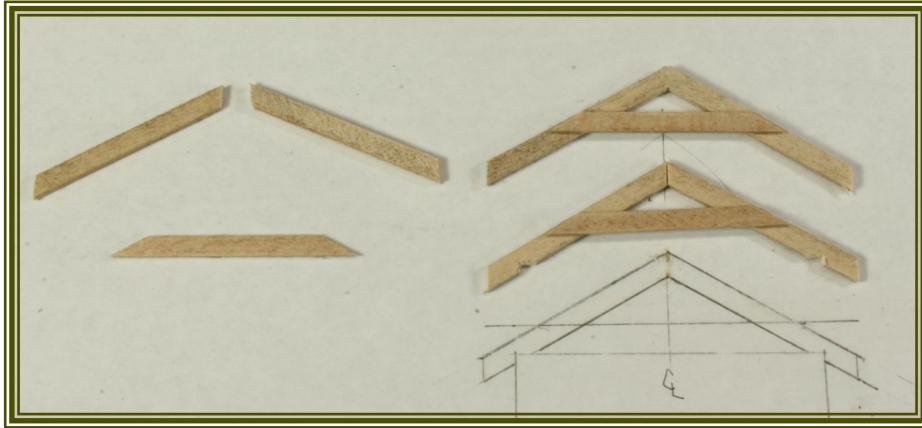


Figure 7 - These rafters were cut to size using the Repeater attachment on the Sander. There were 15 identical sets produced for the roof on a structure model.

I don't buy expensive tools very often. I always weigh the pros (I've got to have this!) versus the cons (am I really going to use it?) before forking over the cash. But these 3 tools are used on nearly every scratch building project that comes across my workbench.

A Study of Railway Transportation

Submitted by Mark Couvillion and Brian Jansky

Editor's Note: Please see the August 2024 Derail for detailed background on this series.

Published: 1944

Where We “Stop, Look and Listen”

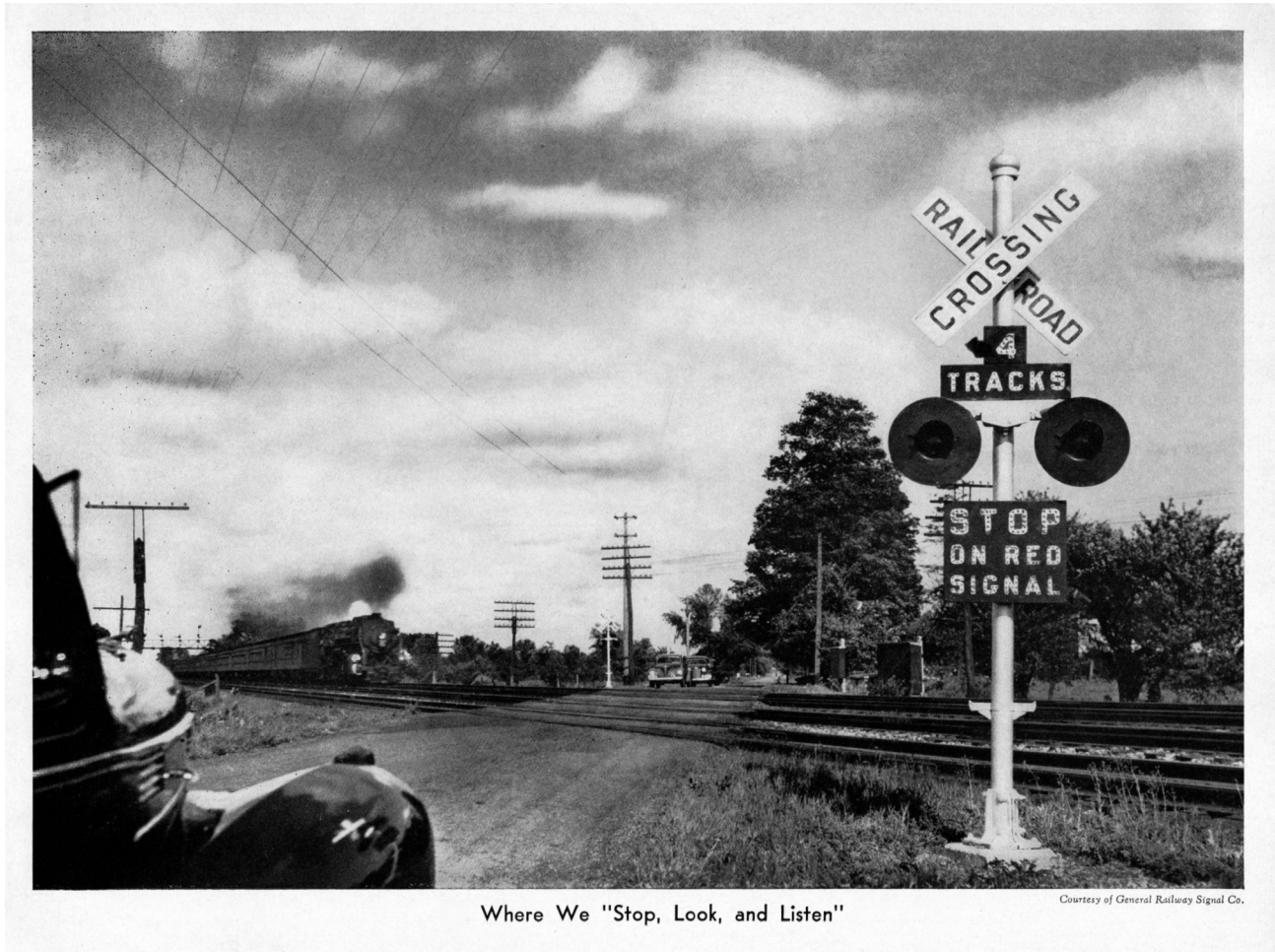
In nearly every railroad community, there is at least one railway-highway grade crossing; in many communities there are several. Throughout the United States, there are 230,000 grade crossings, or one for nearly every mile of railroad.

At nearly every crossing a large sign marked “Railroad Crossing” or “Railroad Crossing, Stop, Look, Listen” warns automobilists and pedestrians of the presence of the railroad and of the need to be careful. At many crossings where rail and motor traffic is heavy, various other warnings are also in use. Some crossings have automatically- or manually-operated crossing gates which are lowered when a train is approaching and raised when it has passed. Some also have electric bells. Others have flashing lights or wig-wag signals equipped with bells. Many have reflecting signs and advance warning signs. At many grade crossings the approaching highway has conspicuous pavement markings.

At numerous grade crossings in cities or towns where traffic is heavy, the railroads employ watchmen with flags, “Stop” signs or lanterns to warn motorists and pedestrians of approaching trains.

The type of warning signs or signals used and the employment of crossing watchmen depend in a large measure upon the location of the crossing and the number of trains, vehicles and pedestrians that use it.

As a still further precaution against accidents, the engineer of the train sounds the whistle of his locomotive - two long, one short, and one long blast - upon approaching a highway crossing.



The picture illustrates modern safety devices at a level, full-view crossing. At the top of the pole on the right is the familiar sign, which can be read from either direction, warning the driver or pedestrian that he or she is approaching a "Railroad Crossing". Underneath, a sign with reflector buttons tells the motorist or pedestrian to be extra cautious as the crossing has four tracks upon which trains may be running. Two flashing red lights appear when the train is some distance away, giving those on the crossing time to reach the other side in safety and warning those who are approaching the crossing to "Stop on Red Signal". A similar warning sign is located on the other side of the tracks to warn motorists and pedestrians approaching from the opposite direction.

Many grade crossings are protected by gates which are lowered when trains are approaching. Some gates are operated by watchmen or towermen, others are operated automatically.

Automatic gates are controlled by electrical circuits so as to close when a train passes over a certain place in the track some distance from the crossing. This point is determined by the maximum speed of trains and is established at a distance far enough away to allow ample time for the gate arms to drop to a horizontal position before the train reaches the crossing.

Flashing lights and warning bells are operated automatically in the same manner. Warnings by lights or bells are given about six seconds in advance of lowering the gates. About 10 seconds are required to lower the gates.

Wide crossings are protected by four gates and narrow ones by two. The short-arm gates form a barrier for the right-hand lane only, thus permitting escape if a vehicle is trapped. At some crossings, gate arms are arranged to swing outward from the tracks when struck, to prevent trapping vehicles.

Crossing gates are for the protection of persons, drivers, or pedestrians, who, deliberately or otherwise, try to cross the railroad track or tracks ahead of oncoming trains, in spite of the fact that signs and signals warn them of the danger.

Nearly every grade-crossing accident could be avoided if proper care were exercised by motorists and pedestrians, first, by coming to a full stop before crossing the track, second, by looking in both directions to make sure that a train is not approaching, and third, by listening for the sound of an approaching train.

Many accidents occur because motorists drive over crossings without taking the proper precautions; many others occur as a result of motorists or pedestrians deliberately trying "to beat the train to the crossing". Numerous crossing accidents are the result of motorists driving into the sides of freight trains at night.

Some persons ask why trains do not stop at crossings to allow motor vehicles and pedestrians to pass. The answer is that railway trains, weighing in many instances thousands of tons and traveling at high speeds, could not stop at the numerous highway crossings without greatly interfering with and slowing down the movement of passengers, freight, express and mails, which must move on exact time schedules.

A motor vehicle can stop within a few yards; pedestrian can stop almost instantly. A train running at a speed of 60 miles per hour travels 500 feet in less than 6 seconds; 1,000 feet in 11½ seconds, 2,000 feet in 23 seconds.

A heavy steam railway train, traveling at full speed, cannot stop suddenly; it requires hundreds or thousands of feet in which to slow down and come to a full stop, depending upon the speed at which it is traveling, the weight and length of the train, and other factors. Several minutes are required for a heavy train to start and attain its maximum speed. Obviously, therefore, it would be impracticable, and in countless cases impossible, for trains to stop at crossings to allow motorists and pedestrians to pass.

Large sums have been spent upon the separation of railway-highway grade crossings by the construction of overhead bridges or underpasses. Before the present war, it cost around \$85,000, on the average, to separate a crossing. The cost of separating all of the 230,000 railway-highway crossings in the United States would be about as much as the total present investment in all railroad property, except locomotives and cars, throughout the country.

The railroads spend millions of dollars annually, and railway management and employees devote much time and effort, to promoting safety at railway crossings.

Efforts of the railroads and their employees and various safety organizations, and the cooperation of the public, resulted in a reduction of 24 per cent in fatalities at railway-highway crossings from 1928 to 1942, notwithstanding an increase in the number of automobiles on the highways during that period. Yet, sad to relate, 1,970 persons lost their lives in highway-railway crossing accidents in 1942.

One out of every three railway-highway crossing accidents involving the collision of motor vehicles and trains is caused by the motor vehicle running into the sides of trains.

Too great emphasis cannot be placed upon the importance of exercising due caution when approaching crossings.

A Study of Railway Transportation

Submitted by Mark Couvillion and Brian Jansky

More than 1,000 boys and girls in the United States are seriously or fatally injured each year while playing on railroad tracks, taking short-cuts across railroad property, hopping on moving trains or going under or between standing cars.

Children should be cautioned against playing or walking upon railroad tracks, crossing railroad bridges, climbing around cars, "hopping" trains in motion, or taking "short-cuts" across railroad property. To this end, the railroads have for years waged a vigorous safety campaign, with such slogans as:

"SAFETY FIRST"

"STOP, LOOK, AND LISTEN"

"BETTER TO BE SAFE THAN SORRY"

"CROSS CROSSINGS CAUTIOUSLY"

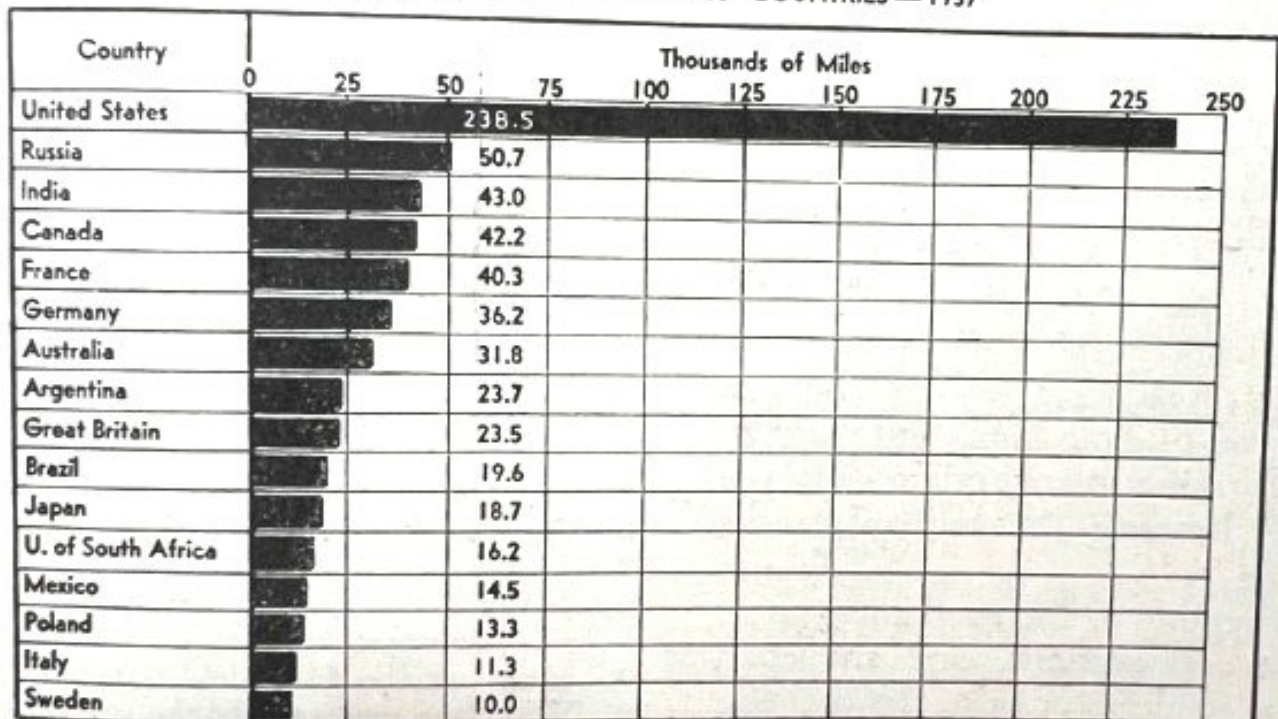
"LOSING A MINUTE MAY SAVE A LIFE"

"A SHORT-CUT ACROSS THE RAILROAD TRACK MAY BE A SHORT-CUT TO THE HOSPITAL"

Children can help to promote safety by (1) observing these rules themselves, and by (2) discussing them with their parents and friends.

Railroad mileage has increased significantly in major countries in the last 80 years. The United States leads all other countries in total Railway Mileage!

RAILWAY MILEAGE IN LEADING COUNTRIES — 1937



GROWTH OF RAILWAY MILEAGE BY STATES

The following figures represent miles of railroad. Sources: *Poor's Manual of Railroads*; and *Statistics of Railways of the United States*, compiled by Interstate Commerce Commission.

State	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1942
Alabama	..	46	183	743	1,157	1,843	3,314	4,226	5,226	5,378	5,249	4,906
Arizona	..	..	..	..	..	349	1,097	1,512	2,097	2,478	2,494	2,215
Arkansas	..	..	..	38	256	859	2,196	3,360	5,306	5,062	4,826	4,382
California	..	..	..	23	925	2,195	4,356	5,751	7,772	8,356	8,240	7,524
Colorado	..	..	..	..	157	1,750	4,176	4,587	5,533	5,519	4,972	4,450
Connecticut	..	102	402	601	742	923	1,007	1,024	1,000	1,001	969	875
Delaware	..	39	39	127	197	275	323	347	335	335	325	295
District of Columbia	..	*	*	*	*	*	30	32	36	36	36	34
Florida	..	..	21	402	446	518	2,471	3,299	4,432	5,212	5,666	5,010
Georgia	..	185	643	1,420	1,845	2,459	4,532	5,652	7,056	7,326	6,672	6,215
Idaho	..	..	..	..	..	206	941	1,261	2,179	2,877	2,965	2,742
Illinois	..	..	111	2,790	4,823	7,851	10,214	11,003	11,878	12,188	12,500	11,777
Indiana	..	..	228	2,163	3,177	4,373	5,971	6,471	7,420	7,426	7,107	6,857
Iowa	..	..	..	655	2,683	5,400	8,366	9,185	9,755	9,808	9,698	8,906
Kansas	..	..	..	..	1,501	3,400	8,806	8,719	9,007	9,388	9,339	8,479
Kentucky	..	28	78	534	1,017	1,530	2,746	3,060	3,526	3,929	4,055	3,534
Louisiana	..	40	80	335	450	652	1,759	2,824	5,554	5,223	4,654	4,292
Maine	..	11	245	472	786	1,005	1,338	1,915	2,248	2,295	2,194	1,862
Maryland	13	213*	259*	386*	671*	1,040*	1,231	1,376	1,426	1,436	1,443	1,328
Massachusetts	..	301	1,035	1,264	1,480	1,915	2,094	2,119	2,115	2,106	2,022	1,745
Michigan	..	59	342	779	1,638	3,938	7,243	8,195	9,021	8,734	8,072	7,176
Minnesota	..	..	..	..	1,092	3,151	5,466	6,943	8,669	9,114	8,779	8,371
Mississippi	..	..	75	862	990	1,127	2,332	2,920	4,506	4,369	4,209	3,813
Missouri	..	..	..	817	2,000	3,965	6,004	6,875	8,083	8,117	7,897	6,939
Montana	..	..	..	..	..	106	2,181	3,010	4,207	5,072	5,228	5,105
Nebraska	..	..	..	..	705	1,953	5,295	5,685	6,067	6,166	6,174	5,877
Nevada	..	..	..	..	593	739	925	909	2,277	2,160	2,109	1,828
New Hampshire	..	53	467	661	736	1,015	1,145	1,239	1,246	1,252	1,166	956
New Jersey	..	186	206	560	1,125	1,684	2,047	2,257	2,260	2,352	2,299	2,070
New Mexico	..	..	..	..	..	758	1,324	1,753	3,032	2,972	2,973	2,598
New York	..	374	1,361	2,682	3,928	5,991	7,661	8,121	8,430	8,390	8,312	7,664
North Carolina	..	53	283	937	1,178	1,486	3,001	3,831	4,932	5,522	5,161	4,628
North Dakota	..	..	..	..	†	†	1,941	2,731	4,201	5,311	5,276	5,262
Ohio	..	30	575	2,946	3,538	5,792	7,912	8,807	9,134	9,002	8,805	8,435
Oklahoma	..	..	..	..	..	289†	1,214	828	5,980	6,572	6,678	6,018
Oregon	..	..	..	..	159	508	1,428	1,724	2,285	3,305	3,456	3,383
Pennsylvania	..	754	1,240	2,598	4,656	6,191	8,453	10,331	11,290	11,551	11,141	10,088
Rhode Island	..	50	68	108	136	210	213	212	212	211	191	189
South Carolina	10	137	289	973	1,139	1,427	2,194	2,818	3,442	3,814	3,780	3,349
South Dakota	..	..	..	..	65†	1,225†	2,486	2,850	3,948	4,276	4,238	3,988
Tennessee	..	..	..	1,253	1,492	1,843	2,752	3,137	3,816	4,078	3,940	3,503
Texas	..	..	..	307	711	3,244	8,613	9,886	14,282	16,125	17,069	15,865
Utah	..	..	..	..	257	842	1,090	1,547	1,986	2,161	2,196	1,908
Vermont	..	..	290	554	614	914	921	1,012	1,100	1,077	1,056	915
Virginia	..	147	384	1,379	1,486	1,893	3,160	3,779	4,535	4,703	4,516	4,205
Washington	..	..	..	..	..	289	1,783	2,914	4,875	5,587	5,542	5,301
West Virginia	..	..	97	352	387	691	1,328	2,228	3,601	3,996	4,046	3,763
Wisconsin	..	..	20	905	1,525	3,155	5,584	6,531	7,475	7,554	7,288	6,540
Wyoming	..	..	..	..	459	512	942	1,229	1,645	1,931	2,036	2,008
United States	23	2,818	9,021	30,626	52,922	93,296	163,597	193,346	240,439	252,845	249,052	229,174

* District of Columbia mileage included with that of Maryland prior to 1890.

† North and South Dakota combined in Dakota Territory prior to 1890.

‡ Part of Indian Territory prior to 1890.

RAILWAY MILEAGE IN THE UNITED STATES

Sources: 1830 to 1889, inclusive, *Poor's Manual of Railroads*; 1890 to 1942, inclusive, Interstate Commerce Commission. Data for years 1830 to 1889, inclusive, and 1916 to 1942, inclusive, cover calendar years. Data for 1890 to 1915, inclusive, cover years ended June 30. No mileage is included for Alaska or insular possessions.

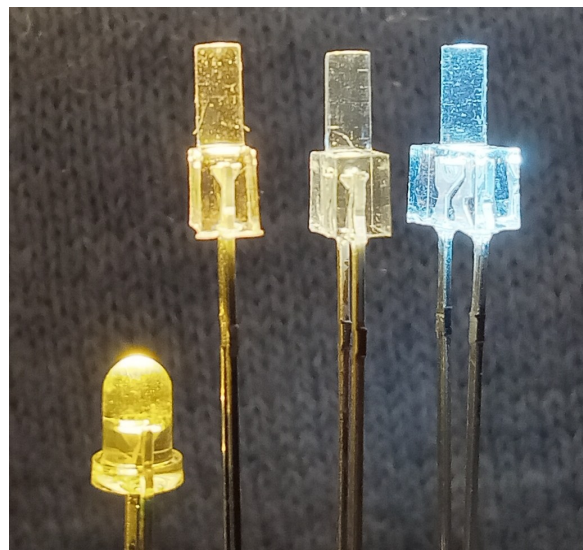
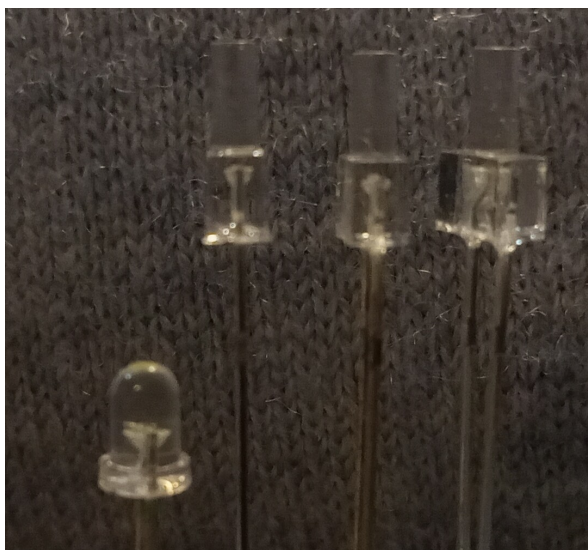
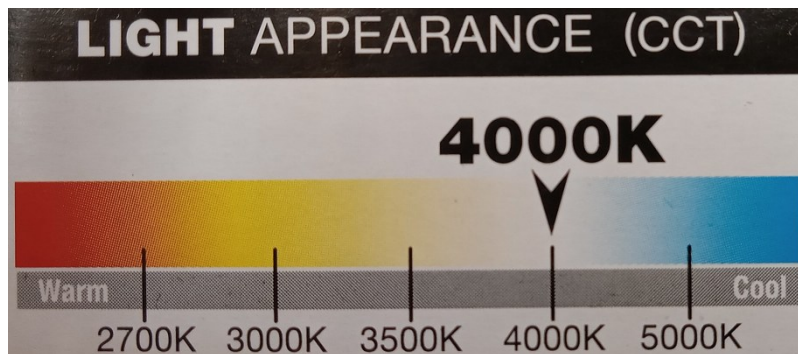
Year	Miles of Road Operated *	Miles of All Track Operated *	Year	Miles of Road Operated *	Miles of All Track Operated *	Year	Miles of Road Owned *	Miles of All Track Operated *
1830	23	.....	1868	42,229	.....	1903	207,977	283,822
1831	95	.....	1869	46,844	.....	1904	213,904	297,073
1832	229	.....	1870	52,922	.....	1905	218,101	306,797
1833	380	.....	1871	60,301	.....	1906	224,363	317,083
1834	633	.....	1872	66,171	.....	1907	229,951	327,975
1835	1,089	.....	1873	70,268	.....	1908	233,468	333,646
1836	1,273	.....	1874	72,385	.....	1909	236,834	342,351
1837	1,497	.....	1875	74,096	.....	1910	240,439	351,767
1838	1,913	.....	1876	76,808	94,665	1911	243,979	362,824
1839	2,302	.....	1877	79,082	97,308	1912	246,777	371,238
1840	2,818	.....	1878	81,747	103,649	1913	249,777	379,508
1841	3,535	.....	1879	86,556	104,756	1914	252,105	387,208
1842	4,026	.....	1880	93,296	115,647	1915	253,789	391,142
1843	4,185	.....	1881	103,108	130,455	1916	254,036	397,014
1844	4,377	.....	1882	114,677	140,878	1917	253,626	400,353
1845	4,633	.....	1883	121,422	149,101	1918	253,529	402,343
1846	4,930	.....	1884	125,345	156,414	1919	253,152	403,891
1847	5,598	.....	1885	128,320	160,506	1920	252,845	406,580
1848	5,996	.....	1886	136,338	167,952	1921	251,176	407,531
1849	7,365	.....	1887	149,214	184,935	1922	250,413	409,359
1850	9,021	.....	1888	156,114	191,376	1923	250,222	412,993
1851	10,982	.....	1889	161,276	202,088	1924	250,156	415,028
1852	12,908	.....				1925	249,398	417,954
1853	15,360	.....		Miles of Road Owned *		1926	249,138	421,341
1854	16,720	.....	1890	163,597	199,876	1927	249,131	424,737
1855	18,374	.....	1891	168,403	207,446	1928	249,309	427,750
1856	22,076	.....	1892	171,564	211,051	1929	249,433	429,054
1857	24,503	.....	1893	176,461	221,864	1930	249,052	429,883
1858	26,968	.....	1894	178,709	229,796	1931	248,829	429,823
1859	28,789	.....	1895	180,657	233,276	1932	247,595	428,402
1860	30,626	.....	1896	182,777	239,140	1933	245,703	425,664
1861	31,286	.....	1897	184,428	242,013	1934	243,857	422,401
1862	32,120	.....	1898	186,396	245,334	1935	241,822	419,228
1863	33,170	.....	1899	189,295	250,143	1936	240,104	416,381
1864	33,908	.....	1900	193,346	258,784	1937	238,539	414,572
1865	35,085	.....	1901	197,237	265,352	1938	236,842	411,324
1866	36,801	.....	1902	202,472	282,822	1939	235,064	408,350
1867	39,050	.....				1940	233,670	405,975
						1941	231,971	403,625
						1942	229,174	399,627

* Figures for the years 1830 to 1889 represent miles of road operated. Figures for miles of road owned are not available for these years. Data for "miles of all track operated" not available prior to 1876.

Color-Match LEDs Before Installing

I install LEDs into engines often. My “signature” is bright warm-white tower LEDs trimmed to fit into the individual lighting holes of the engine. There are often six or more tower LEDs in an installation. Sometimes, there are other sized LEDs in the installation. With the many LEDs used in each installation, I often have to mix LEDs from different orders. When unlit, most tower LEDs look the same. I started hooking them all up in a two-gang breadboard at 3 volts to assure that all are the same color BEFORE installation! I have occasionally spent a lot of time installing LEDs only to find out that one is the wrong color. Not very prototypical! I prefer warm white LEDs to model older incandescent bulbs. Bright white LEDs are for newer engines. Below are the colors, names, and temperatures of the LEDs available in “white”:

Yellow White	2700 Kelvin	Older steam engines - kerosene flame
Warm White	3000 Kelvin	Middle to late steam, early diesels – incandescent bulb
Bright White	4000 Kelvin	More modern diesels – halogen bulb
Blue White	5000 Kelvin	Not recommended for model use – halogen bulb



Next Month: File LEDs To Fit Light Holes in Shells

KNOW YOUR RAILROAD

Memories of the Southern Pacific and Other Branches in South Louisiana



Old map of south Louisiana Railroads – from C. S. Hammond Maps

I was watching the following video by Jaw Tooth on YouTube, which had some footage of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey circus train entering a tunnel somewhere, and it brought back several old railroad memories from my teenage years in and around Lafayette, Louisiana.

Monster Train Appears Out Of Tunnel With DPU! Dangerous Truck & Circus Trains Thru Abandoned Tunnel



The tracks opposite the Lafayette passenger station where the circus train was parked – photo by author

In the late 1960s, as a teenager, I had gone down to the train station in Lafayette, Louisiana, to watch the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey circus train come into town for its several days of performances there. The event had been publicized, and a lot of people were there to watch its arrival. The train came off the Southern Pacific branch to Alexandria half a mile west of the depot, which is now abandoned. In the a-piece-here-a-piece-there method of railroad construction, the line to Alexandria had originally been the continuation of the mainline from New Orleans. Then, the railroad must have figured that Texas would be a better target, so built due west to Houston from Lafayette. The line to Alec (as locals often refer to that town) ran right by the Acadian Hills Country Club (closed for the past 15 years), where my dad failed to make a golfer out of me. I'm still proud of the only birdie I ever got: a chip shot on par 3 hole #3 over a sand trap and right into the hole! When you are using terminology like "double par" (8 strokes), you shouldn't turn pro. The previous hole, #2, a long par 4 or par 5, teed off over a small hill, and had a tall telescopic viewer so golfers could see if somebody was on the fairway ahead. I never heard of anybody getting clonked by a golf ball on that hole, though. The course was a par 71, but they could have easily made it into a par 72. Hole #6, a par 3 that ended short of a creek, could have easily been extended past the creek in the back north corner of the course, and made into a short par 4. In the club's last few years, the course had a small alligator that wandered around between the water traps.



Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey railcar – photo by Harvey Henkelmann

I remember the circus train as coming in with two consists (passenger cars in one, and animals and equipment in another), but that memory's kind of fuzzy now. Back then, there were still a few tracks opposite the train station, where the circus train(s) parked and unloaded from. That had once been the site of the original freight yard, which was moved to the west side of town probably a decade or so before. I remember seeing circus people looking out the Dutch doors of the train as it rolled into town. I took some photos with my Instamatic camera, but don't know where those are today. The circus performed in Blackham Colosseum for several days on the Louisiana (Southwestern Louisiana, back then) campus.

At that point in the Alexandria branch's operation, it still had two freight trains a day each way as far as Opelousas, about 25 miles north of Lafayette. One train was a turn to Opelousas and back, and the other train ran through to Alexandria one day (with the northern portion of the line having trackage rights on the Missouri Pacific's ex-Texas and Pacific line into Alexandria), with the crew returning southbound the next day. Opelousas still had some rail-served businesses, and there was an interchange track with the Missouri Pacific.

My mother was a representative for Scholastic Magazines, and one day during the summer, I talked her into letting me go along, whereby I could have the family Buick to go look at train stuff while she gave her presentation. So, I was in luck and quickly found an SP switch engine on the Opelousas Turn switching some tracks. I parked nearby, and was taking some photos, when one of the switch engine crew members got off the engine and started walking straight towards me. I thought to myself, "I'm in trouble now," but couldn't figure out what I had done wrong, as I wasn't standing on railroad property. When the man got within about 25 feet of me, I recognized him as being Mr. Breaux, the father of a buddy of mine (Conrad) in the Lafayette High School band. He walked on up, and we chatted for a few minutes. Then somebody on the engine yelled something at him in French, and he yelled something back in French. We continued talking for a couple more minutes, and then he moseyed on back to the engine.

Mr. Breaux, who also owned two farms in and near Lafayette, worked on an SP seniority district that he said was named "Branches", whose trainmen were separate from the mainline crews, and worked on all the SP branches in the area out of Lafayette and New Iberia, and other branches on towards New Orleans. Lafayette had a moderately large classification yard, and a several-tracks engine terminal. A shortline railroad now works those branches that remain, with the branch to Breaux Bridge barely hanging on with an industry or two still remaining. That line once went all the way to Port Allen, opposite Baton Rouge, barging railcars across the Mississippi River, but the bridge over the Atchafalaya River was wiped out in a hurricane back in the 1920s. The railroad ran shuttle trains from Port Allen and Lafayette to the washed-out Atchafalaya bridge for a few years (piroguing passengers across the river?), then abandoned the eastern end of the line. Another branch crossed the Breaux Bridge branch in Breaux Bridge (once famous for its upside down traffic light) to get to Cade (between Lafayette and New Iberia), but it is long gone except for about a mile of track. A branch out of New Iberia once crossed the SP Sunset Route at Midland, and went on up to Eunice, Louisiana, where there was a swing gate at the interlocking with the Missouri Pacific. From there, the Rock Island (yes, the Rock) ran north up into Arkansas. Imagine, why would the Rock Island build a line down to Eunice in south Louisiana of all places? It didn't even go the short 19 miles further to get to Crowley, the main town in the area. I suppose connecting with the Missouri Pacific's branch to Crowley was sufficient.

Breaux Bridge, with the two rail lines crossing there, must have been a pretty busy place back into the 1950s. I drove over there one day in the late 1960s to poke around a little bit. I surprisingly found the following combination station in good shape, and seemingly still being used. I don't remember much about this little expedition, and with film being expensive to a high school kid, I didn't take any other photos of the area.



Small Southern Pacific combination station in Breaux Bridge, Louisiana – photo by author

Eunice was something else! It was served by four railroads, the Missouri Pacific's east-west mainline between Houston and Baton Rouge plus its branch south down to Crowley, a Southern Pacific branch down through Midland to New Iberia, a Texas and Pacific branch coming from the northeast and Bunkie, and a Rock Island line going due north to Alexandria and Little Rock. The Rock and T&P are now completely abandoned. The Texas and Pacific probably branched off the Rock Island just north of the interlocking with the MP mainline. The Southern Pacific branch angled south-southeast to get to Midland. There may have once been a small joint yard for the CRI&P, T&P, and SP off to the right on the east end of the wye, which was not on the MP mainline. There conceivably may have been another wye where the T&P parted ways with the Rock Island. Two wyes? Wye not? I remember seeing the interlocking's swing gate in the late 1960s (probably on another Scholastic trip with my mother), which I believe was on the MP mainline where the Rock Island crossed. I had the impression back then that the Rock no longer served Eunice, though the interlocking was still intact. Four railroads seems a little extreme for a town the size of Eunice, but such was the case.



Aerial photo of Eunice, Louisiana – from Google Earth

Railroad branches used to be a dime a dozen in south Louisiana. In addition to the branches mentioned above, there were even more SP branches further east and west from Lafayette, New Iberia, and Midland as the nutria crawls, and the Missouri Pacific and Texas and Pacific also had other branches straddling the swamps and bayous. In verifying parts of this article, I learned of rail lines I had never even heard of before, including an MP line still extant today and quite busy from Ville Platte to Opelousas that wasn't even shown in my *Official Guides of the Railways* (being listed in the station index industry for Belaire as “not shown in timetables”). The Atchison, Topeka, Santa Fe, and Lost Railroad even ran a line from Silsbee, Texas (or somewhere around them there parts) to Oakdale, Louisiana, and no further. Oakdale? Oakdale? Maybe some ATSF aficionado in the club can explain that buffoonery. Some people in the club like to make fun of the shenanigans of the Missouri Pacific and Southern Pacific railroads, but really, Oakdale? That line east of DeRidder, Louisiana is abandoned today. The only evidence of that line in Oakdale is Railroad Ave, where its small yard was located, and it connected with one or two small logging railroads. I guess the ATSF couldn't find a misguided railroad gullible enough to purchase the line. However, in an alternate universe, my Texas and Louisiana Railroad purchased that line, and made it into a major transcontinental railroad. You just need imagination.

Third Annual San Jac at SAMRA Ops Session, July 12, 2025

It started in March. “Are we going to SAMRA?” Soon there were sixteen members signed up and a date set. This was our largest group. It was great to see Chuck Lind proud of San Jac’s representation and operating skill. SAMRA President Alan Vincent was proud to show off the San Antonio & Northern and the impressive facility. Both were pleased with the interaction of the two clubs. Everyone had fun and stayed busy. Our members described the layout as “special”, “amazing”, “a masterpiece”, and “FUN!” Many familiar structures from Gil Freitag’s Stoney Creek & Western were featured prominently. Expert modeling was everywhere one looked and more to take in than one could in one visit. “Excellent day!” We’ll have to go back!

Thanks, SAMRA!

San Jac members attending were: Robert Ashcraft, Tom Bailey, Bob Barnett MMR, Larry Daughtry, Rick Jones, Bill Harris, Chuck Lind MMR, Caleb Luebeck, Joshua Luebeck, Kenneth Luebeck, Greg Luegering, David Paul, Chris Roehl, Steve Sandifer MMR, Chris Tolley, Bill Wright MMR.



*For more photos featuring our members visiting
San Antonio Model Railroad Association’s Any Ops Session
on July 12th, please visit*



San Antonio Model Railroad Association - SAMRA added 15 new photos to the album:
San Jacinto Model Railroad 2025.

July 12 at 6:26 PM · 🌐

[San Jacinto Model Railroad Club](#) Visiting Us Today For Any Ops Session.

*For more photos featuring San Antonio Model Railroad Association’s
Any Ops Session layout on July 12th,
please see David Paul’s photos on the next page.*



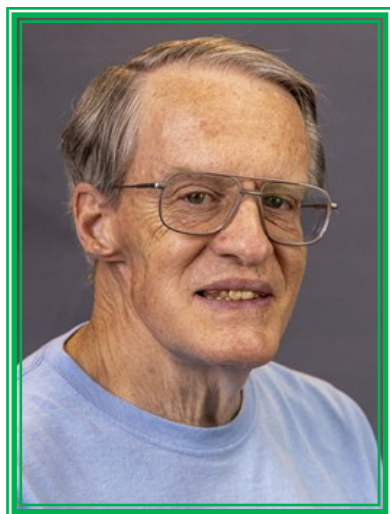


Happy August Birthdays!



Chris Roehl

(August 29)



Ray Holtzapple and Mary Dee Neal

(August 14) This married couple shares a birthday.



Margaret Slutz

(August 7) wife of Gret Slutz, prior to boarding the Rocky Mountaineer in Denver, CO travelling to Moab, UT.



Rick Jones

(August 1) as "Mark Twain"



Bill Wright MMR

(August 23) with wife, Betty



Leslie Stewart

(August 25) wife, of Phil Stewart.
Photo taken in Hawaii.





Happy August Birthdays!



Cathy & Robert Ashcraft

will celebrate their wedding anniversary on August 4th and Cathy's birthday on August 29th.

Mark and Resa Couvillion

Will celebrate their 46th wedding anniversary on August 4th.



Congratulations!



**Congratulations
to Gilbert Freitag
for winning the Freitag Award
at the LSR Convention.**



NOTE: To share your celebrations (birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, retirements etc.) with your San Jac family, please email d.gatohogno@gmail.com before the 9th of the month to be included in the next Derail edition.

Cash Flow - Last month

6/1/2025 through 6/30/2025

Category	6/1/2025- 6/30/2025
OUTFLOWS	
Meeting Rental	200.00
Software	21.64
Train Show Expense	
Module Reimbursement	500.00
TOTAL Train Show Expense	500.00
TOTAL OUTFLOWS	721.64
OVERALL TOTAL	-721.64

Account Balances - As of 5/31/2025

Account	Balance
Bank Accounts	
Chase Checking	6,072.11
Frost CD	10,363.97
TOTAL Bank Accounts	16,436.08
OVERALL TOTAL	16,436.08

Account Balances - As of 7/1/2025

Account	7/1/2025 Balance
Bank Accounts	
Chase Checking	5,350.47
Frost CD	10,363.97
TOTAL Bank Accounts	15,714.44
OVERALL TOTAL	15,714.44

Tom Bailey presented the clinic “Santa Fe Streamlined Passenger Trains in Kansas 1942-1957”

Chuck Lind announced that past San Jac president Gene Mangum passed away on June 30.

Chuck Lind called the business meeting to order at 8:21.

46 members were present with 12 online. We had one guest, Edmor Wienskoski. We had one new member, Andrew Bastlett. He models in OO scale.

Bob Sabol asked for articles remembering Gene Mangum so we can have a Derail dedicated to him for the next edition. Please get these articles to him by July 13.

Phil Stewart:

- This is the first joint meeting of Division 8 and the San Jac Club.
- The LSR convention in Baton Rouge was just completed.
- The National Train Show is July 14-19 in Novi, Michigan. Convention Station #6 (VI) for NOVI.
- The national narrow gauge convention is September 3-6 in St. Louis.

16 people have signed up for the SAMRA operating session on July 12. Need to be there by 10:00.

This was the third meeting at this location, as voted on at the April 1 meeting. Chuck Lind opened a discussion about future meeting locations. No other options were mentioned. We voted and the club unanimously voted to continue meeting at the current location permanently.

The Freitag Award was given to Gilbert Freitag at the LSR convention.

Next month’s clinic is by Craig Brantley, entitled “How Not To Build Your Model Railroad”.

We need refreshments in September and October.

Dick Louvet is willing to remain club treasurer, but does not want to handle the AV duties in the future. If someone would like to take over the AV duties, please let Chuck Lind know.

We are also looking for an officer selection committee. Let Chuck Lind know if you would like to serve on this committee. Steve Sandifer nominated Robert Ashcraft to serve, since Robert was not at the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29. Our next meeting is at the same location on August 5.



SanJac Officers

President: Chuck Lind MMR

president@sanjacmodeltrains.org

Vice President: Bob Barnett MMR

vice-president@sanjacmodeltrains.org

Secretary: David Paul

dbpaul32@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Richard (Dick) Louvet

secretary@sanjacmodeltrains.org

Past President: Gene Mangum



Division 8 Texas Gulf Division Officers

Director: Phil Stewart

pstewart1225@yahoo.com

Secretary/ Treasury: Tom Marsh

txtr7@yahoo.com

Derail Staff

Conductor: Bob Sabol

bsabol@stillmeadow.com

Engineer: Terri Sabol

terri74@gmail.com

Brakemen:

Mark Couvillion

mark_couvillion2@hotmail.com

David N. Currey

texasandlouisiana@msn.com

Divina Gato-Hogno

d.gatohogno@gmail.com

Brian Jansky

brianj844@gmail.com

Pete Leach MMR

pleachtx55@gmail.com

Richard Louvet

secretary@sanjacmodeltrains.org

Kelly Russell MMR

krussl@yahoo.com

Steve Sandifer MMR

steve.sandifer@sbcglobal.net

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

Now In-Person and ONLINE

Southwest Central Church of Christ
4011 W. Bellfort, Houston, TX 77025

Visitors are always welcome!

www.sanjacmodeltrains.org

Webmaster: Brian Jansky



Next Meeting

TUESDAY, AUGUST 5TH

AT 7:00PM

HYBRID MEETING: ONLINE AND IN-PERSON

‘How Not To Build Your Model Railroad’

PRESENTED BY CRAIG BRANTLEY



Refreshments:

Bob Werre



Video Corner



**My Must-Haves When
I Design a Model Railroad**