



Newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter December 2004

DECEMBER CHAPTER MEETING AT BLACKHAWK MUSEUM

Saturday, Dec. 11, 12 noon-5 pm. **Do not bring food or drink.** Refreshments will be provided by ETE.

Blackhawk Museum, 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville, CA 94506

See below or go to <http://www.blackhawkauto.org/infof.html> for directions

Calendar of Events

Saturday, December 11, 2004, 12-5pm: ETE Bay Area Chapter monthly meeting will be held in the downstairs classroom at Blackhawk Museum, 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville, CA 94506. **NOTE: Refreshments will be supplied by ETE – DO NOT BRING food or drinks.**

December through Sunday, January 2, 2005: All Aboard: HO Scale European Trains — ETE exhibit and layout at Blackhawk Museum, 3700 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville, CA 94506. Hours are 10AM to 5PM, **Wednesday through Sunday** (closed Monday & Tuesday). For more information, call (925)-736-2277 extension 236.

Saturday - Sunday, December 18-19, 2004: GATS (Great American Train Show), Marin County Civic Center, San Rafael, CA.

Saturday, January 8, 2005: Chapter Monthly Meeting, Hosted by Dave Pryor at his home in Hayward. Details to be posted in January newsletter.

Recap of the October Meeting

We enjoyed another fall meeting at the Andersen's home in Danville. A FREMO style layout was set up in their garage by the Module SIG. Several members had fun running their trains and we all enjoyed watching them.

The highlight of the meeting was a video presentation by Stretch on the progress he has made on his layout, *The Andersen Bahn*. He planned and engineered the project very carefully, presenting details of methods he used to solve potential problems for 100% operational reliability.

After the presentation, we were invited upstairs to see the results of his handiwork. The quality of construction was readily apparent. Thank you, Stretch, for a very informative and enlightening seminar. And thanks again to both Michelle and Stretch for hosting us. It is always a fun venue.

LOST AND FOUND

Someone left an item behind at the Andersen's. It is a magazine titled *Minnegazette*, which appears to be the magazine of the Minnesota Transportation Museum. If you are missing this, please contact Stretch at (925) 837-8198 or StretchA@aol.com and he'll see that you get it back.

The Reverse Corner

Notes from the Module SIG

By Tom Melka (melka@pacbell.net)

We are up and running at Blackhawk! This year, we are back upstairs off the upper gallery in the same large room we had two years ago. There is plenty of space for our displays. We have some neat static displays, in addition to our award winning layout. Porsche is one themed display case. Old time royal trains are in another. Separately, the museum's president is displaying his Lionel train collection in an adjacent gallery!

On our opening day, Friday Nov. 26, we had over 400 visitors and almost as many on the following day. While these are peak days, it represents the scale of audience we can expect during the holidays.

This year, Märklin USA is sponsoring us. They will have HO starter sets available for weekly door prizes (NOTE: ETE members are NOT eligible for these). This is being met with tremendous audience approval. Also, Märklin is providing track & electronics for the module owners. Thanks to Jacques Vuye for coordinating this fabulous support.

New modules are displayed for the first time this year. Rolf Krumbiegel contributed his new single module, with the frame by Ian Lorentzen, wiring by Jim Lowe, and a very large brewery diorama by Richard Orr. Rolf added his usual fine details. This great team effort brings a new industrial aspect to our layout.

Steve Imialek contributed his two rebuilt modules of a Belgian passenger station, originally built by Jacques Vuye. They look great! Our layout has a total of 20 modules and 6 corner sections, equal to the size we had a couple of years ago. Even more modules in the works for even bigger layouts in future venues!

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(Reverse Corner, continued from previous page)

This venue continues to bring ever higher attendance to the Blackhawk Museum. The promotional activity from Märklin should help drive even greater attendance numbers.

As always, please join us as a volunteer docent or qualified operator. Contact Rolf Krumbiegel (rolkru@earthlink.net) if you would like to volunteer. We are operating Wednesday through Sunday every week from Thanksgiving to January 2 (tear down is earlier this year due to another display being set up immediately after ours.)

And join us here for our monthly meeting Sat., Dec.11!
See you at Blackhawk! Happy Railroading!

Treasurer's Report

by David Baird

The current (Nov 1st, 2004) SF Bay Chapter account balance is \$6,395.77. We started the year at \$5,334.59. I anticipate about \$350.00 in additional expenditures before the year's end, leaving us with about \$700 more at the end of 2004 than at the start of the year.

Chapter membership fees brought in \$1,053, and EuroWest 2004 netted us about \$800. Our miscellaneous expenses were about \$660, and the newsletter costs will probably total around \$500. Miscellaneous expenses included purchase of a TV and a VCR for improved presentations at EuroWest, Blackhawk, etc.

The ETE Chapter polo shirts were seeded by the chapter, and almost all the costs have been recovered. We spent \$1,218.16 for 50 shirts and have sold 48 shirts for \$1,200.

There is some concern that the chapter is holding a balance puts our non-profit status at risk. Chapter Chairman Dave Pryor and I believe we should reduce the balance, and one easy way is to reduce the dues for 2005.

The newsletter costs will increase in 2005 because we will need to use a copy service and pay for envelopes and labels. Even \$100/month for the newsletter will reduce the balance by only \$1,200; we may still have more if we hold EuroWest 2005.

Mr. Pryor and I think we should eliminate the chapter dues for 2005 and only collect the fees that ETE National requires (currently \$15). We'll let the new officers handle that issue.

We might also consider buying Chapter DVD player and some videos. There are currently DVD players that can show PAL format as well as NTSC, so that would allow us to show DVDs sold in Europe that can't normally be played here.

Call For New Chapter Officers

It's time again for new chapter leadership. We've seen some interest in the roles to be vacated by Mr. Baird and Mr. Pryor. Rolf Krumbiegel has offered to continue with events and site coordination,. Steve Imialek is a candidate for Treasurer and Membership Officer. Ryan Hoover offered to continue as newsletter editor. Joe Freese has offered to help with newsletter mailing if someone else writes and delivers the copy to him. We still need a Chairman.

Current Officers

Dave Pryor - Chairman
Phone: (650)-697-2727
Email: MRMarklin@aol.com

David Baird - Treasurer/Membership
Phone: (408) 879-9985
Email : david.baird@hp.com

Rolf Krumbiegel - Events/Program Coordinator
Phone: (925) 939-7576
Email: irmik@jps.net

Newsletter editor: Ryan Hoover
Phone: (650) 573-1334
Email: ryanhoov@aol.com

EuroSnips

News about Railways in Europe and the World

Compiled by Jim Recker

Spectacular UK suicide crash of 100mph train

UFTON NERVET, UK, Nov 6th – Local police concluded that a suicidal motorist stopped his car on a grade crossing in Berkshire, thus being hit a high-speed train.

The event was witnessed by an un-named off-duty policeman, who saw the auto on the track. As the red flashing lights and gates were activated., he ran to an emergency phone booth and tried to get through to a signal tower. He could not before the train collided with the car at 100mph.

The locomotive and its eight coaches were strewn across the tracks and the car was crushed into an unrecognizable mangle. Both train and auto drivers, and an eight-year-old girl were killed. Another person died later that night. 150 people were injured.

This was the first major train wreck for nearly two years and it prompted criticism of the safety record of Britain's 7,900 level grade crossings. Some 18 months ago, three farm laborers were killed when their minibus was hit by a train at an unmarked crossing in Worcestershire.

Union officials demanded that all level crossings on intercity lines be grade separated with bridges or tunnels. That call was rejected by rail bosses, who said it could cost billions.

Eurostar to quit serving Waterloo in 2007

LONDON, UK, Nov 15 – Eurostar confirmed that a plan to vacate its Waterloo International terminal as soon as Section 2 of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link opens to St. Pancras early in 2007.

Eurostar had originally planned to keep Waterloo open as a second terminal, but with annual patronage of around 7 million well below the projected 18 million passengers/year, this is no longer considered viable.

At the same time, cleaning and maintenance of the train fleet will transfer from North Pole (west of London) to a new depot at Temple Mills. UK Transport Secretary, Alistair Darling, has given London & Continental Railways permission to build the new depot and a 2.5km access track from Stratford International at a total cost not exceeding £402 million.

Virgin Trains staff abused by customers

UK – Virgin Trains is joining forces with rail industry partners in a drive to protect rail staff from assault, threats and abuse in a nationwide holidays campaign. The season often sees an upsurge in the number of railway staff falling victim to verbal abuse, threats and physical violence. Alcohol and drug abuse are major contributors; fare evasion confrontation is another problem.

Belgian SNCB split-up confirmed

BRUSSELS, Belgium, Nov 2 – The Belgian government announced major appointments to the three railway companies which will emerge from the breakup of SNCB (Belgian National Railway Co.) on Jan.1. Many of the appointments are political.

The government will take over €7.4 billion of SNCB's debts, along with its most valuable property holdings. The debt transfer will present the state with an annual interest bill of €300 million, and SNCB Holding has been instructed to sell enough property during 2005 to cover this.

The regions and communities will have preferential rights to buy and develop the land, which SNCB fears may not reach full market value because of the enforced sale.

Russian Railways signs Siemens high speed accord

MOSCOW, Russia - Nov 9 – Russian Railways (RZD) plans to build a fleet of up to 150 electric high speed trains (HSTs) to operate inter-city services were announced by railway President Gennady Fadeyev. In München, he signed a cooperation accord with Siemens for technology to setting-up a joint venture and build the trains at RZD's Moscow locomotive works.

RZD expects to roll out its first 230km/h HST in 2007 starting on the Moscow–St. Petersburg–Helsinki corridor. Other routes include Moscow–Rostov-on-Don and Moscow–Nizhni Novgorod.

Russian government approved RZD's investment plans for 2005, totaling \$5.26 billion. 11% of that will go to 1) expansion of oil transport to China, 2) automation of the railway's electric power accounting system, and 3) express commuter services between Moscow, Lyubertskey and Ramenskoye.

RZD's has started testing a diesel loco rebuilt with a new engine from General Electric as a pilot to re-engine up to 100 locos.

DB finances improves, SJ does much better

BERLIN, Germany - Nov 11 – German DB AG improved its earnings after tax loss of €54 million, while revenue grew 4% in the first nine months of 2004. Passenger-kilometers were flat at 52.1 billion.

Swedish passenger rail operator SJ increased its quarterly profit by reducing costs 10%. Jobs have been cut and catering and cleaning have been “insourced.” Though revenue fell 2%, profit increased to SEK67 million, the best since the state-owned company was formed from the old SJ in 2000. Future plans include more automated ticket sales, and more passengers through better WiFi internet and phone reception on trains.

Swedish trains beat the plane

STOCKHOLM, Sweden - Nov 20 – Swedish airport authority Luftfartsverket wants to get out of two unprofitable airports because they are better served by road and rail. Air passenger numbers have fallen 40% since 2000, and they are still falling.

Landvetter airport in Jönköping is three hours by train from Stockholm, and two hours by car from Stockholm airport. Norrköping airport, between Ryanair's international Nyköping base and Linköping airport, is 75 minutes from Stockholm.

RFF seeks local approval for new TGV line

PARIS, France - Nov 26 – The French Rail Network (RFF) has asked the prefecture of Charente to open an enquiry to obtain approval for constructing the first phase of the 302km Sud Europe Atlantique high-speed line. RFF hopes to receive a declaration of public utility during the first quarter 2005.

TGV Sud Europe Atlantique will extend the existing Paris–Tours TGV Atlantique line to Bordeaux. The 300km/h line would cut the Paris–Bordeaux journey time by 50 minutes. The current fastest time by non-stop TGV is 2hrs, 56min.

The first 121km long phase will run Villognon–Ambarès-et-Lagrave, north of Bordeaux. It will cost €1.7 billion to build and should open in 2013. This section will cut 30 minutes off the Paris–Bordeaux journey time and should attract an extra 1.7 million passengers.

French nuclear protester killed by waste train

STRASBOURG, France, Nov 7 (AFP) – An anti-nuclear protester died in north eastern France Sunday after being run over by a train carrying nuclear waste from France to Germany.

The 21-year-old man, who had chained himself to the railway near the city of Nancy, lost a leg after he was crushed by the train and died despite receiving emergency treatment at the scene.

Earlier the train, which was carrying treated nuclear waste from the French plant at La Hague to Gorleben in northern Germany, was delayed for two hours near Nancy as police removed two protestors who had also chained themselves to the track.

Italy leads Europe in HSR infrastructure spending

ROME, Italy – Italy's railway infrastructure development program is the largest in Europe. Investment by the RFI (Italian Railway Network, the infrastructure arm of Italian State Railways or FS), is targeted at two aspects — 1) the high-capacity, high-speed railway (HSR) network, and 2) the freight logistics chain.

In June 2002, a new company, Infrastrutture SpA (ISPA), 100% government-owned, was formed for investment management. The HSR lines between Turin, Milan, Bologna, Florence, Rome, and Naples will be funded in full by ISPA for €25 billion. Tunnel construction on the Milan–Genoa and Milan–Verona–Padua lines will be funded separately.

Gradual reduction in HSR investment will coincide with the progressive opening of new lines, starting with the 204.6 km Rome–Naples line in December 2005.

This will be the first high-speed line in Europe to be controlled by the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) comprising the European Train Control System (ETCS) Level 2.

The high-speed lines are built for mixed passenger and freight traffic (25-ton axle load) so the program will also upgrade the entire Italian mainline network. When done, it will provide four tracks in each of the country's main corridors, providing a massive increase in capacity for both passenger and freight.

