

*E*uropean *T*rain *E*nthusiasts



*Newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter
February - 2006*

Chapter Meeting Saturday, February 11, 1:00-5:00 pm

**The Winslow Residence 4016 Kingridge Drive
San Mateo, CA 94403**

**Refreshments: Please bring items listed if your LAST name starts with:
A-G : Desserts H-O – Drinks P-Z – Finger foods**

Plates and cups (paper) would be great as the Winslow's have more to do than our dishes!

A note from Don Winslow:

Directions are as follows:

From Hwy 280 take Hwy 92 East or from 101 take 92 West. Exit on Alameda de las Pulgas and turn South. Go about 2 miles to 42nd Avenue and turn right. Go a very short block and turn right on Kingridge. After the church parking lot we are the fourth house on the left.

We have made arrangements with the church on the corner to allow parking in their lower parking lot. The entrance is on the left after turning onto Kingridge. There is also limited street parking for those who need to be closer.

Activities will include operating both my Marklin Digital layout and Lionel Command Control O Gauge layout. Visitors are welcome to bring trains which will operate on Marklin M track with either digital or analog control. We will set up the chairs in the garage to facilitate our business meeting and videos. Members are welcome to bring videos.

We will have some beverages and appetizers as well as plates, napkins etc. People can bring refreshments according to the alphabetical split as usual.

If you need any other info let us know. We're looking forward to a good meeting.

Don Winslow.

MARCH MEETING: Hope Lutheran Church is at 1801 Manor Blvd (near Wicks Blvd), San Leandro, CA 94579.

Meeting Minutes *Jan. 14, 2006 Home of Dave and Maria Pryor*

Chris Vais opened the meeting at 2:30 with 33 members present. The Pryor's were warmly thanked for their gracious hospitality and delicious buffet luncheon they provided. Dave had videos of the latest Messe and other train events running on TV's. We also admired the latest beginnings of his train layout. Wolfgang Leitenberger demonstrated a rolling stand and offered to take orders; contact him at 831-636-4821 or see it online at www.eisenbahnclinic.com

Eurowest. This venue will take place at the Hiller Aviation Museum. The last weekend of August is tentatively set for the date. When the date is firm, please consider volunteering some time to help out at this Tenth Annual Eurowest Convention. Some of you have already stepped forward to volunteer, more are needed.

Blackhawk. This 33 day venue was an overwhelming success. The museum proudly featured our modules on a full page in the winter edition of Museum News. We also "got some ink" in the Contra Costa Times, the Valley Herald, and the Bay Area Parent magazine. Rolf delivered the starter set to a surprised grandmother and very excited grandchild. Thomas the Tank Engine, thanks to Richard Orr, was a big hit among the younger set. If you want to know the correct consist order of these cars, just listen to the youngsters who gathered around to watch Thomas run and corrected Richard's consist. Oh yes, we will be returning for our sixth annual holiday venue next Nov.



Hiller Aviation Museum, San Carlos Airport Modular Venue Apr. 8-23; 10 – 5 daily. Please contact Peter Barnes 650-637-1210 or pwbarnes@earthlink.net if you want to operate or docent. New and inexperienced operators are encouraged to operate at this venue. Experienced operators will be there to “show you the ropes” and give you run time experience.

Modular SIG. The next venue will be Jan. 20-21 at the Cow Palace GWAATS. In March, Talbot’s Toyland in San Mateo will host us along with the Marklin rep. and his display. The Museum on Main Street in Pleasanton will host us in May. And we’ll be making our annual return to the Museum of San Ramon Valley in Danville in late June and early July. August is Eurowest and then we’ll finish out the year and begin the 2007 venue at Blackhawk. New modules are in the works. If you’d like to join us, please contact Tom Melka or anyone of the module owners.

El Camino Medical Center. We will have more to report at the next meeting.

Latest ETE DVD is for sale, contact Steve Stern at steve@ete.org or 510-793-9747

Bumper stickers are for sale, contact Steve Imialek at imialek@pacbell.net or 925-516-1673.

From the Editor: My apologies to those that had received the first newsletter of the year WAY too late, I hope you can forgive me. Please note that we are very eager to stop the printed version, as a matter of fact, If you received the printed version and you have email, please let me know as soon as possible so I can add you to the list. Our main reason for doing this is cost, it costs us much more that the \$5,00 membership fee to print, fold, stuff into envelope and put a (increased fee) \$0.39 stamp on it, so if you have Email and did not get one in your inbox send me a note at: rrndejong2006@sbcglobal.net

EuroSnips - February 2006

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Serbia-Montenegro Train Crash Kills 39

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BIOCE, Serbia-Montenegro -- Jan 23 - A packed passenger train derailed and plunged into a steep river canyon outside the Montenegrin capital, killing at least 39 people and injuring more than 135. Victims cried for help from the ravine, where four train cars lay smashed. Darkness in the densely forested area was hampering rescue efforts.

At least 200 passengers were believed to be on the train when it crashed, including schoolchildren returning home from a skiing holiday in the north of the country. The train was en route from the northeastern town of Bijelo Polje to the Montenegrin coastal city of Bar when it derailed near Podgorica.

The train derailed as it emerged from a tunnel above the Moraca River. Initial reports indicated the train's brakes might have failed, tossing the entire train down a 300-foot ravine. Deputy Prime Minister Miroslav Ivanisevic described the crash “as the worst rail accident in the history of Montenegro”.

The republic's transport minister resigned because of the accident. Montenegrin President Filip Vujanovic visited the scene and called it a “catastrophe”. A three-day mourning period was announced for the victims.

Record Year for Eurostar As Business Travelers Switch From Airlines

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LONDON -- Jan. 17 - The results are in: Eurostar, the high-speed passenger train service that links the UK with France and Belgium, saw record sales and traveler numbers in 2005 as an innovative new product strategy attracted thousands more business customers. Sales are up 7% over 2004 to £464 million (US\$828 million).

The increase in "Business Premier" traffic, with 14% more business tickets sold than in 2004, shows that Eurostar appears to have become the carrier of choice for business travelers, resulting in some airlines removing their business-class products on short-haul European routes. In total, 7.45 million travelers chose Eurostar in 2005, up 2.4% on 2004. Eurostar has now carried more than 68 million people since it started services in 1994.

During the year, Eurostar recorded its highest ever market share, taking 71% of the London-Paris and 64% of the



London-Brussels air/rail routes. Punctuality in 2005, at 86.3%, was much better than the punctuality rates of airline competitors operating on the London / Paris / Brussels routes. Recent data from the Civil Aviation Authority shows that punctuality at Heathrow Airport has remained below 70%.

To meet growing demand, a 10th daily weekday service is being introduced between London and Brussels, beginning on February 13th, further easing onward connections to Amsterdam and Köln. In addition, to help travelers wishing to book further ahead, Eurostar tickets can now be bought up to 4 months before travel.

Eurostar continues to make detailed plans for its move in London to St. Pancras International in 2007 - when its entire service will switch from Waterloo.

Record Year for Thalys As Well

BRUSSELS -- Jan. 12 - Thalys International, the high-speed passenger train service that links Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam and Köln, saw 2005 revenues of some €335 million (US\$411 million) before tax - an increase of some 5.5% in comparison with 2004. In 2005 some 6.18 million passengers used the Thalys trains. This is the first time for Thalys to reach above 6 million passengers.

The German part of the Thalys between Brussels and Germany increased 3.5% to some 915,000 travelers in 2005. In October 2005 Thalys and Eurostar signed an agreement to use mutual experts and experiences in order to build up the long-term profits for the passengers.

Chunnel made Britain £10 billion Poorer

LONDON -- Jan. 18 - Meanwhile Britain would be £10 billion (US\$17.8 billion) better off if the Channel tunnel had never been built, according to a study by a former Strategic Rail Authority economist recently submitted to the Department for Transport.

The study attempts to estimate the total costs and benefits to the British economy from the construction and operation of the tunnel, which opened for business in 1994. The construction costs of the tunnel doubled, from £4.7 billion in the original estimate by the construction consortium to £9.5 billion. No British government money was invested in the building of the tunnel, but British Rail had to invest significant sums to build up its international passenger and freight businesses as well as in the rail infrastructure

leading to the tunnel. In all, the report says, BR spent £1.08 billion on works related to the tunnel.

Problems started when the traffic forecasts that underpinned the tunnel's construction "largely and systematically overestimated the total size and growth of the cross-Channel freight and passenger markets ... Eurotunnel's forecasts were extremely optimistic, forecasting between two and three times the current numbers of passengers". The number of passengers using the tunnel - by car shuttle or train services - peaked in 1998 at 18.4 million. Since then, the market began a process of regression, which continues to the present day. As the construction costs of the tunnel rose in the early 1990s, Eurotunnel continued to increase its revenue forecasts "without any clear evidence or justification".

The report calculates that the total costs of the tunnel to date have been £12.7 billion, while the total benefits have been £6.3 billion. Once the losses incurred by the backers of the tunnel have been subtracted, the net present value of the project is minus £10 billion. "The Channel tunnel clearly has, up to the present day and in cost-benefit terms, not been a viable project," the report says.

Another Tunnel Under The Sea

ISTANBUL -- Jan 10 - The European Investment Bank is extending a loan of €450 million (US\$552 million) to the Republic of Turkey to part-finance the Marmaray rail tunnel project, one of the world's most ambitious urban transport projects linking the Asian and European sides of the Bosphorus.

The loan will also support the infrastructure of the urban rail system including an international railway link and an urban rail commuter project. The 76 km railway line will connect Halkali on the European side of the city with suburban Gebze on the Asia side, sharply reducing travel time between the two and helping relieve the city of the growing traffic congestion.

The rail system will carry 75,000 passengers an hour and link with the municipal light-rapid rail system and metro. Some 63 km of the system will be above ground, while 14 km will be underground including a 1.4 km tunnel under the Bosphorus. The project, scheduled for completion in March 2010, had already received loans totaling €650 million (US\$798 million) from the EIB.



France Plans National Rail Police Patrols

PARIS -- Jan. 11 - France is to introduce patrols on trains by a newly created railway police force in a bid to clamp down on "hooliganism and anti-social behavior".

This is in response to an incident on New Year's Day when around 40 teenagers went on the rampage on a train between Nice and Lyon, robbing and sexually assaulting passengers.

That incident and subsequent attacks on trains have led to demonstrations by passenger groups demanding better security. French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy took the same route to announce the new security measures. He said that a national railroad police force with 1,000 to 1,500 officers would be in place this year.

Many passengers on the Nice-Lyon train were taking advantage of a special €1.20 (\$1.50) offer to travel in the Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur (Paca) region all day on December 31 and up to midday on January 1. SNCF has denied any link between the low-price offer and the incidents, pointing out that more than 15,000 special tickets were sold and that the trouble was confined to just two of the 10 coaches on a single train.

French To Start Piggyback Service In 2007

The French transport ministry has launched a project to enable highway semi-trailers to be transported by rail from Bettembourg, Luxembourg, to Perpignan in southwest France near the Spanish border, a distance of more than 1000km. The €15 million (US\$18 million) project will be funded by the French Transport Infrastructure Finance Agency. French Rail Network (RFF) plans to complete work to increase the loading gauge by the end of 2006 to allow the new service to start in March 2007.

DB Flotation Plans 'Ready By Summer'

BERLIN -- Jan 18 - The German government is expected to decide on the conditions of stock market flotation of German Rail (DB) before the end of the third quarter. It is unclear whether DB will be floated as a single entity, or whether the government will choose to issue shares in its transport activities alone. A flotation could raise between €8 billion and €23 billion, according to German financial analysts.

RENFE Orders More High-Speed Trains

MADRID -- Jan 4 - RENFE, Spain, has awarded a €555 million (US\$804 million) contract to a consortium of Patentes Talgo, Spain, and Bombardier for 30 AVE S-102 330km/h trains for delivery between August 2008 and December 2010. This follows an initial order for 16 350km/h trains, some of which are now in service between Madrid, Zaragoza, Lerida, and Huesca. An AVE S-102 set a new Spanish speed record of 364km/h during test runs in December 2004. Talgo will construct the trailer coaches, and Bombardier will supply the power cars, bogies, and traction equipment.

DB and SBB Bundles Marketing Activities

ZURICH -- Jan 20 - The German Railways (DB AG) and the Swiss Railways (SBB) have decided upon a bundling of the marketing activities as regards to the border-crossing offer of strengthening the international passenger traffic. The new cooperation carries the name "Rheinalp". The aim of this is the strengthening of the border-crossing passenger traffic between the 2 countries.

Germany is the most important foreign market for SBB, and DB AG and SBB do cooperate. However the traditional cooperation was always lack-luster despite the more than 3 million international passengers that travel through the border station of Basel, shared by DB and SBB. Even today, there are 8 daily ICE trains on the Rhine rail route Mannheim-Freiburg-Basel, 3 EuroCity trains from Germany directly to Zürich, Interlaken and Chur. Stuttgart and Zürich are connected 6 times per day with ICE and Cisalpino, and from München there are 4 daily EuroCity trains via Lindau to Zürich. Night traffic includes daily connections from Hamburg, Berlin, Dresden and Köln to Zürich using CityNightLine.

The SBB and DB will staff a new Rheinalp office in Freiburg im Breisgau to work on market development

Rail4chem authorized to operate in Belgium

BRUSSELS -- Jan 6 - The Belgian transport ministry has given German-based rail freight operator Rail4chem the authorization to use the Belgian rail network for specific relations. The licensee is the subsidiary Rail4chem Benelux B.V., based in Rotterdam.



This approval gives the private-sector carrier Rail4chem its own access by rail to the main European ports. The permit is an important step forward as the company can now further expand its transport services from the North Sea ports and industrial locations on the coast to the industrial centers in Central and Eastern Europe.

Portuguese Railways 150 years

The Portuguese Railways CP celebrates 150 years railways in Portugal. To mark this anniversary the CP museums are free throughout 2006.

The first train journey took place on 28 October 1856 between Lisbon and Carregado. At that time there were no real roads. A coach trip from Lisbon to Oporto took at least five days. Even the mail-coach took a minimum of thirty-four hours.

The history of CP is also largely the history of the entire country over the last 150 years, which is why CP has decided to open the doors of its museums for free. CP has museum collections in Arco de Baulhe, Bragança, Chaves,

Estremoz, Lagos, Lousado, Macinhata do Vouga e Santarém.

Märklin 2006 New Items released

Don't be the last one on your block to start drooling. As in years past, German train dealer Lokshop has scanned the latest "2006 Märklin Neuheiten" (new items) and published the entire brochure on the web: Check it out in English at http://catalog.lokshop.de/MAR/2006.NShow/img_en/index.html

As the secret is out, Märklin has additional details on its web site <http://www.marklin.com> or at <http://www.maerklin.de> (in German).

OUTSIDE EUROPE

BEIJING -- Jan 19 - China declared an emergency at one of the capital's main railway stations when snow stranded more than 100,000 passengers before the Lunar New Year holiday. The Chinese Xinhua news agency did not say how long it took for rail travel to resume and clear the station.



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