

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

## **Bay Area Chapter Janvier 2003 Newsletter**

### January Meeting Notice

**When:** Saturday Jan 11, 12:00 to 3:45 PM (note early start!)

**Where:** Willows Senior Center,  
2175 Lincoln Ave, San Jose  
(See map)

**Host:** Richard Orr (408-559-7450)

**Meeting Agenda:**

- Swap Meet and videos
- Show and Tell of your holiday treasures – test tracks provided for AC and DC
- EuroWest 2003 discussion

***Special assignment...***

**Refreshments:** If your name begins with: A through H, bring **Dessert**  
I through P, bring **Drinks**  
Q through Z, bring **Finger food \ salad**



### **All Aboard!**

ETE is back at the Blackhawk Museum in Danville with the modular layout and European Railroads display. The exhibit is open Wednesday to Sunday through January 12, 2003. Don't miss Bill Juergen's presentation "*Austria by Train and Ship*" at 3:00 PM on 1/12/2003!

## January Meeting Agenda

Note the early start time! We'll have a swap meet, with background videos. Bring your favorite commercial or personal train video. For those who'd like to show off a new holiday treasure, we'll have some track for AC and DC. We'll have a brief discussion on EuroWest 2003.

## Recap of the December Meeting

We hope you had a wonderful holiday season. Our December meeting was held at Andreas and Annie Hildebrandt's home in Burlingame. The stormy weather was not enough to deter a large gathering of ETE members. Andreas's layout had two loops of track with trains running continuously, and he found room to put David Baird's HOe modules which ran Austrian narrow gauge trains.

Elections were held and the following officers are now serving for year 2003 :

David Pryor co-chairperson

David Baird co-chairperson (treasurer/membership)

Peter Barnes program coordinator

Many thanks to Jacques Vuye and Janet Grosser for ably handling year 2002! And thanks again to all who helped put EuroWest 2002 together.

Andreas has arranged a location for EuroWest 2003 :  
Basque Cultural Center  
599 Railroad Ave.

South San Francisco, CA 94080

The dates are planned for the last weekend in July (26/27). This facility is large enough to play jai alai, so it will have room for our modular displays. Plus, they offer gourmet food, and we're getting a huge price break at \$35 for dinner. Our chapter epicureans highly recommend the center's gourmet dinners. Stay tuned for more info on EuroWest 2003.

Chapter member Colin Mackenzie delivered chocolate truffles to us at the December meeting. His wife runs a chocolate factory in Santa Cruz. He has offered to supply chocolate favors for the EuroWest banquet. Thank you, Colin! The truffles were good ...

## Year 2003 Dues

Another year has passed. Time to fork over your dues for year 2003. The total cost is \$25, including both the Bay Area Chapter's local \$10 dues, and the ETE National \$15 dues. It is much easier to track the payments if you do not pay ETE National in a separate payment. Please write a check to "ETE - Bay Area Chapter" for \$25, or you can pay cash. If you can't

make it to the January meeting, checks can be mailed to :

David G. Baird  
15351 Charmeran Ave.  
San Jose, CA 95124

## Reverse Corner - notes from the Module SIG *by Tom Melka*

Our Module SIG (special interest group) schedule peaks with our display at the Blackhawk Museum in Danville during the holiday season. We opened the Friday after Thanksgiving, November 29. We are running through January 12, 2003.

Many of you have been there already to see our layout in a world class museum. If you haven't been there this year, plan on bringing friends and family out to see us before January 12. With the addition of Jim Lowe's modules, we have an even bigger layout in a space right off the main automotive display. This is always a fun venue. There is plenty to enjoy at the museum for those who want to see something in addition to the trains.

Many thanks to the module owners/partners operating the layout and the ETE members who have volunteered as docents. This is a big task staffing 7 hours a day, 5 days a week. Also, many have been participating in organizing, loaning and setting up our European trains displays adjacent to the layout. We have museum display cases, videos, and wall displays filled with interesting content on our favorite subject. Thanks to all of our members involved in this special project.

Special thanks go to Rolf Krumbiegel, who has taken on most of the Blackhawk organization this year. The rest of us (slouches) have gone back to gainful employment and don't have as much time to participate as in the past.

We have had outstanding attendance so far this year. The Blackhawk Museum management has appreciated the public appeal model trains provide during the holidays. It is definitely a family venue drawing visitors from around the Bay Area and around the country. We have set attendance records again this year, topping 2001's numbers! Those who have operated and participated as docents have seen the broad audience drawn to this venue. European visitors, train buffs and others with no connection to Europe or trains have seen the appeal of our modules and the surrounding display. Mainly, we see families looking for an activity that will interest everyone during the holiday vacation.

Publicity this year has worked very well. We have had some outstanding articles in East Bay newspapers sparking the public interest. This included the Oakland Tribune and Tri Valley Herald, among others. Examples will be added to our ETE website as we did with last year's information. Additional info will be out in next month's newsletter, as we recap the whole Blackhawk venue that ran almost 2 months.

For upcoming events, our sights are on a small setup at Talbots Hobbies in San Mateo in February and the Cow Palace GATS show in March. We also have a GATS show in May in San Rafael and a 2 week venue around the 4th of July holiday at the Danville Museum, again. With EuroWest at the end of July, we have a pretty full year already!!

### **Eurosnips January 2003** (compiled by Jim Recker)

#### **\*\* DB Changes Fare Structure \*\***

German DB AG is struggling to win a public relations battle over the new fare system, in effect since December 15th, which makes it cheaper to book tickets in advance, and more expensive to buy them the same day. The BahnCard now also gives a 25% reduction in fares, compared to 50% before. Each passenger may also bring four companions who each pay 50% less. The deals may all be combined. DB has also started a companion service where passengers can find other people going to the same place, so they can get the 50% companion deal. This is called Mitfahrzentrale and the concept is widely used in Germany for car travel.

#### **\*\* German Transport Minister Wants Fast Privatisation \*\***

The German minister of transport, Manfred Stolpe, wants the railway, DB AG, to be privatised closer to 2004 than 2008. He feels DB has been doing well economically and wants the momentum to continue. DB would be the only rail privatisation in Europe where ownership of the track would stay with the privatised train operating company.

#### **\*\* ICE3 Slowly to Brussels \*\***

Three pairs of ICE3s have been running daily between Brussels - Köln - Frankfurt am Main starting December 15th. But as they have not yet been authorised to run on the new high-speed line between Leuven and Ans, they take about 14 minutes longer than planned, and just fail to make convenient connections at Brussels with the Paris - Brussels Thalys TGVs.

#### **\*\* Swedish SJ Runs Out of Money \*\***

Swedish SJ has gone through its capital funds and found its net value is negative. Neglected maintenance, useless old trains and unprofitable

franchises are liabilities worth SEK1bn, about 110 million Euros. Since the company is bankrupt, it needs more money, which the Government will be granted. SJ was turned into a passenger train operating, limited company in January 2001. It is wholly owned by the government.

\*\*\*\*\* SPECIAL FROM LAST MONTH \*\*\*\*\*

#### **\*\* Train Watching Threatened in USA \*\***

*From TrainOrder.com - Todd Clark*

*Rail enthusiasts around the USA are finding that they are less welcome watching trains at their favorite spots as law enforcement and the railroads investigate what was once thought to be a harmless hobby.*

*A few weeks ago Richard Whitenight learned that he was a suspected terrorist as police questioned him about watching trains at Tower 55 in Arlington, Texas. The interrogation did not stop there, but also included a search of his car and confiscation of his railfan log book. He was later interviewed by the FBI and given a trespass warning by the local police. The strange part of this whole affair was not only was Mr. Whitenight cooperative, but he also is employed by a police department.*

*Of course this might be considered an extreme situation, but it also happened in Carson, California where two trainspotter, waiting for trains along the tracks, were visited by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Not only were they interrogated, but they were taken out of the car spread against the sheriff cruiser and had their car searched. In this case the deputy could not comprehend that watching trains was a hobby.*

*The bottom line here is that railfans may have to be careful when watching trains, just like in Eastern Europe before the fall of the Berlin Wall!*

*As crazy as it sounds, it may be help to learn how to educate a cop about our strange hobby in under 60 seconds. Keep a few model railroad magazines in the car. It is far easier to explain to a cop who has never heard of the train watching hobby that you create miniatures and are looking for ideas to model your layout, than it is to explain you are obsessed with taking pictures of trains. You may even want to have some photos of your train layout handy.*

*Wear a shirt with a train on it. Better yet, wear a shirt listing a railroad club or web site (ETE?).*

*Finally, while there have been no similar reports of police harassment of train spotters in Europe, keep in mind that everyone along the railroads are much more careful looking for terrorists these days.*

