

European **T**rain **E**nthusiasts

Bay Area Chapter

March 2004 Newsletter

When: Saturday Mar 13, 1:00 to 5:00 PM

Where: Hope Lutheran Church

1801 Manor Blvd.

San Leandro, CA

Hosts : Phil and Mary Woods

Meeting Agenda:

- **Swap Meet**
- **Polo shirt distribution**
- **Video – Salzburg model railway**
- **Show and Tell – HOe or N Scale trains**
- **Mystery trains on display**
- **Loops of track for running standard gauge HO**

Special assignment...

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

bring some trains to display “from a European country rarely modeled and never thought of.”

Polo shirt distribution will continue. The cost is \$25 per shirt. First dibs to those who requested shirts earlier, then the rest are available to anyone. There are 5 sizes (S, M, L, XL, 2XL), and two varieties : most have the chapter name “San Francisco Bay Area Chapter” on the outside of the ETE wheel, but a few were made without the chapter name.

Recap of the February Meeting

Thanks to Richard Orr for arranging room at the Serbian Orthodox church in Saratoga. Several tables were available for swap items. David Baird brought in his HOe modules and ran several Austrian narrow gauge trains. Mark Cihlar was able to run his RhB baby krokodil that was set up for running on HOe instead of the usual HOM track. Don Winslow brought in his large but portable Maerklin layout and had lots of trains running around.

The new ETE polo shirts are in, and many were sold at the meeting.

Dues Are Due

Most chapter members have renewed for 2004, but a few are still delinquent. Please send a check for \$23.00 payable to “ETE Bay Area Chapter” to David Baird, 15351 Charmeran Ave, San Jose, CA 95124. Dues must be received by March 17 for members to stay on the mailing list. If you’re not sure whether you’ve already paid, give David a call at 408-879-9985 to verify. Thanks!

Meeting Agenda

We’ll make this a multi-activity day. Since the next few months will have meetings at clubs or museums, this is the last chance for a while to have a swap meet, so we’ll do that again. We’ll show the video of the Salzburg model railway. We’ll have several loops of track : HO (2 and 3 rail), and HOe/N, so feel free to show off a new locomotive or train. In addition, Joe Freese has indicated that if the weather is good, he will

Jacques Vuye brought up the idea of having a north bay meeting this year, probably in Sonoma, for which he would host. It has been a long time since there has been a Bay Area Chapter meeting north of San Francisco.

New Members

Please welcome new members Edgar Aguirre, John Greene and Michael Tuason.

Upcoming Events/Meetings

April 10 : Hiller Aviation Museum, San Carlos
May 8 : Walnut Creek Model Railroad Club

Reverse Corner - notes from the Module

SIG by *Tom Melka* (melka@pacbell.net)

February was all we expected and more! Talbot's Toyland on February 21 and 22 was a resounding success. New members joined, there was great press, good deals on train stuff and a lot of fun was had by all.

A week later, as I was driving to the Friday set-up at the Cow Palace GATS show, I reflected on how much fun this really is. Two weekends in a row is a tough schedule for our module set-up, running and tear downs. Yet I looked forward to the next venue for many reasons. Enjoying the experience with fellow European train enthusiasts is what it is all about. There is much to share and discuss. Always something new. Always something different. It is also a wonderful distraction from life's challenges. GATS was also a success. We placed second in the contest. Not bad. (We think they spread the success around a little bit!) We recruited new members, passed out our ETE brochures and talked up European trains to many new enthusiasts.

Several of us went to dinner after that Friday set-up. There is always the "business at hand" to discuss; as well as the latest goodies announced recently at the Nürnberg Toy Fair. But we also reflected on the module SIG and what has kept it a success and enjoyable over all these years.

- The module layout standards set-up in the early 90's still uphold reliable operation and an outstanding appearance that is un-matched in our venues. We started off on the right foot with the frame profile and scenery that keeps us from looking like a tabletop. K track on Merkur roadbed with Sommerfeldt catenary is a module formula that can't be beat. Our wiring standards for AC and DC and now AC digital and DCC open operation up to everyone.

- The participation of our Chapter members as docents, make our module layout a great experience for our audiences. This lends credibility and enjoyment to the audience. It also brings the rest of the chapter into our group.

We have a good thing going; we plan on staying with it all the more.

We have also been reflecting on the layout operation. There are many newer module owners and partners who have committed to managing module components. They have earned the benefit of running trains at our shows. We also have docents who bring trains to have run for them from time to time. On the other hand, the layout has gotten more complex with the AC and DC digital operations. Also, as we have all seen, our scenery is that much more detailed and precise. We have a challenge to bring our layout operators up to speed in running a more complex layout and caring for the fine details we present to the public. To that end, we have written procedures for operators and docents to follow. The intent is to support our members in these important, public facing, roles. Some of the procedures are common sense, but all of it is informative and may be new to some. Importantly, for operators, we will have a training and certification process. It includes sponsorship by one of the core module owners/operators. This will provide the guidance, knowledge, resources and confidence to run the layout on your own. For everyone, it will heighten the sensitivity to protect the layout and ensure smooth operations.

What's next?

We will conduct the initial operator training at the next venue, the **Train Collector's Association, Cal-Stewart** meet. This will be at the Santa Clara Convention Center the last weekend of March. That's March 26 – 28. For those wishing to attend, this show is open to the public on Sunday only, **March 28**. Special thanks go to Paul Canton for coordinating this event for us. The training will start at this venue by bringing all the module owners and partners up to speed as qualified operators.

Our 2-week venue at the **Hiller Aviation Museum in San Carlos will be April 4th through the 18th**. This is a 7-day a week display, so we are looking for docent volunteers. You don't need training to be a docent. We will provide you with the new guidelines to follow. As before, any chapter member can volunteer to be a docent. Peter Barnes is handling the Hiller staffing. Contact him directly to volunteer.

We are challenged to have enough operators trained by the Hiller venue. If you are interested in operating, please contact a module owner for sponsorship. Our first priority will be to train everyone involved with the modules themselves. We will then look outside of this core group for operators at the long term venues such as Hiller and Blackhawk.

Let us know your thoughts. We appreciate your ongoing support as we look forward to a schedule full of European Trains!

Eurosnips March 2004 *(compiled by Jim Recker)*

EuroRail NEWS - March, 2004

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CD Cuts 6000 jobs

PRAGUE, Czech Republic - Feb. 3 -- Ceske Drahy, the Czech national railway, announced in January that 6000 jobs out of a total of 77 500 are to be cut by April. The railway has been shedding about 3000 workers per year for the past decade. The job cuts are in response to financial losses and increased automation.

Eurotunnel Competes in France

PARIS, France - Feb.17 -- Eurotunnel has been licensed by the French government to run its own freight trains in France, in competition with state-owned FRET SNCF. The government decision is in compliance with an EU directive that introduced open access competition in March last year. Eurotunnel plans to run trains from Britain to Milan and Basle.

New Trains Too Long

COPENHAGEN, Denmark - Feb 18 -- Danish DSB's shiny new IC4 trains, to be put in service this year, are too long for some platforms. Rail administration Banestyrelsen is looking at how many stations will have to be lengthened. The problem will occur when DSB runs four of the 200 km/h diesel trains together. Even the platforms at Østerport, which are less than three years old, need extending. All of the 83 trains are to be delivered by 2006. The four-car trains are 86m long and 3,15m wide.

Alstom Recovers With 460 Locos

PARIS, France - Feb. 9 -- French SNCF last week ordered 460 diesel locomotives for €836m from Alstom and Siemens. The deal is led by Alstom, whose share of the order is 58,5%. An option for another 100 locos would make the order worth more than €1 billion. Delivery will take place 2006-2015. They will be used for freight service in France and will also be approved to operate in Germany. They will weigh about 84 metric tons, develop a continuous rating of 1600 kW at the wheel rim, and have a maximum speed of 120 km/h. The 90 ton Bo-Bo locos will be equipped for one man push-pull operation, with on-board passenger information, warning and communication systems and train heating. SNCF also ordered 60 electric locos from Alstom for commuter service. Alstom, which almost went bankrupt last fall, has seen its share price rise over 25% within a week, partially due to this order. There has also been a rumor that

China has contracted Alstom to build the giant Shanghai-Beijing high-speed railway.

Cisalpino To Expand Services

BERN, Switzerland - Feb. 27 -- Trenitalia and Swiss Federal Railways (SBB) have decided to increase their financial participation in Cisalpino, their joint subsidiary which operates passenger services on two routes (Florence - Zurich - Basle/Stuttgart and Venice - Geneva) using a fleet of nine multi-system Pendolino trains. As a result, Cisalpino will purchase 14 more Pendolino trains from Alstom at a cost of more than Euros 300 million. The trains will enter service in 2007 to coincide with the opening of the Lötschberg base tunnel, which will permit a substantial reduction in journey times. The Gotthard base tunnel will open in the middle of the next decade.

OTHER RAILWAY NEWS

GREAT BRITAIN: The long list of places where train passengers may connect to Wifi, fast wireless Internet, now includes a GNER train in Britain, and by this summer, Eurostar trains and 15 British stations.

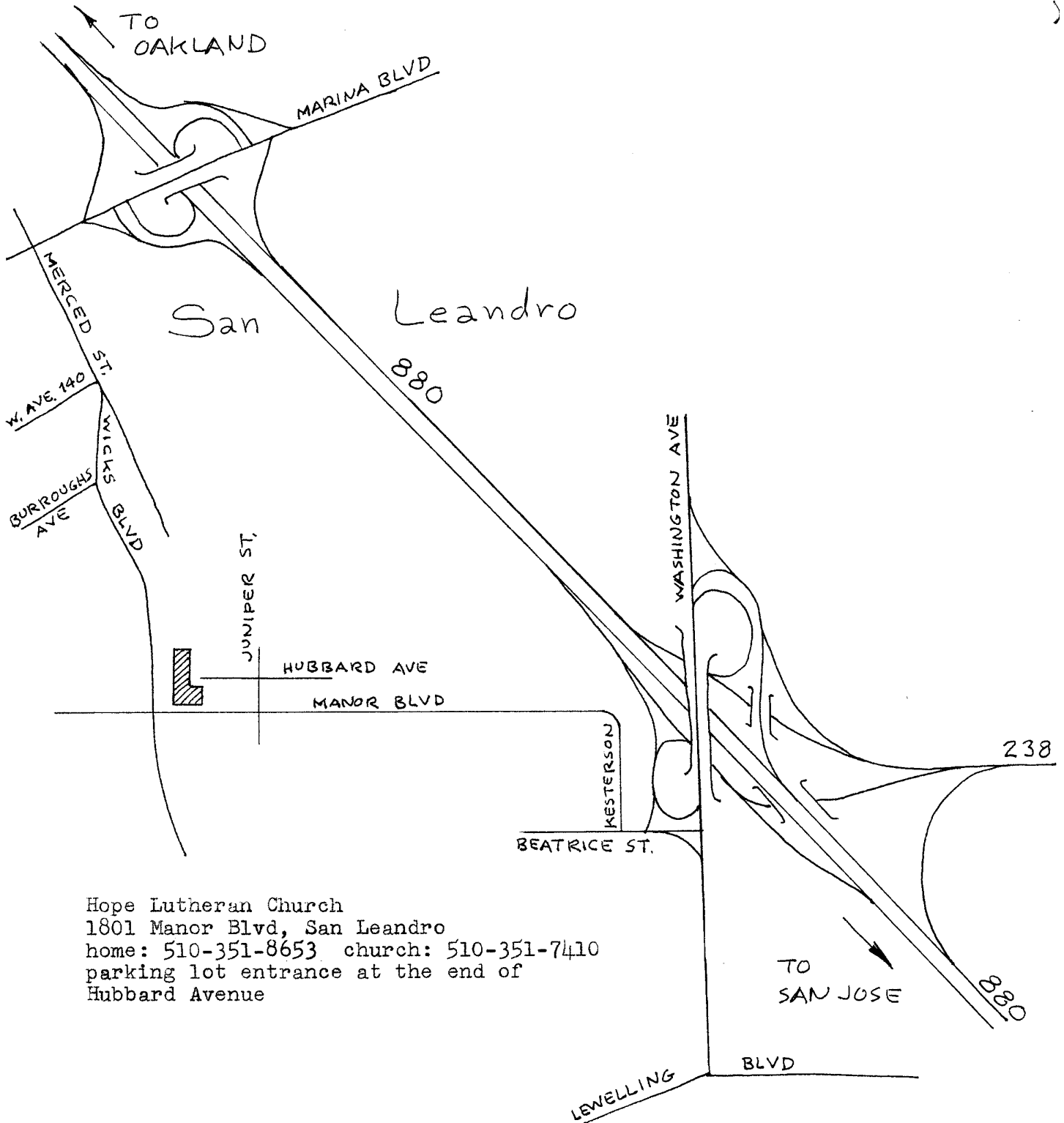
GERMANY: Passengers who are delayed an hour or more because of late German DB long-distance trains will get a 20% refund, starting October 1st.

SWEDEN: Swedish rail administration Banverket and train operator SJ are testing fines as a way of keeping each other on their toes. An X 2000 train between Stockholm and Göteborg which is an hour delayed costs about €12 000, which SJ pays to Banverket if the delay is attributable to them, and vice-versa. The tests started in December. Last year, 28% of these trains were delayed 5 minutes or more to the end station.

THE NETHERLANDS: Dutch NS is testing SMS (cell phone) ticketing on the Netherlands to Köln, Frankfurt and Düsseldorf routes. Customers receive a text message to their mobile phone with a unique number that they present to the inspector. The technology was in use in Austria as early as 1999.

FRANCE: Le Mans is to join French tram club. March 15th is the closing date for tenders to build a 15km light rail network in the French city at an estimated cost of €290m. Alstom, Siemens, Bombardier and Stadler have already prequalified. February 7 saw the conclusion of the public enquiry for an 11km light rail line in Ile-de-France, linking Villejuif, Rungis, Orly Airport and Athis Mons to the south of Paris. Included in the regional plan for 2000-06, the line would have 18 stations serving a corridor where over 300 000 people are employed. Traffic is estimated at around 36 000 passengers a day.

FRANCE: Four months since starting service, the SNCF Rail "autoroute" across the Alps to Italy is not meeting revenue expectations. With a capacity of 18 trucks or 28 trailers, the four daily trains between Aiton and Orbassano are running practically empty. SNCF and FS officials had initially estimated annual traffic of 30,000 to 50,000 trucks annually. However, despite a subsidy of €23 million to offer a competitive option, truckers are ignoring this byway.



Hope Lutheran Church
 1801 Manor Blvd, San Leandro
 home: 510-351-8653 church: 510-351-7410
 parking lot entrance at the end of
 Hubbard Avenue