

Newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter November 2010

NO CHAPTER MEETING BUT PLEASE COME AND SUPPORT THE SACRAMENTO CHAPTER AT INTERNATIONAL RAILFAIR IN ROSEVILLE

Future Chapter Meetings

DECEMBER 11 – BLACKHAWK (CHRISTMAS PARTY)
JANUARY 8 – MEETING AT PETER BARNES' CHURCH
IN SAN CARLOS, CA

Upcoming Module SIG Events

BLACKHAWK

MEETING MINUTES FROM OCT. 9, 2010

Call to Order:

A regular meeting was called to order by John Ruehle at the home of Stretch and Michelle Andersen. John thanked them for their gracious hospitality. It has been decided that our Module SIG will be participating in the National Train Show which is to be held in July.

Next Meeting:

Our next meeting will be on Dec. 11 at Blackhawk. At this time, we will be having our Christmas party.

Dues are due at the December meeting

VACANCIES FOR 2011

- 1) New chairman needed
- 2) New Secretary and Editor for this newsletter



Some of the fun at the October Chapter Meeting



Editorial Comment - Jim Recker

Did you come to the last ETE chapter meeting? If you did *not*, you missed out on one of the best meetings of the year. Noticed that I said “one of the best”? There have been indeed other great meetings this year!

What made this particular meeting so great? There was something for everyone:

- TWO model railroads (the SIG modules and Stretch’s automated layout),
- A TV playing great European train videos,
- A room to relax with friends,
- A patio to meet some new one.

Did I also mention that there was great food and drink?

There were also a tremendous number of discussions going on, about a number of topics. I realized this as I went from one discussion about new SIG corners, to another with some Germans and told them about a railroad in Germany that runs on the left under 3000VDC catenary. (You will have to find me next meeting to find out where that is!).

And I came late! I know I missed a presentation, and the general chapter meeting, but I still had a great time.

As I left, I thought to myself that a good meeting is really about what the chapter members bring to it. So it occurred to me that if members were missing the meeting, that we all miss out.

I know there have been some complaints about the quality of chapter meetings over the last couple of years: I think it is because some of you have not been sharing with the rest of us. So I hope to see you at the next meeting in December. Come share with all of us, let us know what you’ve been thinking, and let’s make plans for more great meetings in 2011.

Reverse Corner – By Steve Imialek

Many members enjoyed the October chapter meeting day at the home of Stretch and Michelle Andersen. Stretch’s layout, a wonderful work in progress, was operating. Peter Barnes set up his new

module, a multi-track switch yard with detailed industries, alongside other modules to form a long FREMO layout. This layout began on one side of their three car garage then wound along the front of the garage, through the back door and out onto the backyard. Stretch provided the end loops for continuous operation. He also used his camera car so we could get a cab eye view of what our modules looked like in “real life”. Ian Lorentzen was cutting slots for the module WAGO pass through and he demonstrated his latest catenary gauges. Wolfgang Leitenberger was finishing the wiring to the switch tracks on Dieter Vorbach’s (Jim Lowe) station modules that he and Stretch did to replace the double slip switch. Dieter also set up his latest module that will allow Peter and Petra Dittrich’s HOe winter scene to be attached to it for display at the upcoming Blackhawk venue. It was a train filled day topped off by celebrating Steve Stern’s birthday and we wish him many more.

This day began with a SIG meeting and the meeting began with an update on Andreas Hildebrandt’s recovery from a serious medical condition. Thankfully he has been recuperating at home and should be fully recovered soon. Flowers were sent and a card was passed around during the day for all members to sign. Then the SIG was updated on the portable control panel design and construction, the upgrade to the signaling system, the Blackhawk venue, and a new design for the corners. It was informally accepted by unanimous acclaim to go ahead with building four new corners that will be a little longer but will have parallel tracks and an easement for wider curves. It was also decided that the SIG have its own Yahoo Group to facilitate communication and store the recent working documents we’ve generated to preserve and pass down the wisdom. Ian presented a 1:1 scale drawing for the new corners and he will be the project manager. Steve Stern will develop the Yahoo site.

Rolf Krumbiegel, as venue coordinator, presented the necessary items to be done for the Blackhawk venue. This holiday season marks our **Tenth Annual** appearance at this world class museum. Rolf has been working hard to make the displays unique and if you can help or have something of European railroading interest to display please call him at (925) 939-7576 or rolkru@earthlink.net. There will be 26 modules and

six corners which is over 300 feet of mainline track. The venue begins on Friday, Nov. 26 which is the day after Thanksgiving and is open to the public every day the museum is open from 10-5 until Sun. Jan. 9, 2011. The downstairs gallery has been completely remodeled and expanded. We are anxious to finish this year and begin the new year operating trains for the many visitors during the holiday season in this spacious gallery.

The SIG would like to welcome our newest member, Bob Greenfield, who is the latest owner of the “Jacques Vuye” pair of Belgian modules. Bob has partnered with Stretch and Dave Pryor in the past helping at set ups, tear downs, and operating trains. Welcome aboard, Bob!

SIG members will be notified of the next meeting in December. There is a full agenda as we’ll be discussing updates of ongoing projects, the NMRA/NTS in July, EuroWest, recommendations and revisions to the Module Standards, and new venues.

Happy Rails to you...Until we meet again.

EUROSNIPS – By Jim Recker

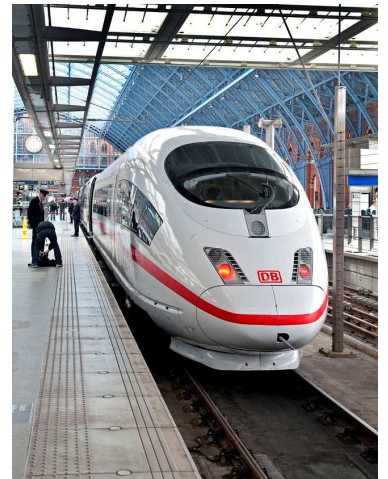


ICE Arrives at St. Pancras

LONDON, October 19th – An ICE3 train set finally arrived at London St Pancras for the first time. This is the first step for Deutsche Bahn which announced that it expects to run regular services between London, Frankfurt and Amsterdam in late 2013. The arrival followed extensive testing and evacuation trials in the Channel Tunnel, where ICE trains sets were coupled and uncoupled several times.

The evacuation tests were designed to develop a system for the safe evacuation of passengers from a train of 400 meters which, between sets, to not have a through corridor unlike the current Eurostar sets. When DB has, in conjunction with Eurotunnel, developed the final procedures, Eurotunnel will submit it to the Channel Tunnel Intergovernmental Commission for agreement. This procedure is then expected to be a part of DB’s submission for a safety certificate for the tunnel, when they are ready to apply to run services from St Pancras to Germany and the Netherlands.

The new services will be worked by class 407 Velaro train sets (ICE3). Initially there will be 3 trains each way per day. Deutsche Bahn says that they will probably be in a position to launch a London to Amsterdam service a year ahead of rival train operator Eurostar.



Siemens to Supply new Eurostar

MUNICH, October 7th – To most everyone’s surprise, Eurostar International announced that it intends to order ten high-speed Velaro trains from Siemens for its London-Paris route. Eurostar plans to invest some €800 million in the purchase of new trains and the overhaul and refurbishment of its existing train fleet. The deal is nonetheless subject to completion of talks on final terms, said Eurostar, an international railway operator dominated by the French group SNCF.



The announcement comes as German rail operator Deutsche Bahn prepares to offer services to London for the Summer Olympics in 2012, meaning that for the first time two European railway operators will

compete on a cross border route that does not connect their respective countries. The order will expand Eurostar's current fleet of 27 trains, "whose design and technology will also be overhauled starting in 2011," the statement said. Around nine million passengers take the train each year on the Eurostar routes between Brussels, London and Paris.

New Eurostar model on display in Hyde Park, London

The Velaro D train set is one of Siemens' flagship products, and can carry up to 900 passengers or 20 percent more than Eurostar trains now running, at 320 km/h, around 200 MPH. It would connect London and Paris in just over two hours, London and Amsterdam in less than four hours, and London and Geneva in about five hours. Siemens has already sold the trains to railways in China, Russia and Spain, but lost out to Alstom's AGV train in an Italian tender. Alstom was the manufacturer of the original Eurostar train sets, and was expected to win the latest bid.

France and Britain have fixed conditions for trains that wish to use the Channel tunnel, in particular their length, that are only met by Eurostar trains that now connect London with Brussels and Paris. Since the tunnel open, that rule effectively blocked rivals to Eurostar, owned by France's state-owned rival SNCF, its Belgian counterpart SNCB and the British group London and Continental Railways. However a working group has been established to review the situation and Eurotunnel has called for rival railways to come forward, suggesting the possibility that it may offer new services between London and Amsterdam or Frankfurt.

Last Few Feet of the World's Longest Tunnel

ZURICH, October 15th – A new 35.4-mile Swiss tunnel, designed to shift transport of goods from environmentally damaging trucks to trains, now trumps Japan's Seikan Tunnel – previously the world's longest. Swiss engineers finally completed the tunnel, drilling through the last few feet of rock needed to complete the 35.4-mile tunnel underneath the Swiss Alps and the Gotthard Pass.

The Gotthard Base Tunnel, as it is called, was undertaken in order to create a passage for a high-speed transportation system through the Swiss Alps.

The project has been under way for almost 20 years and about 2,500 workers have been a part of it. The railroad being built in the tunnel is expected to be open to trains by 2017.



The project cost \$10 billion – or \$1,300 per Swiss voter – a cost they agreed to foot in a referendum more than 20 years ago. The completion of the tunnel was greeted with elation across the country. Millions of tons of goods are now transported through that section of the Alps on heavy trucks, which are slower and damage the fragile mountain environment. The rail will be faster and have less of an impact on the environment. Two other high-speed rail systems through the Alps are planned, but are far from completion.

No passenger rail services have been announced yet. However it is expected that the SBB intends to run at least two passenger trains per hour per direction through the tunnel, such as a half hourly service to Ticino and an hourly service to Milano, connecting to Basel or Zürich. Train fans are also wondering how much rail traffic will continue over the existing link over the Gotthard Pass.

Ukraine: 43 killed in Bus / Train Crash

KIEV, October 12th – A train locomotive rammed through a stalled passenger bus on a railroad crossing in eastern Ukraine on Tuesday, killing 43 people and injuring eight others as it pushed the bus 300 meters (yards) down the tracks. Investigators said the bus driver ignored the horn of the oncoming train and a flashing red light at the crossing. The bus stalled on the tracks as the driver tried to shift gears.

The yellow bus was smashed into a pile of metal by the blue locomotive, which was not pulling any cars. Television footage showed emergency workers piling bodies alongside the tracks outside the town of Marhanets in the Dnipropetrovsk region.

Ukraine's Railways said the train driver saw the bus heading toward the tracks from 500 meters (yards) away and sounded its horn, which the driver ignored. The train driver applied the emergency brake system, but the locomotive was traveling at a speed of 75 kilometers (47 miles) per hour and was unable to stop in time.

One of the survivors, who was headed to work in a nearby mine, said that the passengers tried to stop the driver from crossing the tracks when they saw the red light and heard the horn. They started screaming "Where are you going?" Local railway officials said the bus was packed with commuters, most of them heading for work.

Road and railway accidents are common in Ukraine, where the roads are in poor condition, vehicles are poorly maintained and drivers and passengers routinely disregard safety and traffic rules. But officials said this was the deadliest auto accident in the country's history. Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich declared a national day of mourning

More Swiss Rail Bits (lots of news this month)

Last Rigi Train from the Old Station

The last train departed from the elevated station at Arth-Goldau on 8th October. For many years there has been a search for a suitable site for the new station for the Rigi-Bahn. Now



construction of the new station of the Rigi Railways in Goldau is underway. The new station will simplify operational procedures, create a more modern look, and the station will be equipped for disabled people. Gone will be the old station over the SBB mainline.

The new station will cost CHF10.3 million and should be ready to be put in operation in December 2011. In the meantime, the Rigi-Bahnen will depart from a temporary stop in the Eichmatt parking lot.

Attempts will be made to keep some of the old structures, but the bridge will be torn down. Nevertheless, under the heading "Arth-Goldau 2020", a local working group concluded that the area around the station will now be more attractive and should bring more locals around the Arth-Goldau station.

New ALLEGRA Train Sets

A year ago in this newsletter, it was announced that the brand new Abe 8/12 "ALLEGRA" train set from



Stadler Rail would be taking a major role on the Rhaetian Bahn.

This month, 15 dual-system (11000VAC / 1000V DC for Bernina) trains with a pair of ABe 4/4 III are now covering all



Bernina services. Three additional ABe 4/4 III are in reserve. Gem series 801-02 and ABe II 47-49 will be now only used for maintenance and infrastructure traffic, but can, of course, jump in if necessary.

However the other ABe IIs are heading to the scrap heap: The staff decorated the fronts of some ABe II,

at least #44 and 45, for their last day of work, after 46 years.

Street Running Aarau-Suhr Ends

The “special” running between Aarau and Suhr will now end on November 21 as the line has been moved 400 meters to the east. The single track has run for more than 100 years on a two-lane road, in one of the lanes, which was pretty hairy for road traffic.



Also gone will be the SBB's standard-gauge Zofingen-Lenzburg line crossing at grade on a diamond crossing at Suhr. This was the last remaining meter/standard gauge crossing, also unique because of a special roadside device to switch the catenary from WSB's 750 DC volts to the SBB's 15000 AC volts and back. An operator controls this crossing from the relay-based interlocking machine - which is also slated for replacement. At the same time, a brand-new, multi-level, glass-walled Aarau SBB station will open, with a façade that now includes Switzerland's largest station clock. It's about 9 meters in diameter.

ANNOUNCEMENT/REMINDER:

For those of you who have ordered polo shirts, they are waiting for you at our house. Lalo will be bringing them to Blackhawk for our December meeting. Please let her know if you will be there.

She is ordering more polo shirts and jackets for anyone who is interested. Please let her know ASAP.

Fall Collage on European Rails

Right: Swiss sugar beet season! Meter gauge Ge4/4 pulls a freight out of Yverdon.
Below: SBB-CFF Ae6/6 pulls a short freight with logs to Neuchâtel



Left: The new Moscow – Nice sleeper train pulls into the Ventimiglia border station where the Italian locomotive will be replaced a French one.
Below: A BR218 pulls a shuttle from the German mainland to the island of Sylt, near Denmark. There are only tracks on the causeway.
Bottom: Belgian freight heads across the Meuse towards Germany.

