

European Train Enthusiasts



Newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter
October 2004

The October Meeting

When: Saturday, October 9, 2004, 1:00 to 5:00 pm

Where: **Stretch and Michelle Andersen's home**

337 Paraiso Dr., Danville, CA

(See directions and map in this issue. Watch for their unique mailbox – see photo)

Host: Stretch and Michelle Andersen, (925) 934-7290

Agenda: Business meeting @ 1:30; slide presentation on the “AndersenBahn”, FREMO operation of HO modules in the garage and garden.

Refreshments: If your last name begins with the letters as follows, please bring:

A–G: Desserts **H–O: Drinks** **P–Z: Finger foods and/or salads**

PLEASE BRING YOUR EXTRA PICNIC PLATES, NAPKINS, UTENSILS, CUPS, & ICE!

October Meeting Agenda

The October meeting is at the Andersens' home in Danville from 1-5 pm. The modules will be set up "FREMO style" (point to point) in their garage and garden. This operating session will also be a "shakedown and refresh" for the annual Blackhawk show.

Agenda (times approximate):

1:00-1:30 Refreshments and socializing.

1:30-2:00 Chapter business meeting.

2:00-3:30 Stretch will do a slide presentation about the building of his “AndersenBahn” layout. He will cover some of the basic construction techniques used so far, including: 1) benchwork, 2) cyclorama backdrop, 3) roadbed, 4) wiring, 5) stop blocks, 6) slow down modules and 7) occupancy detection.

After the presentation, members can accompany Stretch upstairs to inspect and see for themselves the techniques described put into practice. The layout has no scenery yet, but the complete loop and two hidden yards are now running and automated. This means

LOTS of trains running at the same time, all computer controlled.

3:30-5:00 Enjoy watching model trains run and socializing.

Upcoming Meetings & Events

ETE SF Chapter monthly meeting, Saturday, October 9, 2004: Join Michelle and Stretch Andersen at their home, 337 Paraiso Dr., Danville, CA, for the annual module SIG FREMO layout in their garage and back yard.

28th Annual International Railfair, November 13-14, 2004, Roseville, CA, Placer County Fairgrounds. See page 3.

Recap of the Sept. Meeting

The September 11th meeting was held at Bob and Colleen Greenfield's home in Alamo. They graciously provided all of the refreshments. A hearty 'thank you' to the Greenfields for hosting us in grand style! Lost & Found: a long-sleeved blue denim shirt was found after the meeting at the West Bay Model Railroad in June. Please contact David Baird to reclaim it.



October 2004

ETE Leaders — we want you!

Chapter Leadership

It is now time to start thinking about serving as a leader of the Bay Area Chapter for 2005. The next meeting after the October 9th meeting at the Andersens is in December, since we traditionally attend International Railfair in November. Please consider volunteering your services to the Chapter.

Virtually all roles or positions are available. David Baird and David Pryor have served two years and will hand off their responsibilities to others. Rolf Krumbiegel has offered to help with venue selections for chapter meetings for year 2005, as he did for 2004, but he has his hands full with Blackhawk and Danville Museum coordination.

This means that the chapter needs several roles filled, including

Treasurer, Membership Officer, Newsletter Writer, Newsletter Mailer, Events Coordinator, etc. Since Mr. Pryor's office has handled the newsletter printing and mailing for two years and he will be relinquishing his leadership role, we'll require new people handle the newsletter duties.

Volunteer organizations need to have membership participation to thrive. Let's keep the energy level up by getting some "new blood" running the show. This is your chance to lead the chapter in the ways you'd like to see.

National Leadership

Not only are there roles for the chapter, the National organization needs new directors. Here is a quote from Steve Stern, currently a director: "We are the largest chapter in ETE and deserve to be well represented on the National Board, this is a great opportunity to contribute to the direction and future of ETE. Please consider volunteering to serve on the National Board." And here's an excerpt of a message to be published in the *Express*:

Once again it is time for members to consider serving on the National Board of Directors for a two-year

term. Four directors will be elected to replace those Board members whose positions expire at the end of 2004.

The National Board is intended to be a steering committee for the overall ETE organization. The principle duties of Board members are to see to the publishing of the *ETE Express*, to foster the creation of new ETE chapters and to facilitate communication and cooperation among existing chapters. Board members serve two-year terms and are required to attend approximately four Board meetings per year (via teleconference).

In addition, different Board members have different duties that facilitate the administration of the overall ETE organization, such as secretary, treasurer, membership, etc.

Self nominees (otherwise known as volunteers) interested in running for the 2005-2006 Board are requested to submit a written statement to the ETE P.O. Box no later than October 31, 2004. Each candidate must declare his or her local chapter affiliation or specify that he/she is a "member at large".

The Reverse Corner

Notes from the Modular SIG

It's Oktoberfest season and we are coming up on our big venue at Blackhawk. As we mentioned at the last Chapter meeting, this year we have Märklin USA sponsoring us. They will provide starter sets as door prizes. They are also providing track & electronics products for the module owners. Prime Time Trains also has volunteered to provide products as door prizes. And we'll have sponsorship and support from Bay Area hobby shops.

Our model railroad venue continues to bring the highest attendance to the Blackhawk Museum. This promotion activity will be driving this venue to even greater attendance numbers.

Several modules are under construction by SIG members. Some creative plans are coming to fruition.



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We may have our largest layout ever, if projects are completed by the Blackhawk event.

This also reinforces the need to construct the broad radius return loops we have been discussing. We are fast approaching a point where we cannot fit all our modules into a loop in many venues. Return loops for point-to-point layouts are the answer.

Interested in helping out with modules? Drop me an email or contact any of the Modular SIG members.

Happy Railroading!
Tom Melka (melka@pacbell.net)

Directions to the Andersens

From the South:

Take Interstate 680 north. Exit at Sycamore Valley Road W. Turn right onto Sycamore Valley and go east to Greenbrook Drive. Turn right (south) onto Greenbrook. Proceed to Paraiso Drive and turn left (east). 337 is on the right at the base of a hill and at the corner of Robyn Drive. You'll know when you're at the right place when you see Stretch's mailbox masquerading as a DB switch stand and lamp by the curb (see photo).

From the North:

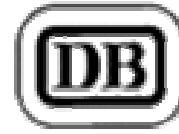
Take interstate 680 south and exit at Sycamore Valley Road W, Danville. Turn left (east) onto Sycamore Valley and then follow the directions above.

International Railfair

The ETE Bay Area Chapter doesn't hold a monthly meeting in November, since it almost always coincides with International Railfair in Roseville.

This year, the 28th, it is being held on Sat. – Sun., November 13-14, 2004, at the Placer County Fairgrounds in Roseville, CA. See their website for details: <http://www.internationalrailfair.com/>.

A map to International Railfair appears below.



K.Bay.St.B. Class S 3/6; DRG Type 18

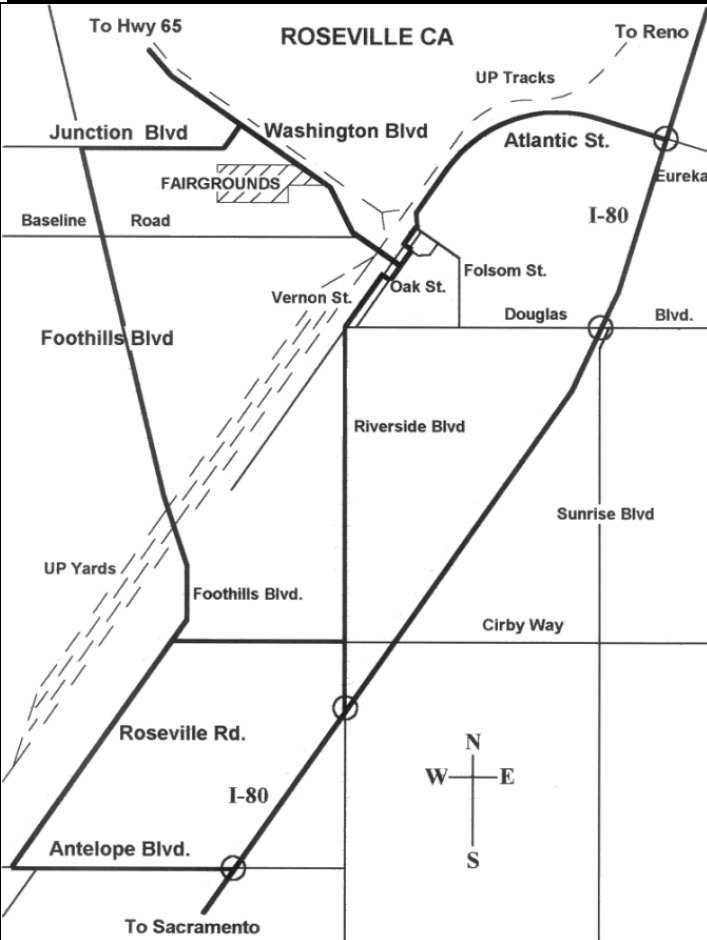
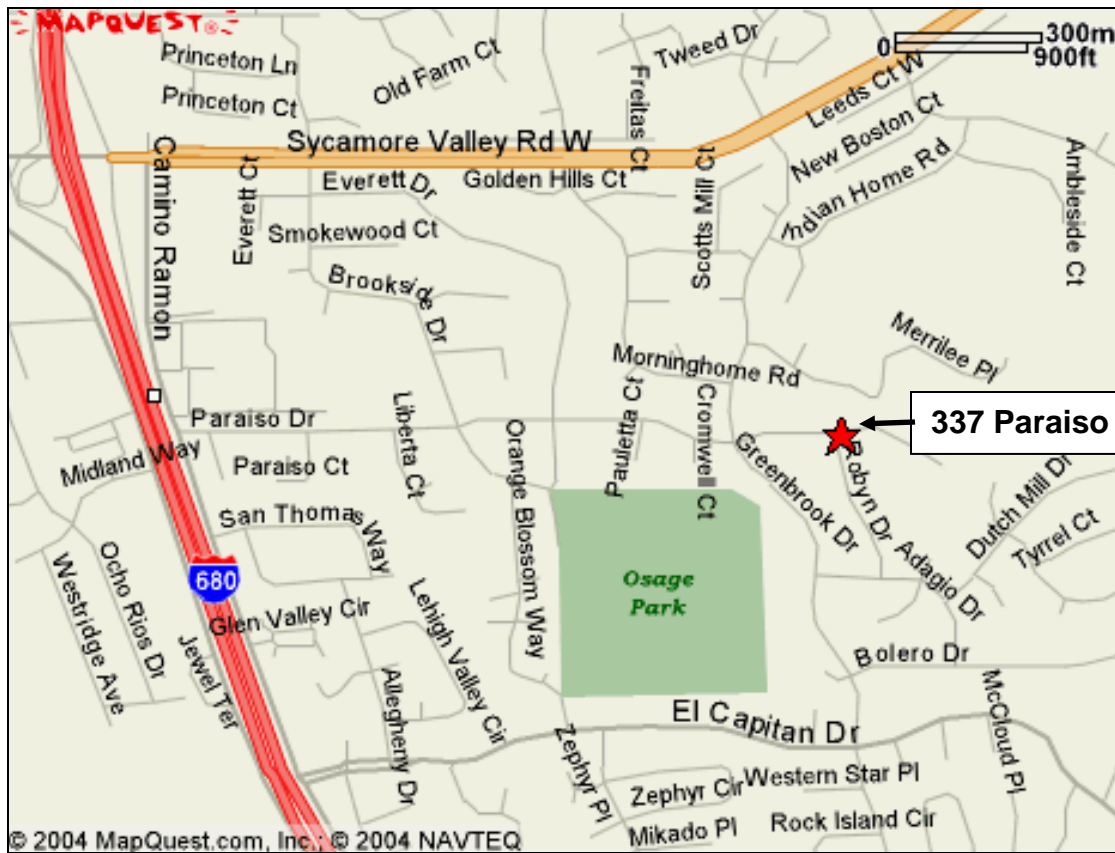


The Andersen mailbox at 337 Paraiso, Danville

SEE MAP ON NEXT PAGE



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International Railfair

28th Annual International Railfair will be held Sat. and Sun. November 13-14, 2004, at the Placer County Fairgrounds, Roseville, CA.

Saturday, Nov. 13 10am-5pm
Sunday, Nov. 14 10am-4pm

Adults \$6. Kids under 12 Free.

See map at left for directions.

(There is no ETE Bay Area Chapter meeting in November.)





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EuroSnips

News clips of railways of Europe and the World

Compiled by Jim Recker

Germany

Deutsche Bahn reports operating losses, faces intercity ridership challenges

KÖLN, Germany, 9/2/04 — The Deutsche Bahn (DB) announced lower operating losses than expected but remained in the red for the first half of 2004. DB reduced its pre-tax losses to €2 million (\$76 million) compared to €143 million for the same 6 months last year. The company said first half sales declined to €1,719 billion, down 16.3% from €3,995 billion in 2003, as it sold off subsidiaries. Even though the company failed to meet expectations, DB head Hartmut Mehdorn said he was satisfied with the results. The company said it expects positive year-end results and to improve profits in 2005. DB is planning to offer stocks to the public in 2006 (see DB IPO...).

On the other hand, DB's long-distance traffic is losing €260 million this year according to internal numbers. Reasons for the loss include energy price rises of 30% and competition from low-fares airlines. The company plans to reduce the number of InterCity and EuroCity trains while running more InterCityExpress (ICE) trains, as well as raising fares another 3.5% after a 3.4% rise last spring.

Deutsche Bahn plans massive savings measures

As part of a savings plan aimed at making it more attractive for a future public offering, DB is working on a plan to reduce its operating costs by €100 million (\$120 million) a year. The national railway said it would eliminate 25% of its 4,000 positions at ticket counters in train stations across the country. Selling tickets for long-distance journeys alone costs the company €500 million a year against sales of €3 billion, and it wants to cut those costs dramatically. In 2000, DB reduced the number of ticket counters and travel centers in stations from 896 to 592. It wants to increase dramatically the percentage of customers who buy their tickets online via the Internet or from

automated machines in stations. According to German newspaper reports, DB's long-distance, high-speed and intercity trains are currently only running at an average 40% of capacity. An internal government report states that this figure would have to rise at least to 50% to make DB attractive to stock investors (see below). It is seeking to raise passenger levels through special offers that include €9 tickets to anywhere in Germany during August and tickets as low as €9 to Holland, Austria or other neighboring countries.

Deutsche Bahn's stock IPO could reap €2 billion

DB hopes to realize €2 billion (\$2.45 billion) from the initial public offering (IPO) of stock planned for 2006, according to the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. A report of DB's advisory committee of transport experts said that the company must drastically reduce its debt by €9 to €12.6 billion to attract private investors. The advisors reckoned that DB's "net indebtedness" had reached €38.6 billion, although they noted that the executive board set the amount half that. They attributed the discrepancy to a more conservative assessment on the part of the advisory committee.

German train stations to be smoke-free in future

Deutsche Bahn announced that it would ban smoking in all larger railway stations. Already, 350 of DB's nearly 5,700 stations are officially smoke-free. People may only light up in specified smoking zones. By the end of the year, smoking will be prohibited in all of the capital's stations, according to DB spokesman Heiner von der Laden.

United Kingdom and trans-channel

Eurostar to reach on time and traffic targets

Launched 10 years ago, Eurostar's traffic and on time record are both rising. With the first refurbished trainsets poised to enter service, CEO Richard Brown revealed that the restructured management team is successfully generating fresh business on the London - Brussels route and is targeting an 80% share of the London - Paris rail/air market when CTRL Section 2 opens in 2007. A direct London - Amsterdam service is also being considered.



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Sir Alastair Morton, of Eurotunnel fame, dies

LONDON, 9/304 — The man who was the powerhouse behind the construction of the Channel Tunnel has died. Sir Alastair Morton was chairman / cochairman of Eurotunnel 1987-1996. During this time, he fought tirelessly and won a succession of battles with Eurotunnel's 223 banks and consortium of ten contractors called Transmanche Link (TML) that built the tunnel. The Channel Tunnel opened in May 1994, a year late, and its cost had doubled to about £10 billion (\$16 billion). But there is little doubt that without Sir Alastair at the helm, the Channel Tunnel project would have foundered.

Sir Alastair returned to the rail industry in April 1999 when he was appointed the first chairman of Britain's new Strategic Rail Authority (SRA). Sir Alastair's legendary powers of persuasion failed to win ministers round to his call for fewer but longer passenger franchises in return for much greater investment in the rail network. The railway then suffered what Sir Alastair described as a "nervous breakdown" following the Hatfield accident, which ultimately led to the demise of Railtrack. Sir Alastair left the SRA at the end of 2001.

85% of British trains arrive on time

On-time performance in Britain continues to improve after the upheaval of accidents and political reforms of last year. In the first seven months of this year, 84.6% of trains in Britain arrived on time, which is better than the 77.3% achieved by British domestic airlines.

Sweden

Two train drivers dead in grade crossing accident

KRISTIANSTAD, Sweden, 9/10/04 — Two drivers were killed when their three-car diesel train collided with a tractor-trailer rig at a railroad crossing in southern Sweden. The front car hooked into the truck, spun it around 180°, then landed on its side. The other two cars derailed. Newspapers said that trains usually run at 140-160 km/h (75-87 mph) at that site.

The truck driver, 61, has been charged with manslaughter, as well as carelessness in traffic and causing

injury. He admits to the circumstances but not to the crime. So far, no faults have been found with the railway's crossing protection, which has warning lights, bells and barriers. The truck driver says he could not see the warning lights because of the bright sun in his eyes.

SJ offers better cellular, wireless Internet in trains

SJ is installing GSM repeaters for better cell phone reception in all of its X2000 tilting trains and the new Alstom double-deckers. The latter will even offer wireless broadband Internet capability.

Japan

Japan celebrates forty years of "Bullet Trains"

The Tokaido Shinkansen of Central Japan Railway (JR Central) celebrates its 40th anniversary of high speed train service between Tokyo and Osaka. The former Japan National Railway (JNR) started the original — and world's first — dedicated high speed "Bullet Train" service between those cities in October 1964.

(The last of the original Series 0 (zero) Bullet trainsets running on JR West were retired last year, but several are preserved in museums.)

In those forty years, there has never been a wreck, nor has there been a serious injury or death to a passenger or train staffer. That nearly "perfect" safety record was broken last year when a man was hit by a train.

JR is understandably proud that its ongoing research and development efforts helping to keep the world's busiest high speed rail line at the forefront of technical development. Series 500 and 700 trains on JR West line west of Hiroshima cruise at 300 km/h (186 mph).

Next year, JR Central will start testing the new N700 tilting pendular railcar set and research will continue testing of the superconductor maglev, expected to someday to offer passenger travel at 400-550 km/h.

Meanwhile, this month's scheduling changes on the Tokaido line should allow for a 5% increase in traffic. Other new services will soon be launched to challenge domestic air travel across Japan.