

Newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter SEPTEMBER 2010

**Chapter Meeting - Saturday, September 11
OKTOBERFEST Time: 1pm – 5:00pm**

@ Private Location

A-G: Drinks H-O Desserts P-Z: Finger Food

Future Chapter Meetings Locations

- October 9 – Oktoberfest II – Danville, CA
- No November Meeting (please support Sacramento Chapter at International Railfair in Roseville)
- December 11 – Christmas Party and Chapter meeting at Blackhawk Automotive Museum in Danville, CA

Upcoming Module SIG Events

Saturday, Sept. 4 thru Sunday, Sept. 19 – Tracy Historical Museum – Tracy, CA
Nov. 26 thru Jan. 9, 2011 – Blackhawk Automotive Museum – Danville, CA

August Meeting Minutes (Aug. 14, 2010)

Call to Order:

Thanked Westbay Club for hosting meeting, and letting us run our trains. Westbay Club members explained plans for new layout.

Thanked all who helped with Eurowest. Singled out Wolfgang, who was at meeting, for his work on 4 Corners of Europe display. Ed Rikkelman was on vacation, so no final numbers on Eurowest receipts and expenditures.

Announced Lalo Ruehle is putting together an order for club shirts. Please contact her at ruehlem@comcast.net if interested.

Announced Lalo needs to have items for newsletter by Aug. 25. Same email address.

Steve Imialek showed new ETE informational brochure. Got permission to get bids for printing chapter mailing address on brochure in space provided for such on brochures. He announced schedule for Module SIG show in Tracy. Set up is 9/4 at 9:00 AM, with breakdown 9/19 at 2:00 PM. He is looking for volunteers to help run trains. Finally, mentioned that he had a list of LGB European models available from a used equipment dealer, Bob Morris. Contact Steve if interested in looking at list.

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ETE Events/Program Coordinator: Rolf Krumbiegel
ETE Module SIG News: Steve Imialek

Reverse Corner – By Steve Imialek

Over 1400 guests paid a visit to join in the EuroWest festivities on July 24-25 in the Hiller Aviation Museum at the San Carlos Airport. There were three operating train layouts: SoCal chapter, SF Bay Area chapter, and the Swiss Narrow Gauge (HOM). This year's theme was "The Four Corners of Europe" complete with a static display of model trains highlighting this theme. Especially noted was the Russian diorama built by new member, Vladimir Rappoport. Thanks to Wolfgang Leitenberger for organizing this fascinating display.



About 70 folks stayed for the banquet and were treated to an interesting history of Trix Express by Jens Ullmann, the after dinner speaker and EuroWest coordinator. As he shed more light upon this company, some in the audience noted that they too owned Trix Express. To end his talk, Jens quizzed the audience about the current values of selected models from Trix on eBay(Germany). Some guests couldn't wait to get home to see if they owned some of these trains after Jens pointed out how valuable some of them had become over the years. A special thanks to Jens for developing his informative power point presentation.

There are just two venues left this year. There will be a ten day venue at the Tracy Historical Museum in downtown Tracy at the renovated Post Office originally built in the 1930's and well worth a visit during our stay from Sept. 4-19. The Tracy Bean Festival also takes place nearby on Sept. 11-12. Set up will be at 9am on Sept. 4 and the tear down will follow at 2pm on Sept. 19. Steve Imialek is hosting this venue as he tries to fill the venue coordinator shoes of Rolf Krumbiegel which will be a hard act to

follow. Contact Steve at (925) 516-1673 or imialek@pacbell.net if you would like to participate.

Our last venue will be at the world class Blackhawk Museum in Danville from Nov. 26- Jan. 9, 2011. Rolf will host this **Tenth Anniversary** of ETE and Blackhawk. Contact Rolf at (925) 939-7576 or rolkru@earthlink.net for assisting the SIG.

There will be a SIG work session/modular operation during the Oct. meeting at Stretch Andersen's house in Danville. These sessions have been held in the past as a repair/maintenance time for modules needing attention before the Blackhawk venue. The next SIG work session will be at Blackhawk before the venue with dates to be determined.

They are currently 16 module owning members in the SIG and four new modules are under construction or in renovation. Three future modules are in the pre-approval "arm chair" stages. New members are currently needed to handle the corners. Please contact the SIG if you are interested.

An LGB collection (1 gauge) with mostly European trains has become available. Contact Steve Imialek if you are interested. He also has Bemo HOe for sale too.

Ian Lorentzen has three modules for sale. Contact Ian at (510) 793-2038 or ilorentzen@comcast.net

Happy rails to you! Until we meet again...

Fun Internet Links

Train Movie Site:

<http://www.trainmovies.org/>

EUROSNIPS – By Jim Recker

Follow-up on Glacier Express Derailment

BRIG, July 31st – A probe into the derailment in July of the Swiss tourist train, the **Glacier Express**, in which one person died and 42 others were injured has found the driver was going "too fast". Federal investigators found he had sped up too early, not allowing the whole train to cross a line marking the end of a 35km/h zone and the start of a 55km/h track.

Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn (MGB) said it was "deeply saddened" by the most serious accident in its history and the fact that it was caused by human error had enhanced their dismay. The driver involved is in a state of shock, said the firm. He has been employed by the firm for eight years and has never before had an accident. Nevertheless the incident will be reviewed by an investigating magistrate in the coming weeks.



Rail accidents are rare in Switzerland and the Glacier Express – dubbed the "slowest express train in the world" – generally runs at the pedestrian pace at an average of 18 mph. The train had been travelling between Lax and Fiesch in canton Valais and came off the track near a viaduct in the Goms Valley. One Japanese tourist died in the crash. Of the 42 people who were injured, 28 were Japanese.

Eight Japanese remain in hospital. According to one of the three tour operators which organized the group's trip, negotiations over compensation for the affected tourists are ongoing. Japanese tour groups also other planned Glacier Express trips.

The accident was big headline news in Japan over the past week, with many journalists travelling to

Switzerland to cover the latest developments. There has been intense criticism in the Japanese media over the fact that the Glacier Express started running again just two days after the accident. It is, however, only allowed to go at 10km/h on the incident-area track.

Jean-Pierre Schmid of the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn said in a news conference that trains had begun running again as it was an essential railway servicing the whole region. Nonetheless, Japanese travel groups remained concerned. Gen Aoto, president of the Japan Club of Zurich, said that the Glacier Express was one of the most beloved routes for Japanese tourists. "Everyone wants to come to Switzerland at least once in their lifetime," he said.

The Japanese have an image of Switzerland as a safe place. Finding the accident's cause is one of the most important things the authorities and train company can do to restore this shaken faith.

The Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn received help from Roger Zbinden, head of Asian key markets at Switzerland Tourism, who has been living in Japan for seven years. He said that cultural differences had to be considered in the communications around the accident. This included advising on what to wear – a tie, which is not always a given in Switzerland in the summer – and on emotional content. He said the different reaction to the train being put back into operation quickly was also cultural. For the Swiss, it signalled that the train is safe, but this was certainly not the case of the Japanese.

Other Swiss Narrow-Gauge News



AIGLE, August 27th – Two trains collided in a remote area near the Alpine village of Plambuit, on the Aigle-Sepey - Les Diablerets (ASD) line. Officials

remain uncertain of the cause. There were about 40 passengers on the later afternoon trains, most of them school children. Fortunately the railcars did not leave the tracks, but the control cabs in both trains were severely damaged. Some of the injured, including the train drivers, were taken by helicopter to hospital because of the difficulties in reach the crash site. The line was re-opened several days later: A canton

magistrate will lead the investigation to determine the cause of the collision.

LANDQUART, July 31st – The board of directors of the Rhaetian Railways (RhB) has elected a new CEO as successor of Erwin Rutishauser who is retiring: He is 56 years old Hans Amacker, former CEO at RBS for the last eight years.

Overnight Train Arrives at Wrong City

ZURICH, August 23rd – It was quite a wakeup call for 135 passengers on an overnight train headed to Milan, Italy. They woke up in Zurich, Switzerland instead.

The traveler's had boarded the "Salvador Dali" train in Barcelona, headed for Italy's fashion capital. The train, run jointly by the Spanish train operator Renfe and the French SNCF, completed the first part of its journey without incident, arriving in Lyon as scheduled. As usual, it was part of a convoy including another train, the Pau Casals, which was destined for Zurich. However, rail workers then confused the destinations, sending the Zurich service towards Milan, and the Milan-bound train towards Zurich.

Complicating matters, due to urgent construction work south of the Simplon Tunnel (see below), the train missed its scheduled slot to Italy. At Geneva, Swiss rail workers realized the error, but redirected the Milan train to Zurich, and passengers had to be transferred to a replacement bus service to reach their original destination.

Passengers destined for Zurich were re-routed back to Lyon, from where they continued to the Swiss city, eventually arriving a reported four hours behind schedule. According to a report in the Spanish newspaper El Pais, all 135 passengers on the Milan-bound service have been refunded the full cost of their tickets.

Simplon Tunnel Restricted Until Xmas

BRIG, July 17th - Due to urgent construction work in a tunnel on the Italian side of the Simplon Line, train service is suspended during certain hours of the day between Brig and Domodossola until December 11th, every day from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., except Saturdays. Commuter replacement buses are made available evenings, running in both directions between Brig or Iselle and Domodossola.

Long-distance international traffic is mostly being detoured using the Gotthard Line. The EuroCity trains to and from Milan are running each day.

Deutsche Bahn completes Arriva takeover

BERLIN, August 27th – Deutsche Bahn announced the completion of its acquisition of Arriva. DB UK Holding Ltd has acquired all the shares of Arriva plc, which is now its wholly-owned subsidiary. The German national railway company said it will conduct its regional passenger transport activities outside Germany under the Arriva brand.

DB said the acquisition moves its passenger transport revenues outside Germany from 'marginal' to 'a top position'; Arriva has bus and rail operations in 12 countries, with 42,000 employees in 2009. DB becomes not only a leading provider of passenger transport in Europe but it also creates substantial growth prospects from which all stakeholders will benefit: customers, employees and the owner of DB.

To comply with European Commission competition requirements, Arriva's German businesses must be divested. DB is to sell them as one package, and expects that the transaction will attract 'a high number of strategic and financial investors, who will play a significant role in the divestment process'.

Budget crunch hits Czech rail projects

PRAGUE, August 9th – Czech Transport Minister Vít Bárta has called for an immediate halt to all railway upgrading projects being undertaken with funding from the Czech State Transport Infrastructure Fund. The move is part of aggressive austerity measures announced by the Czech new government which came to power in July. Bárta is faced with a shortfall and needs to cut from the transport.

The embargo affects 31 rail projects valued at KC90.2 billion. Several controversial schemes have been stopped at the planning stage, such as relocation of the main station in Brno.

Except for safety-related works, no more construction will be undertaken this year, and the ban may extend into 2011 unless the government can negotiate lower prices. Bárta believes that construction costs are too high, and there have been suggestions that some of

the bigger companies have incorporated profit margins of up to 20% in their bids. The minister plans to launch a thorough investigation into the pricing, quality and timekeeping of existing contracts before allowing work to resume.

Berlin S-Bahn Control Update

BERLIN, August 16th – DB Netz is to replace the mechanical train stops (Zugsicherung) on the Berlin S-Bahn network. Over the next 10 years, electronic speed supervision will use electronic balises (electronic beacons or transponders) as part of a new Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system, at a cost of €130 million.



Left: Red signal, the white bar touches a valve which stops the train.
Right: The white bar is tilted away.

Tests have been carried out between Hermannstrasse and Sonnenallee on the southern ring, and the first part of the S-Bahn to be equipped will be Route S1 between Frohnau and Schönholz. A further 19 stages will follow, with successive batches of rolling stock fitted with balise readers, on-board processors and cab displays. Existing electronic interlockings will need to be replaced, but any new interlockings will be designed to work with the speed supervision equipment.

Final Tracks Laid on New Scottish Line

BATHGATE, August 27th – Network Rail (NR) has laid the final section of track on the new 24 km line between Airdrie and Bathgate, the longest passenger line with new stations to be constructed in Britain in over a hundred years.

Services are set to begin on the route in December with four trains an hour operating in each direction on the new link which is a section of the soon-to-be electrified line between West Lothian and West

Lanarkshire. The new link includes three new stations at Calderdrux, Blackridge and Armadale, as well as two relocated stations in Drumgelloch and Bathgate. Funded by Transport for Scotland, the project cost £300 million to complete.

RhB Baggage Car with Pantograph

LANDQUART, August 24th – There has been no formal announcement but RhB trains have been spotted over the summer pulling baggage cars with a pantograph. Internet sources indicate that these cars have become necessary for providing long trains with enough power for air conditioning, kitchen equipment and other accessories. It seems that locomotive transformers and train wiring are not able to support power the required current that the longer trains need.



RhB baggar car near and in Filisur station

On the other hand, there seems to be no need for these new cars on the Glacier Express. While 12 cars long with full air-conditioning, kitchens and more, the GEX stock has a more efficient electrical design.

EuroWest 2010 Images...



Latest Summer Images...



LEFT: Berniabahn veterans 30 and 34 at Bernia Suot (Aug. 2010)
 RIGHT BELOW: New colors on a RhB Ge 4/4, highlighting the 30th anniversary partnership with a Japanese railroad.



BELOW: Not a layout, just a luck shot north of Liège, Belgium (Aug. '10)
 RIGHT: Thalys traffic from Paris was diverted by weekend track work on its way to Brussels (Aug. 2010)



BELOW: CAPTRAIN won back a freight contract through the Netherlands, pulling with a class 66, here near Oost Maarland. (© 2010 – Theo Geuskens)

RIGHT: Yes, you can put up both pantograph on your electric locomotive! In the picture, a SNCB class 13 pushes an IC service up the hill west of Liège Guillemins station, Belgium.

