



Celebrating our 60th Year

THE HERALD eZine

Official Publication of the Sacramento Model Railroad Historical Society

March / April 2008

Dispatching

How Did it Get Started

Meet Joe Minor

A Junior Member Tells His Tale



Photo Galleries

The Start of a *NEW* Feature

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THE SACRAMENTO MODEL RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY is a Non-profit Educational Organization under the tax section 501(a) as described in section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code. The SMRHS is incorporated as a Non-profit California Corporation under section 23701d of the California Revenue and Taxation Code. We are dedicated to advancing the understanding of railroading and its history and impact on the development of our nation, as well as developing an understanding of railroad operations and technical skills through model railroading.

THE HERALD accepts advertising with the proceeds going towards the production of this publication and maintenance of the [Society's Web Site](#). Contact the [Editor](#) for advertising rates and mechanical requirements.

Manuscripts and photographs dealing with model railroading or railroading in general are welcome. Materials submitted for publication are assumed to be gratis and no payment will be made to the author, or his representative. Articles and correspondence relative to THE HERALD should be directed to the [Editor](#).

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Visitors are always welcome.
The Society's regular hours of operation are:

Tuesday nights 7:30pm - 9:00pm
Friday nights 7:30pm - 10:00pm or later

1990 Grand Ave. Sacramento, CA 95838
(916) 927-3618

ON THE COVER

Two Union Pacific units sit idling on a late summer night in Roseville yard as a train passes behind in this scene captured by junior member Joe Minor. Be looking for his feature article of Night Operations coming soon in **THE HERALD**.

Photo by Joe Minor

EDITORIAL

We're off and running! With the first issue of THE HERALD's new *eZine* format now under our belt, the stage has been set and the bar raised for what is quickly becoming the talk of the Society. I want to thank everyone for all the wonderful feedback I've received. The reception at the last business meeting was overwhelming. Thank you all!



Dave
Good
Editor

In the January issue, I included many opportunities for photographs to be displayed.

As many of you know, I am a semi-professional photographer (yes I have been paid to take pictures – just not often enough) and have been shooting railroad related material for over 25 years. As we have brought our newsletter into the 21st Century by reformatting it to an *eZine*, we now can include far more images and graphics than before as we no longer worry about ink consumption or overly expensive printing costs.

I have seen cameras around many of our members' necks. I know we have some talented people amongst us. Joe Minor is one of our junior members and what he can do with his Nikon D40 is phenomenal. Some of his work was shown off in the January/February 2008 issue of THE HERALD and one of his images adorns the cover of this issue. There are more of you out there. I've seen some of Mike Beard's work. Fantastic! Show us more. You don't have to be a fine photographer to get your images seen our *eZine*. This is not meant to be an elitist segment of our newsletter. I want to see anything that you deem important to either yourself or the Society.

My hope is that you will start sharing your picture and show them off in THE HERALD. There are currently four galleries to

help guide you with ideas. The *Photo of the Month Gallery* is meant to feature an exemplary piece of your work. This is where you show off your Best Stuff! The *Railfan Gallery* is to share the sights of a railfanning trip you have taken. A brief description of where you were and what you saw should accompany your image. The *Society Gallery* is where we illustrate things that have been happening in and around our Society. From Open House to attic clean-ups, anything that shows our members at work or play or the Society in general is welcome. Then there is the *Crummy Gallery*. The final page in THE HERALD is reserved for a blast from the past. This can be a picture you took or have in your collection, showing something from railroading's long history. The title of this gallery only indicates it's at the end of a long train called THE HERALD. As cabooses were called crummies – so shall be our ending gallery.

I hope everyone with a camera will find something to share with the Society. Through our images, we'll get a glimpse of what each of us sees in the SMRHS. It will be a window to our souls. (oooh spooky thought)

This is your Society! ~ This is YOUR *eZine*!

- THE HERALD



INFORMATION BOARD

Society Officers

Board of Directors

| | |
|----------------|-------------|
| President | Bob Rohwer |
| Vice President | Scott Inman |
| Treasurer | Dave Good |
| Secretary | Don Butler |

Board Members at Large

(Terms Remaining)

| | |
|---------|-----------------|
| 1 year | Dave Lauderdale |
| 2 years | Dave Megeath |
| 3 years | Joe Melhorn |

Our next two

Board Meetings

Will be held on

March 14, 2008

April 11, 2008

At 8:00 PM

Unless indicated otherwise.



Our next general Business Meeting

Will be held on

March 28, 2008

At 8:00 PM

Please be sure to attend.

Submissions for the May/June 2008

Issue of **THE HERALD**
Are due no later than:

April 18, 2008

Contact [Dave Good](#)
For electronic and content requirements.

KEY PERSONNEL

These folks, along with our Board of Directors, are the key people in the Society who can best answer your question of...

“What can I do to Help?”

STANDARD GAUGE LAYOUT:

| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Construction | Dave Megeath |
| Electrical | Don Butler |
| Scenery | Scott Sticksel |
| Operations | Scott Inman |
| Industry Committee | Tim Grover |
| Member Training | Joe Melhorn |

NARROW GAUGE LAYOUT:

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| Supervisor | Dave Good |
| Construction | Lu Good |
| Electrical | Ken Martin |
| Sick Humor | John Lutz |

OFFICIAL SOCIETY PHOTOGRAPHERS:

| | |
|---------------|-----------|
| Dick Dennison | Dave Good |
| Bob Rohwer | Joe Minor |

OUTREACH PROGRAM: Dave Megeath

THE HERALD EDITOR: Dave Good

SMRHS AUXILIARY: Penny Zine

THE PREZ SEZ

The last two months have been some of our most productive. During January we ran trains. The operations committee tested their new operating plan for three days. It worked very well. Members' trains were integrated on a limited basis into the operation. We will be implementing operations this month. Scott Inman is looking for members to train as Train Masters and Dispatchers. As expected a number of opportunities and ideas were developed to improve the operation system.



**Bob
Rohwer**
President

As has been mentioned before we try as much as possible to represent the areas we are modeling in the 1950's to early 1960's time period. There is a balance between the history of an area and what we need to operate trains. This has required that we have historical locations in the wrong place, sometimes the scene is reversed in order to fit it in, and there may be tracks going through an area that never existed. The good news is that the public does recognize our historical locations. Table Mountain at James is one example. Some of the current ideas that are being looked at are:

- Oakland pier is being reworked to provide more industrial opportunities. It will still have the "Mole" and will be used to load members' trains on the layout for operations and general running.
- We can lengthen the layout from an operations point of view by changing the locations at the end of the east end of the layout. Portola would be changed to Keddie, Bieber to Reno and the current Reno area to

Quincy. There may be some electronic and CTC issues that will be need to be looked at.

- The current Quincy branch mock-up that extends over part of the Sacramento Yard would be eliminated. This would open up the area. Another proposal is to provide a small representation of Marysville and include the Sacramento Northern along the uphill WP grade right below the current location of Quincy.
- One area that is still being discussed is Setzer Lumber. One proposal is to replaces it with Globe mills. Another eliminates industries there altogether and include a diorama of the residential area that existed at the end of R Street and actually "show" Sacramento the town.

If you have opinions, please let the board know. It is our goal to firm up changes in the coming months. We want to be very careful not to make major changes to existing benchwork unless there is a major benefit or redirect efforts from finishing the layout to modify it.

During the February construction period we got a lot of work done. Most of the projects that were proposed were finished. We also have a large number of diverse projects taking place at the same time all over the layout. Thanks go to Dave Megeath and Don Butler for their leadership. We will have a lot to show the Western Pacific Convention.

Training activities have progressed well. We completed many of the member qualifications. Two new member training sessions were completed during the period – one on the requirements and standards of the Society and the other on

(Continued on page 6)

THE PREZ SEZ - (continued)

basic DCC. Be sure that if you have any questions about the sessions to contact a board member. As we all know DCC can be very complex. In the training session "Demystifying DCC" we showed a simple plug and play installation. The important thing is to continue to work with DCC. We have members that have knowledge at all levels. They are willing to help you, so just ask.

We just received 10,000 resistors for resistor axles. The installation process has been greatly simplified so we are suggesting you modify the axles on your cars rather than exchanging them. If you need instructions on how to install the resistors, just ask. Also Metro Electronic across from the old WP station is carrying Nickel Print conductive paint for \$10. Just call them to be sure they have it in stock before going down.

Finally, Dick Denison one of our most senior associates with his membership dating back to our 14th & J Streets location, was celebrated by all present at our last general meeting by becoming our third Honorary Member. The Board of Directors bestowed this rank upon Dick after his December letter informing us of his intention to resign his membership due to not being able to drive well at night among other reasons.

For his extraordinary years of membership, his countless contributions of time and materials capturing our society's history on film, for being one of the members who came through when our current home was in jeopardy and invested his money to save it and for the many other valuable contributions he has made over the years both financially and otherwise - Dick, you have the thanks of a grateful society.

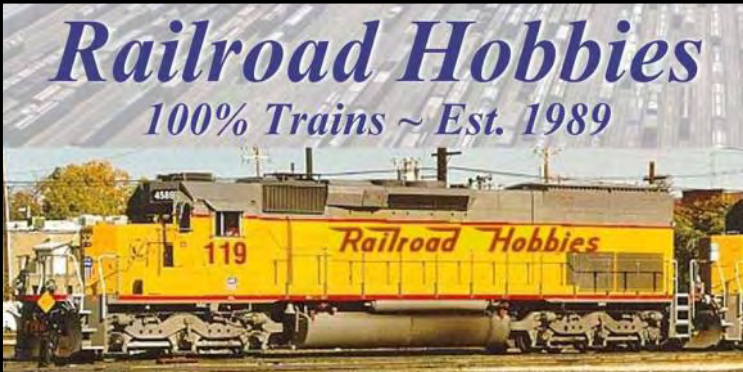
As President, it certainly is gratifying to see the progress the Society is making.

Did You Know?

The **BEST WAY** to become more involved with projects going on around the society is to ask one of our **KEY PERSONNEL...**

"What Can I do to Help?"

See Page 4 for a list of these helpful folks.



Railroad Hobbies
100% Trains ~ Est. 1989

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

Special thanks go out this month to the many members who participated in the test runs of our new car-card and waybill system throughout January. Operators ranged from the experienced to beginner levels. At some of the tests there were even more guests than committee members which just shows that there is building interest and growing support for full-blown operations from the membership.



**Scott
Inman**
Operations
Committee

The committee, while seriously testing and despite the growing pains of learning a new system, had a blast along with all the guests operating the Sierra Central Railroad. It was quite refreshing. Some of the more seasoned members (read that as older) had difficulty remembering back to the last time they operated the standard gauge with a purpose rather than simply running in circles.

We enjoyed hearing the non-committee members' comments that contained both positive feedback and constructive criticism. We are now taking those comments, making a few more tweaks to the system and will unveil the whole package to the general membership in March and April.

It is my deepest hope that the momentum towards serious operations on the railroad continues to grow as we add more industry and operating points on the layout. The committee looks forward to introducing our operating system to

everyone and is eager to hear your feedback as we move ahead.

During the months of March and April, the Society's schedule with the exception of time needed to prepare for the Western Pacific Convention on April 11, shall be dedicated to introducing the membership to our new operations system. Have a look at the two month calendar in this issue of THE HERALD and see the full docket of operation time. Tuesdays and Fridays will be Operations nights. This means three very important things:

1. The layout (all the ops cars on the layout) will be frozen. If you are here between operation sessions, no cars involved with the operation may be moved at any time. This includes cars in yards. If you do not participate in the operation sessions, you must load a train of your own in Oakland Pier and run it without disturbing ops cars around the layout. Then it must return to Oakland Pier and be immediately removed from the layout. The use of yards to load and unload trains will be prohibited.
2. Your membership cards must be up-to-date and all equipment fully certified in order to operate or circle run.
3. People wishing to run in circles may do so during operation session but only under the guidance of the Trainmaster. These run-throughs will operate as described in #1 above and in limited quantities.

Thanks again to those who helped make our long-term goal of operations a reality. We have ARRIVED!!



COMMITTEE REPORTS - (continued)

The SMRHS proudly participates in the [Boy Scouts of America Railroading Merit Badge](#) program. We have hosted several of these in the past and we have another 3-day session scheduled beginning on Saturday, March 15.



Dave Megeath
SMRHS
Out-Reach
Program
Chairman

I have been a listed member on the [BSA Golden Empire Council's](#) roster of Merit Badge Counselors for many years and have recently begun to distribute a flyer advertising our availability for this program.

We can offer a lot of valuable information to these kids regarding railroad operations, terms, equipment and most importantly, safety around them. We also have three railroad employees amongst us who, through their generous donation of a few hours, can be interviewed by the scouts for their reports.

This is a fantastic program and one that helps the SMRHS attain their goal of being an educational organization. I will need a few volunteers for the upcoming March sessions. I will contact our resident railroaders specifically but anyone who would be interested in helping out are more than welcome to contact me directly to see what can be done.



[Boy Scouts of America](#)



[Railroading Merit Badge](#)

Training continues for Society members as beginning on March 1st, 2008, in order to run or operate on the layout, you need an up to date Certification Card. As a minimum, you will need the following three Certifications signed off: Layout Orientation, Signals and Radio Protocol and Track Warrants. You are highly encouraged to get signed off on Basic Engineer, but this is not requisite for running/operation at this time. We have had very good participation in the Certification program. There is a current roster with up to date Certification sign-offs on the Bulletin Board in the back room. Please do check your status and report any errors to me.



Joe Melhorn
Member
Training
Chairman

Training materials are available on the Society [webpage](#), click on training. If you don't have access to the Internet, see me at the clubhouse and I will provide you with copies of the training materials and a Certification card.

We return to open running on March 4, 2008. The 4th and 7th of March will be utilized to test the layout for problems that may be a result of construction and/or repair during the month of February. Hopefully we will find everything in good working order. We will be available to help you with your Training those two nights. Training will continue on Friday nights. This also includes equipment certification. The 11th of March will see us returning to Operations.

Also starting on March 1, 2008 all rolling stock must have one 10K Ohm resistor axle before it can be certified and placed on the layout. The exception to this is lighted passenger cars or rolling stock that draws power from the track to illuminate marker lights, FRED's, etc.

COMMITTEE REPORTS - (continued)

The Narrow Gauge extension project continues to move forward. We celebrated the laying of the last bits of rail in the Western Flume and Lumber Co. yard and with the exception of a few areas under design consideration, all rail for our remodel and extension has been laid.



Dave Good
Narrow Gauge Supervisor

Ken Martin has headed up the efforts to get switch machines hooked up to the turnouts and feels with a couple of Saturday sessions, we can have them installed.

A decision was recently made to switch the location of the Ridgeway passenger station with the planned location of the new Ice Dock. This puts the passenger tracks and main line in direct line with the new town of Owenyo on the extension and provides more streamlined train movements as well as offers a sizeable area capable of housing an additional industry or two down at the far end of the yard.

Harlan Schoff continues to work the mock-ups at Baldwin Mine. He is developing quite the coal operation there.

A week ago, I surprised a few people when I appeared with a tool box and did some work on the Transfer Trestle foundation. The surprise was probably the fact that I actually own tools that can build models as most folks have only seen me work scenery thus far. That night I laid the 370 individual 3x12x24" redwood planks that will support the final structure. Now all that's left is the trestle itself. I think I'll need more than the 4 hours I spent on the foundation to complete it.

As John Lutz continues to care for his ex-wife, his absence

has been felt. The scenery in the canyon outside of Sierra awaits his return. All our best wishes are with you John.

Operations on the Narrow Gauge have been revised and will be practiced in the coming months. Work and play can co-exist as our current projects typically don't interfere with the operational portion of the layout.

More fun is ahead of us. It will truly be exciting to see the extension come to life as well as witnessing older areas of the layout be rejuvenated.



(916) 485-5288
2752 Marconi Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95821
www.brucestrainshop.com

SOCIETY TWO-MONTH CALENDAR

Key Points:

M
A
R
C
H

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|-----|---|-----|-----|---|---------------------------------|
| | | | | | | 1 TBD |
| 2 | 3 | 4 Run to Debug after construction | 5 | 6 | 7 Run to Debug after construction | 8 TBD |
| 9 | 10 | 11 Full Operations (Ops) Begin | 12 | 13 | 14 Full Ops | 15 BSA Session 1 at SMRHS |
| 16 | 17 | 18 Full Ops | 19 | 20 | 21 Full Ops | 22 BSA Session 2 at SMRHS |
| 23 | 24 | 25 Full Ops | 26 | 27 | 28 Full Ops | 29 TBD |
| 30 | 31 | | | | | |

A
P
R
I
L

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|-----|---|-----|-----|--|---------------------------------|
| | | 1 Full Ops | 2 | 3 | 4 Run to Debug & Certify WP Trains | 5 TBD |
| 6 | 7 | 8 Run to Debug & Certify WP Trains | 9 | 10 | 11 CLOSED To all but WP Convention Participants Only. | 12 TBD |
| 13 | 14 | 15 Full Ops | 16 | 17 | 18 Full Ops | 19 BSA Session 3 at CSRMS |
| 20 | 21 | 22 Full Ops | 23 | 24 | 25 Full Ops | 26 TBD |
| 27 | 28 | 29 Full Ops | 30 | | | |

Saturday work/ops sessions are temporarily embargoed.

The months of March and April will be used to introduce our new car card and waybill operations system to the general membership. We're finally going to be playing trains the way we've dreamed of. Major construction is halted.

Member position training and equipment certification will continue. **REMEMBER:** Your Qualification Card must be up to date and all equipment properly certified in order to run/operate on the layout effective immediately.

The Society will be **CLOSED** on **Friday April 11** to all except those designated to help with the WP Convention and our guests. We're sorry but with the numbers of guests we plan to have a minimal number of members is required for safety reasons.

As we prepare to host the Western Pacific Convention on April 11, let's take some time away from the trains and **CLEAN UP** our home. We want to make a grand impression and that includes taking care of our surroundings as well as our layouts.

We have a Boy Scouts of America Railroading Merit Badge seminar scheduled. This is a 3-day event. Volunteers wishing to help should contact Dave Megeath for information. This is one of the many out-reach programs that we have been proud to host several times in our past.

Photo of the Month



“SP 6051”

© David W. Good

At the August 19, 2006 unveiling of the Union Pacific’s “Heritage” scheme for the Southern Pacific, the classic lines and brilliant colors of a REAL Espee beauty shown proudly in the summer sun. The California State Railroad Museum’s E9, #6051 proved her worth by being the power to actually push the inoperable SD70Ace (dead batteries) to its own party. Sweet justice. (Nikon F5 SLR - Fuji Provia 400 Transparency Film)

Photo by Dave Good

MEET JOE MINOR



**Joe
Minor**
Junior
Member

I guess this is where I can write a little biography about who I am and how trains have influenced the way I am today. I was born in the city of Colorado Springs, CO and I have lived all around the United States from Florida to California seeing many railroads while growing up. Some of my first memories of trains took place in Tampa, FL where I spent many hours trackside with my dad watching the CSX Tropicana Orange Juice trains passing through the yards. Soon I became fascinated

with trains everything about them was awesome the horn and the sounds they made accelerating down a line of tracks was just enough to give me Goosebumps.

After living in a place of 95 degree heat and 100% humidity for 7 years my dad had gotten a new job and the next thing I knew we were packing up our things and heading off to Tucson, AZ. While being settled in for a week or so my dad and I finally went out and explored some of the area and noticed there was quite a bit of train traffic ranging from 35 to 50 trains a day. This is the time in my life where I think trains had a big impact on me because I got to see one of my favorite railroads, the Southern Pacific. Even though the year was 1998 and the SP had already merged with the Union Pacific, there was still a lot of traffic with Southern Pacific power on the point and I just have to say nothing was better than seeing a speed lettered tunnel motor on the point of a Z train grinding its way through Cienega Creek on a nice spring afternoon.

Just as fast as we moved to Arizona my dad had gotten another job and is was off to the frigged place of Middletown,

CT. There wasn't a whole lot of trains around the area and that's when I went in a downward turn regarding trains. I had met new friends and had kind of lost my interest in trains. Going into a new phase, being ten years old at the time, I had found new activities such as sledding and riding my bike around the neighborhood and only going to watch trains with my dad every once in a while. After enjoying the snowy weather for less than a year we moved back to Tucson AZ. I got to see a lot of trains again while out railfanning but I was still in a period where I just wanted to go and hang out with



Photo by: Joe Minor

friends or sit around and watch Nickelodeon on TV rather than chase trains. Then, once while I was out train watching with the old man out by Picacho Peak, I saw my second favorite railroad the Chicago & North Western. I had never seen a C&NW unit before until that day. It was a faded Zitto yellow SD60 on the point of a stack train hauling serious butt towards Tucson. It was an amazing day chasing it all the way to

(Continued on page 13)

MEET JOE MINOR - (continued)

Cienega Creek. I rarely ever saw a C&NW locomotive again but the day I saw that SD60 will be a memory that will last forever.

I had turned 12 and the company my dad worked for had moved him to Sacramento where I have spent the last 6 years living. Within the first few weeks of living here my family and I went over to Railroad Hobbies in Roseville, CA. where I picked up an Athearn blue box GP40-2 kit. I had fallen in love with it and that's when I started the hobby of model railroading. When I turned 13 I received a little point and shoot instamatic 35mm film camera. It wasn't the greatest camera and I could care less about taking photographs at that time but little did I know that was all about to change. When I turned 15, I was given a Nikon N75 35mm SLR camera and I thought it was pretty cool. I started taking roster shots of the various SP and UP power that was in the yard or anything else that looked cool. After getting used to a real camera, I then got my hands on a point and shoot digital camera this is when I finally started to get serious about photography. I would study other peoples photographs and see how they were framing their shots. I thought it was pretty cool and started to come up with some framing ideas of my own. 3 months had gone by and I always wanted to take photographs of trains. That's all I could think about. Sometimes it felt like I had



Photo by: Joe Minor

nothing better to do than to sit and think of ways to set up shots everywhere dad and I went whether it would be framing in some kind of weird tree or maybe include some interesting rock formations on Donner Pass with the passing trains. I've never known why I've gotten into photography but it's just something about taking an image that is special to you that makes it all worth wild.

Today I shoot mostly with a Nikon D40 digital SLR camera though I still have my N75 and run a roll of film through it now and again. People who see my pictures now seem to feel that I have a certain talent and should pursue photography more seriously. Time will tell what happens but all I know is that I really enjoy heading trackside with my camera and waiting for something interesting to come down the line to shoot.

That is just a little bit of how the railroads I've seen have influenced the way I am today. After High School I want to go take the sac city railroad training course so I can pursue a career in the railroad. I would also like to give a big thanks to my good friend Brian Zine because if I never got a picture of him in the cab of an E-unit (SP 6051) I would have probably never known about this Society where I have met a lot of cool people.



Railfan Gallery



Joe Minor practices his artistic photography while Dave Good lurks behind him capturing this moment along the Union Pacific (former Southern Pacific) main line north of Dunnigan, CA.

Photo by Dave Good



Using the tips given to him by Joe Minor to improve his action photography, Dave Good shoots this westbound freight on the former SP main at Binney Jct., Marysville, CA. It appears the lesson was a success.

Photo by Dave Good

October 7, 2007

February 26, 2008

Ferromex Becomes TTX's First New Owner in 43 Years

Real News about Real Railroads

For those who enjoy learning about what's going on in the realm of Rail Transportation.

[Ferrocarril Mexicano S.A. de C.V. \(Ferromex\)](#) has joined [TTX Co.'s](#) rail-car pool and owner roster — TTX's first new owner in 43 years. TTX is owned by North American railroads that use the car pool.

The addition of Ferromex enhances international rail moves into and out of Mexico, TTX said.

"This is an important step for our company," said TTX President and Chief Executive Officer Andrew Reardon in a prepared statement. "With Ferromex, we will extend the benefits of TTX's time-tested business model to an important and growing participant in the North American rail marketplace."

For the railroad, becoming a TTX owner will ensure a reliable supply of rail cars, maximize equipment efficiency through pooling and reduce transportation costs, said Ferromex Chief Commercial Officer Rogelio Velez.

Mexico's largest railroad, Ferromex operates more than 5,000 miles of track, handles 40 percent of all Mexican rail freight and serves five major seaports. The railroad interchanges more than 300,000 cars annually with U.S. and Canadian railroads and manages a fleet of 15,000 cars.

TTX manages a fleet of more than 200,000 flat and box cars, and gondolas in North America. Based in Chicago, the company has been providing cars, information and accounting services since 1955.



February 19, 2008

Caltrain to Open New Northbound Platform at Burlingame Station

[Caltrain](#) will mark a milestone in its Burlingame, Calif., station construction project Monday, February 25, when the new northbound platform opens for passenger boarding at the historic depot.

A fence will run between the tracks to prevent passengers from walking across them. As a result, northbound passengers will cross from one platform to another at North lane or Howard Avenue. The new platform will be equipped with Ticket Vending Machines, ticket validators, electronic

(Continued on page 16)

RAILNEWS - (continued)

messaging signs and a new public address system. Conductors and signs at the station will inform customers about this change in boarding.

Southbound boarding remains the same and train service will not be affected by the opening of the new platform. The year-long project is designed to improve safety and train movement at the Burlingame station.



February 5, 2008

Funding Needed to Complete Nevada Tourist Railroad

Construction of the 18-mile tourist railroad that will run from Virginia City to Carson City could stall in a year if the project doesn't get more money, according to local newspapers. The assets for the Nevada Commission for the [Reconstruction of the V & T Railway](#) increased \$1.5 million in the last fiscal year, but revenue dropped by more than \$19 million, according to an audit by the Reno firm Kafoury, Armstrong and Co.

Major grants from the state, Carson City and the Carson City Convention and Visitor's Bureau came in fiscal year 2006 but not in fiscal year 2007, the audit said. Another reason for the drop was the legislature's rejection of an \$8-million request from the commission at its last session.

Railway representatives have said they will continue to lobby local, state and federal officials this year.

The \$54-million project is expected to be done in 2011 and the commission has raised about \$40 million so far, including \$21 million from Carson City. Workers have finished about a mile-and-a-half of track from Gold Hill to the Overman Pit and have started on about 4.5 miles from American Flat in Storey County south to Mound House in Lyon County, which is expected to be done in August.



Work will then start on the next five miles, which will take the railroad across Highway 50 into Carson City. That's scheduled to be done around February 2009, but it could stop there. The train might have to run from Gold Hill to a temporary depot at the edge of Carson City until the commission can get more money.



Society Photo Gallery



Photo by Joe Minor

Clockwise from Top:

Demystifying DCC was the subject of our latest session for new members held on Friday February, 15. The beauty of these sessions is that not only can new members get a head start on a variety of subjects, but established members can get a refresher course as well.

Scott S. and Dave H. experiment with paints to determine the method with which they will decorate the Feather River Canyon. Dave is enjoying watching Scott try to get a little drop of paint out of a mostly empty bottle. Scott sure looks determined. Go Scott Go!



Photo by Dave Good

THE HISTORY OF DISPATCHING

When railroads reached the stage of development at which they became a serious transportation system instead of a curiosity, a means of safely operating several trains at once became necessary. Since there was no means of reliable instant communication, the system was based on the most reliable information available: train movements adhered rigorously to a published schedule. If one train became late, it made each of the trains it was scheduled to encounter late and each of those



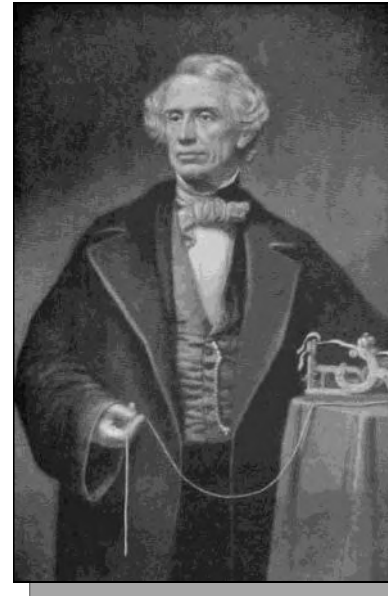
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made other late. While operation might recover at night or on the weekend, as railroads became more heavily traveled, operation could become a hopeless mess for days. There were no uniform practices. Some railroads' rules provided for movement against a late train by waiting some period of time, then following at some distance at walking speed behind a flagman. Other allowed trains to continue until the opposing train was encountered. At that point the conductors of the two trains would decide which train would back to a siding. Such practices did little to return operation to normal.

The schedules providing protection against collision of opposing trains, but did nothing to protect a late train from being overtaken and struck from the rear by a following train. Some railroads instituted a block system to prevent collisions. Only one train was allowed between any two stations. Information was passed from station to station by signalmen who would be stationed on a tower tall enough to allow the tower of the next station to be seen with a telescope. The signalmen might observe the position of a ball signal, a tall mast on which a large black or white ball would be hoisted, or a semaphore. They might communicate using flags.

Should extra traffic develop, an unscheduled train could be operated keeping clear of all scheduled trains, but such trains could be run in only one direction at a time. Without instant communication however, coordination of such unscheduled trains was difficult. Extra trains could be run with sufficient advance notice to allow instructions to be distributed to all concerned, often one or more days.

Samuel FB Morse brought instant communication to commercial reality in 1844 with a demonstration funded by Congress. A wire was strung from Washington D.C. to Baltimore and Morse transmitted "What Hath God Wrought!" to his partner in Baltimore, who responded by repeating the message. In 1851, New York & Erie Railroad (Erie Railroad) Superintendent Charles Minot was instrumental in the location of the line of a newly formed telegraph company along the Erie Railroad tracks. He had conceived the idea that the telegraph would be an



excellent means to coordinate train operation, and attempted to purchase the Morse patent for the Erie, but was unsuccessful. He was so convinced of the importance of the telegraph that he had the pole line already in place and the wires strung for the New York and Erie Telegraph Company. The arrangement for rights to use the equipment included a change of the telegraph company's name to New York and

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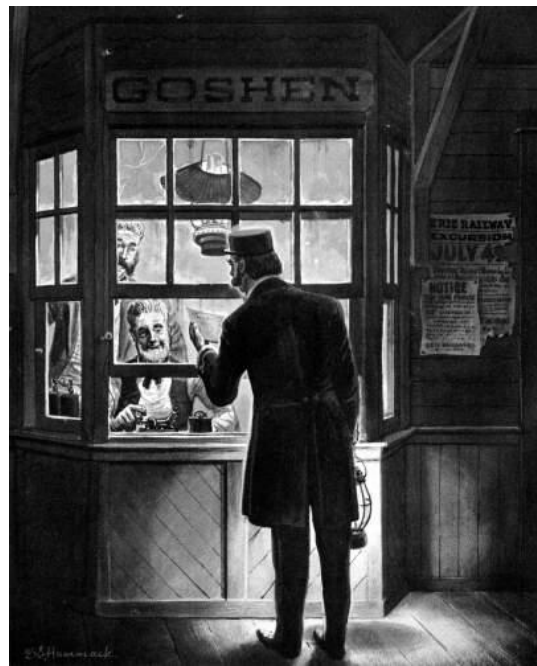
Western Union Telegraph Company, separating the railroad company from the commercial telegraph company. On May 14, 1851, Minot demonstrated how the newly developed Morse telegraph could be used to coordinate train operation. A special train of dignitaries en route to the celebration of the completion of the railroad developed engine trouble. At Middletown, Minot wired Port Jervis to have a relief engine ready.

On September 22, 1851, Minot used the modern technology of the Morse telegraph to change the way railroads operated. Except for Minot's use 4 months earlier, the telegraph was still somewhat of a curiosity and used only as a means of passing important news. While on a train that was delayed at Turner's Station (now Harriman), New York for an opposing train that was overdue, he used the telegraph to ask the operator at Goshen, the next station, if the opposing train had passed. On being told that the train had not passed, Minot issued the first train order:

To Agent and Operator at Goshen:
Hold the train for further orders.
Charles Minot, Superintendent

He wrote separate instructions to the Conductor and Engineer of his train.

To Conductor and Engineer, Day Express:
Run to Goshen regardless of opposing train.
Charles Minot, Superintendent



The first train order was important in two respects:

- Railroad operation need no longer be crippled by a delayed train,
- Railroad operation could be improvised.

The importance of the second was not discovered as quickly as the first.

A third aspect of the first train order also set an important precedent. The system of control that Minot had just developed would not work if the person controlling traffic did not have absolute authority. Until that day the conductor had been the supreme authority for train movement. The Engineer was second in command. Any movement contrary to timetable instructions was arranged between conductors. Sometimes the superiority of trains was related to the physical superiority of the conductor.

The Engineer of the Day Express would not accept the authority of the order to leave Turner's Station against the opposing train, and refused to do so. Minot relieved him of duty on the spot, running the engine himself for the remainder of the trip. At

some later point in history, the nickname "God" began to be applied to Train Dispatchers because of the magnitude of the authority they were given. The authority came with the expectation that every decision would be correct. The nickname remained into the 1980's.

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THE HISTORY OF DISPATCHING - (continued)

The first train order began the development of the position of Train Dispatcher; a railroad employee with the authority to act and issue train movement instructions and generally manage operations in the name of the Superintendent, however, the first Train Dispatcher was yet to come. At first, the Superintendent would personally issue the orders when needed. Railroads generally operated only during the hours that a Superintendent could personally supervise. [Andrew Carnegie](#), who later became a famous and wealthy industrialist, changed that arrangement in 1854, when he became the first Train Dispatcher on the Pennsylvania Railroad, handling Pittsburgh Division traffic between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

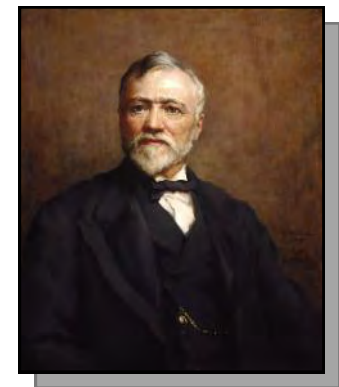


A young Carnegie at age 27

Carnegie became an expert telegrapher by 1852. He was hired by Pennsylvania Railroad Western Division Superintendent Thomas A. Scott to be a clerk and telegrapher in the Superintendent's office in 1854. Shortly thereafter, he became a Train Dispatcher and simultaneously set a standard for those who would follow. He was on duty as the Superintendent's telegrapher on a day when there was an accident that tied up the line. The Superintendent had not yet arrived and Carnegie felt that immediate action was required. He immediately began issuing order, signing each with the Superintendent's initials. The Superintendent heard about the accident and came directly to his office. Carnegie did not know if, as he put it, "death or Westminster Abbey" would be the response from the Superintendent. It turned out to be neither. Carnegie described the action he had taken, showed him the

orders he issued, and showed him the location of all the trains. Scott said nothing. For the next 130 years Train Dispatchers were expected to take the initiative to do whatever was necessary to maintain operation, and were expected to be correct in the action taken. Superintendent Schott also set a precedent. That day, as for the next 130 years, the response to some extraordinary performance would be the same; nothing. In the ensuing 130 years, the response to a Train Dispatcher taking no action in response to a situation or condition affecting the railroad, or taking action that turned out to be wrong would generally be colorful, however.

Carnegie was Superintendent of the Pittsburgh Division from 1859 to 1866. He had a telegraph instrument in his home in Pittsburgh so he could maintain control of night traffic. He subsequently employed the first Night Train Dispatcher in the country and established the first Division Train Dispatching Office. The change from the local control of traffic at each station, the method common in Europe, to a central authority had begun.



Andrew Carnegie

The conversion was not as simple as it seems. As often happens with the implementation of technology in any era, many train and engine crewmen were not comfortable with following telegraphic orders that were contrary to the timetable. On the Erie, many conductors and enginemen resigned to avoid being required to operate as directed by train orders.

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THE HISTORY OF DISPATCHING - (continued)

Skilled train dispatchers became extremely valuable to railroads. Timetable-only operation on the Eastern Railroad of Massachusetts was a primary cause of a passenger train collision in 1871. New management was put in place as a result of the collision. Newly appointed general manager Charles F. Hatch brought with him from the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad his own expert train dispatcher.

This is an excerpt from the book: [ELEMENTS OF TRAIN DISPATCHING VOL 1](#), by Thomas White and published by [VTD Rail Publishing](#) and is reprinted here with permission. Graphics have been added by the Editor from various sources on the internet.

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RAIL TRIVIA

Standard Gauge

The US Standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4'-8 1/2". Why was that gauge used? Because that is the way they built them in England, and US railroads were built by English expatriates.

Why did the English build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by those who had built pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used.

Why did they use that gauge then? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools for railroad that they used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing.

So why did the wagons use that odd wheel spacing? Because that's the spacing of the old wheel ruts in the roads.

And who built those old rutted roads? The first long-distance roads in Europe were built by Imperial Rome for their legions. The roads have been used ever since. And the ruts? The initial ruts which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagons were first made by Roman war chariots. Since the chariots were made for or by Imperial Rome, they all had the same wheel spacing.

Thus, we have the answer to the original question. The US Standard railroad gauge of 4'-8 1/2" comes from the original specifications for an Imperial Roman Army war chariot.

So why were Imperial Roman Army war chariots built this wide? Because the Imperial Roman war chariots were made to be just wide enough to accommodate width of two war horses! There's a joke that goes with this but I refrain from printing it here.

The “Crummy” Gallery



The City of San Francisco at what appears to be a ceremony of some sort at the Southern Pacific's Oakland Mole. Though the train debuted in 1936, this image from the National Archives is dated 1938. Is this the inauguration of the streamliner and the date is wrong? Anyone know?

Photographer: Unknown: Dave Good Collection.