Snyder Layout Dedication

The official dedication of the Tom Snyder layout took place on June 20th. About 40 guests enjoyed the celebration, including many of Tom Snyder's friends, former colleagues, family members and GSMRM members. The California Culinary Academy provided lunch based on a "Zephyr" menu. A special thanks to those members who helped clean and prepare for this event and to all the members who worked on moving and installing the Snyder layout at GSMRM.

In October we received the late Tom Snyder's gauge 1 home layout. The layout was dismantled by the builder with the help of our club members over a three day period and transported from Snyder's Tiburon home to the GSMRM site. GSMRM's Jim Ambrose coordinated the group responsible for re-assembly and wiring of the layout. The layout is now open for viewing during museum public access times. More information on the layout and the move to GSMRM can be found at

http://www.gsmrm.org/tom_snyder/

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Snyder

---- ed.

General Manager's Report

Here's a brief update on the various Museum Projects.

Bathroom/kitchen remodel. Parks has tentatively scheduled work to start during the first week of January. As part of this project, the front entry step will be replaced with an ADA ramp (as a result of a visitor complaint). We will need your help emptying these rooms prior to the remodel. Also, we will have to use the Porta-Potty during construction, and may have to do without running water at times. Please be patient, and remember that the results will be worth it!

Landscaping. Randy Smith has been working on the plans, and has 'recruited' the help of a landscape architect. Parks has provided input during the process, along with the help of their regional gardener. In the meantime, we have continued cleanup. Scrap metal has been recycled and Bill Bigley has helped empty almost half of the block house. As reported earlier, Dan Furtado (PLA member) has started refurbishing our wig wag, which we will install near the front gate as part of the plan. We haven't set a date to start work. Please volunteer to help, so that we can improve our 'curb appeal'.

Meeting room remodel. The LRP Committee is working with Parks on these plans – expect more news shortly.

Trailer donation. Due to Parks requirements, we will probably not be able to act in time to accept the 60-foot trailer donation now being considered. However, more opportunities are out there, and we will be better prepared for the next one. Thanks for responding to our survey; we will consider your responses as we move forward.

Offsite storage. We are considering rental of a small, secure place to store items such as the Ryan collection and archive records. This should be finalized soon.

Recycling. Historically, we haven't been very good at this (except for aluminum cans). The Board has arranged for a recycling bin as part of our garbage service, and placed containers in the public areas as well as within each scale. Some of this stuff is still going into the regular trash cans. Please use these for cans, paper, and other recyclables.

That's all for now. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your support, and wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!    -- John Morrison, GSMRM General Manager

A Realy Online?

In order to keep up with the times, the museum is now also present on some of the popular social networks: Facebook and Twitter. We also have a channel on YouTube. Take a look:

http://twitter.com/gsmrm/
http://www.youtube.com/gsmrm/

Please follow us on Twitter, become a fan on Facebook, so you'll always be informed about upcoming events, and you can see the latest pictures as soon as we post them!

-- Martin Jahner, Webmaster
O SCALE

During Summer-Fall 2009, the GSMRM O Scale group has continued work on the scenery area between Midway and the Zenith yards. Texturing, foliage and trees have been applied to most of the upper Midway area. Most of the trees are custom built using native materials from our area. Several new factory buildings have been installed along the Midway station area. Some rock-work was added to the oil refinery spur. The canyon area behind the south mountain is being prepared for plastering. A track maintenance scene with lighting effects was built inside the long tunnel below Midway and is visible from the walkway. Pictures are available at the O Scale web site link below.

Work on the O Scale Interurban layout has progressed. All the mainline blocks and most of the turnout motors are wired and operational.

Block detectors were installed in the Zenith division for all mainline blocks. A turntable was installed in the east Zenith yard and is waiting for a power supply.

On our On3 layout, electrical work in the Palisade division is being completed.

We also purchased some small high resolution pin-hole TV cameras to replace the low resolution X10 wireless cameras we currently use. The first cameras cover the south Midway area and the Post Rd. - Passenger yard area. The new cameras will be hardwired to multi-processor video controllers so an operator can easily flip between cameras or view several pictures together.

Design work on the computer interface prototype (OSCI) also continues. A new PC was donated and moved to the layout for OSCI-JMRI use (Java Model Railroad Interface). The older PC will be used for on-line train throttles and engine setup. The Arrival, Midway and Zenith screen panels are being built, as well as a single panel showing the entire layout. These panels will show signal aspects and block occupancy as trains progress.

The O scale public and member web sites have been updated. Take a look at http://www.gsmrm.org/o_scale/index.shtml or http://www.gsmrm.org/members/o_scale/.

HO SCALE

Warm summer days gave us the perfect environment to do a number of much-needed trackwork maintenance projects. The layout, now 15 years old in areas, experienced a spate of turnout failures that could not be repaired or were difficult to repair in place. Close to 20 turnouts were replaced on the main leaders of the heavily-used SP and WP Oakland yards, in a critical area of the Elvas wye and at a couple of crossovers. Our standard replacement is now the Walthers/Shinohara "DCC-Ready" Code 83 turnout.

Our crew working on scenery for Donner Pass continues to make progress with detail work and planting several hundred trees. A number were purchased but, given the cost and number required, we are now gearing up to make large numbers from scratch using both natural materials, chopped foam and wire armatures. The scratch-built buildings for our Towle Bros lumber mill complex are coming along nicely and are planned for permanent installation over the winter shutdown.

N SCALE

Feel like picking some oranges? We have our first Grove of orange trees in Edison, planted by Jeffrey Pribyl. Let’s hope he can keep the fruit flies away! We’re going to have to make up switch lists for our DCC throttles, since we have over thirty switches we can control remotely now, thanks to Martin Jahnner (I just can’t remember them all). Each month our members have a choice of running either Analog or DCC days, on the other Sundays, its both (using the block control system of course). Maintenance and updates of our block wiring and turnout control wiring continues to ensure reliable operation.

Joel Frangquist has been busy adding tracks to the new turntable in Bakersfield. This time of the year we have to wear long sleeves or sweatshirts because of the freezing temperatures in the building, but this won’t keep us from making progress so we can show our new additions and improvements at the beginning of the next season in April.

GSMRM ZEPHYR

http://www.gsmrm.org/
EBMEST TROLLEY HISTORY AT HALLECK STREET

BY TOMAS BUCKINGHAM

The O&A&E Power house was built by Elmer Cummings, and for many years it was on the north end of the Halleck street trolley line. It is now on the south section of your O gauge line. California Railway 10 was also built by Elmer in early 1940s or before. I added the link for the link and pin couplers and repainted it. Trim and lettering is still missing. Key System 701 and 3 thirty six foot flat cars were originally built by Elmer. I helped Elmer motorize the 701 an made an air compressor for it. Recently I modified one of the flat cars to accept link and pin couplers. Elmer also made the 271 and a 900 series Key System street car. I added proper fenders to 271. It requires painting, and much work is needed to finish the 900. The Long 500 was originally built by Bill Hoffman and owned by Jack Collier. It runs fine.

Prior to WW 2 there were 2 motor flat cars under construction for operation on the Halleck St. trolley layout line. One was Elmer Cummings Key System 1208. The other prototype was Northern Electric 701 that ran between Chico and Halminton City. The smallest motors available for use in an O gauge model was the Pittman DC 60. The problem was fitting these motors in the model. Elmer Cummings came up with the idea of driving only one axle and modifying the other axle to clear the magnet in each truck. The motors for the 701 ended up in the 1208. Elmer’s 1208 runs well with his two flat cars in tow.

The fate of Northern Electric 701 is unknown. I built SN 660 with help from Elmer Cummings.

During WW 2 there was a derailment in Shepherd Canyon. Sacramento Northern’s two 1500 Volt Baldwin Westinghouse locomotives were descending from the tunnel headed for the Oakland Army base. A box car loaded with #10 cans of pears derailed. The first locomotive went on to 40th and Shafter. George Hademan stayed in the rear locomotive, and spent the night guarding the the rear half of the train. My mother made Georges dinner.

This narration was compiled and edited from email conversations with Tomas Buckingham, Nov. 2008. Additional information and photos are available in the O Scale History section of the GSMRM website: http://www.gsmrm.org/o_scale/OSHistory/OSHist1948Buckingham/index.shtml --Jeff Rowe. All photos by Tomas Buckingham.

OUR 2009 THEME DAYS

During the 2009 season we celebrated special trains every 4th Sunday of the month. Some of these included ATSF/BNSF Day on June 28, Steam Day on July 26, UP/WP Day on August 23. A number of different passenger trains were featured on September 27, the Southern Pacific Railroad was the theme on October 25. A rather unusual theme was our Wreck Train / MOW (Maintenance of Way) Day on November 22. The photos show some of the highlights. Our last theme day for the 2009 season will be “Foreign To California” Day on December 27th, which is also our last operating day this year.

---John Fagan, Jeff Robinson

PRIZE WORTHY!

Congratulations to one of our members! Jeff Robinson of HO Scale was awarded 2nd Place for his display entry of scratch built buildings from Main Street in Pleasanton at the Alameda County Fair this last July. Jeff had been working on these structures from photographs for the last couple of years to incorporate into the HO layout. It was at the suggestion of John Fagan that Jeff enter the model buildings in the fair, which is located in Pleasanton. The detailed buildings represent how they may have looked in the 1950’s and some required hundreds of pieces of plastic to create the right shapes. The buildings are currently on display in the downstairs clubroom where kids of all ages can press push buttons to turn on interior, exterior, and vehicle head and tail lights for different times of the day or night. Each building has at least one interior light and many have neon signs, people, and detailed interiors – including a wedding reception at the Pleasanton Hotel.

--John Fagan, Jeff Robinson
Museum open:
Saturdays: 12 noon - 5 pm for viewing, no trains running. Free admission
Sundays: 12 noon to 5 pm with operating trains. Admission charged.
Wednesdays: 11 am - 3 pm for viewing only, no trains running. Free admission.
December: Open Sat and Sun 12 noon - 5 pm, trains running. Admission charged.