

Totally Toy Train Topics, Talk and Trivia

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Michael Andrews #95-41371

Greetings to all from Walnut Creek.

It has been a fairly busy summer season with much work and family activity but not much train time. We just finished a trip back to Pennsylvania to visit with my family. It was good seeing everyone and one of the things we did was look at old family photos that an uncle put on a compact disc. Of the old Christmas party photos there are several with parts of my grandfather's Christmas layout, which are now part of my collection. These photos are some forty years old but they sure bring back memories of being a kid. My mom's house is not far from the CSX line and all day you can hear the trains as they pass the grade crossings. One thing I did at night, when my kids could not fall asleep, was lay down with them and tell them to listen for the train whistles, and before you knew it they were fast asleep.

The National Board of Directors meeting in June was a busy one. We had 30 agenda items to discuss and it went surprisingly well. Most of them had to do with housekeeping tasks to bring things up to date with procedures. The most significant one was the 2006 Edition of the TCA Strategic Plan. The plan consists of guidelines that TCA will use to carry it into the future, so that we are following a consistent goal. The items in the plan deal with membership, finance, member benefits, asset development, quality of information, member activities, and governance. After my first BOD meeting several years ago,

(continued on Page 3)



See the Nor-Cal Express in FULL COLOR at: www.nor-caltca.com



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Ernest Brookfield
Michael Steinrok
Ronald Anderson
Duke Belville
Jeffrey Richards
Kurt Hasenpusch**

**Saratoga
Santa Clara
Oakland
Santa Cruz
Playa Del Rey
Crockett**



Nor Cal member Chuck Schaeffer's Lionel Standard Gauge #400E, normally a 4-4-4, converted to a 4-6-2, and altered to run on Carlisle and Finch 2-inch gauge track. This involved changes to the boiler and frame, as well as the motor.

FUTURE MEETS

- September 9, 2006 (M)
- October 14, 2006 (M)
- November 18, 2006 (M)
- December 9, 2006 (M)
(Christmas Party, no guests)
- January 13, 2007 (M)
- February 10, 2007 (M)
- March 16-18, 2007 Cal-Stewart Meet
Santa Clara Convention Center
- April 14, 2007 (M)
- May 26, 2007 (SRT)
- June 9, July 14, August 11, 2007
(tbd)

M = Montera Middle School,
5555 Ascot Drive, Oakland
SRT = Scottish Rite Temple,
Sacramento
tbd = to be determined

Business Meeting: 9:30 AM
Trading: 10-11:30 AM

CARLISLE & FINCH AND VOLTAMP TRAINS FROM THE CECIL YOTHER COLLECTION



Carlisle and Finch mining train



Carlisle and Finch #42 trolley



Carlisle and Finch #2130 locomotive



Carlisle and Finch #22 locomotive

Note: all Carlisle and Finch and Voltamp trains are 2-inch gauge



Carlisle and Finch #131 locomotive



Voltamp #2100 locomotive and tender

(continued from Page 1) I found it amazing that the meeting lacked any discussion of plans for the future. As a member of the Strategic Planning Committee we now have some guidelines in the direction that the TCA is heading, and it is showing up in the BOD meetings. Another item that passed was a new set of standards for refinished items. And finally none other than the great Mark Boyd has been reappointed as the Editor of the TCA Quarterly.

On a more local level your Nor-Cal Board of Directors are starting work on the spring Cal-Stewart Meet. We are finalizing plans for the Saturday Banquet and are looking for any entertainment ideas. We have also been working on budget issues to keep our club on track. The biggest issue is rising costs. The cost of doing business is rising faster than we can collect dues and we are doing our best to keep the cost in line with the revenue coming in. And finally the meeting hall. We decided to try a few meets at the Veterans Hall in Lafayette and when I called about the rental all the Saturdays were taken. I will try for next year but for now we will be meeting at Montera Middle School in Oakland.

Michael Andrews

NOR-CAL QUIZ

- (1) What type of (full size) locomotive was the one affectionately- known as "Old Rivets?" Clue: It is now in the collection of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, at Strasburg, PA.
- (2) What company manufactured a popular line of pinewood model train kits, in HO, OO and O gauges, during the 40's and 50's? The company also manufactured an extensive line of solid wood model airplane and ship kits.
- (3) A packet of dry glue powder was included in the above-noted kits. Who was the manufacturer of that glue (the name shown on the packet)?
- (4) Why was the Marx circular mechanical train marketed as the "Honeymoon Express?" (see photo at right)
- (5) What Lionel trains were manufactured to 17/64" scale?
- (6) Who was the Nor Cal member who manufactured the Thorley Hoople line of Standard Gauge trains in the 60's and 70's?



- (7) What United States railroad took delivery of a series of 4-4-4 locomotives? The only other 4-4-4's in North America are described below.



Canadian Pacific 4-4-4 Class F2a #3001 is shown in the upper left photo. Two of the CP 4-4-4's survive: Class F1a #2928 is at the Canadian Railway Museum in Delson, Quebec, while #2929 is at Steamtown, in Scranton, PA.

The Baltimore and Ohio RR had only one 4-4-4, the *Lady Baltimore*, shown during testing in 1935 in the lower left photo. It was never successful, and was scrapped in 1949.

both photos courtesy of Wikipedia

IRA KEELER RESURRECTS MY MARKLIN STATION—INDUSTRIAL LIGHT AND MAGIC'S LOSS IS MY, AND NOR-CAL'S, GAIN!

By Richard Zanotti #97-44625



Photo 1

In the Fall of 2004, I obtained an old Marklin twin tower station, made about 1905. I bought it on EBay, from Chile. It was rusty and roofless. It looked like it had gone through a few revolutions (see Photo 1, rear view). It even had a bullet hole. The original hand-painted finish was mostly gone.

I showed it to Ira Keeler, a Nor-Cal member and a retired model maker formerly employed by Industrial Light and Magic. Ira smiled and shook his head. He told me that it would be a job to restore it. He said that before he could work on it, I would have to do some research and find out how it looked when it was new. Since the twin towers were roofless, he requested that I find at least one tower roof; he could copy that for the second roof, if necessary.

I found pictures of that station in a reproduction of the old 1905 Marklin catalog (Photo 2). I was also able to find color pictures of it in the Ward Kimball collection auction catalogs (Photo 3). [Note that the station sold for \$825! - Editor]

So I needed a tower roof! Last October, I was walking down the isles of the big train meet at York, Pennsylvania. I decided to rest at Joe Vey's table. It was full of ancient train parts. In this pile of parts was a small square roof with a chimney in the center. I asked Joe if he thought this roof was off of an old Marklin station. He thought it was. I took a chance and purchased it. (Continued on next page)

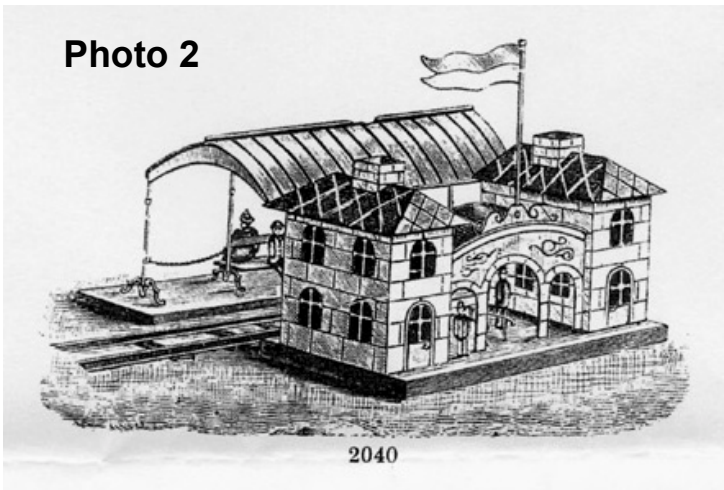


Photo 2

Photo 3



575. MARKLIN STATION WITH CENTER ARCHES, twin painted tin towers with center triple arched covered pass through with handrails, decorative cast metal flourish highlights central arch, 11" x 7.75" x 5", good (serious creasing to 1 tower with areas of overpainting, paint chipping, missing flag) 500-700 929



Photo 4

(continued from page 4) With all of these materials in hand, Ira Keeler took on the challenge of restoring the station. He copied the tower roof perfectly. Both the replacement original roof and the copied roof fit the station perfectly. He removed the old paint, rust, and even the bullet hole, and fabricated a new base to replace the rusted and distorted original. He then hand-painted the station and roofs to in the style of the Ward Kimball sta-

tion. The end result was a beautifully re-stored station, complete with flag (Photo 4)!

We are very lucky to have Ira Keeler in our train club. His model making skills are bringing back to life many of our ancient train relics. George Lucas's loss is indeed Nor-Cal's gain. Thank you, Ira.

Nor-Cal Board of Directors Meeting Minutes August 17, 2006

A Nor-Cal TCA Board meeting was held on August 17, 2006, in Lafayette. Meeting began at 7:40 PM.

Present: Michael Andrews, Bob Nichelini, Bunk Coleman, Cliff Jarrard, Richard White, Bob Spivock

Prior meeting minutes approved.

Monthly meeting dates and some locations approved as follows:

September 9, 2006	Montera Middle School, Oakland
October 14, 2006	Montera Middle School, Oakland
November 11, 2006	Montera Middle School, Oakland
December 9, 2006	Montera Middle School, Oakland
January 13, 2007	Montera Middle School, Oakland
February 10, 2007	Montera Middle School, Oakland
March 17, 18, 19, 2007	Nor-Cal Cal-Stewart, Santa Clara Convention Center
April 14, 2007	Montera Middle School, Oakland

Appointments by President Michael Andrews:

Richard White - Editor David Massetti - Sergeant at Arms

2007 Nor-Cal Cal-Stewart

Hotel: Bob Spivock given authority to further negotiate with the hotel for the best deal for the club and to approve the final conditions.

Banquet: Michael Andrews to check on prices for the banquet. Further discussions took place but final decisions not yet made.

Budget: Preliminary discussions were held on the budget.

Meeting adjourned.

Cliff Jarrard, scribe

In Memoriam—Nancy Sins, died June 18, 2006

Nancy was the wife of longtime Nor Cal member Ed Sins. Nancy died on June 18th of a heart attack associated with her long battle with cancer. She attended many Nor-Cal Cal-Stewart Meets with Ed over the years and always enjoyed talking to other members. She is survived by a son, and her husband.

Nancy will be missed. The officers and members of Nor-Cal extend their condolences.

COLLECTING VINTAGE HO GAUGE TRAINS

Part I—Varney Steam Locomotives, 1945-55

By Richard White TCA 70-3387

Photos (except #3) courtesy of Gary Andrews, Sr.

Judging by sales on Ebay, there is a considerable interest in “vintage” HO gauge trains, which this article will define as those manufactured in the 1945-55 era. Part I of this series will deal with the early post-war steam locomotives of Gordon Varney.

Varney, along with Mantua Metal Products, was one of the premier manufacturer of HO gauge trains in of this era was with an extensive line of locomotives and rolling stock.

Varney’s first postwar locomotive was an updated version of the prewar Baltimore and Ohio RR “Little Joe” Dockside switcher, a Class C-16 0-4-0T. This realistic, all die-cast locomotive featured a Pittman DC-60 motor, and could be detailed using a valve gear kit from Central Valley Mfg. These are available on Ebay for around \$25-40, in excellent condition- more with valve gear installed.

Varney’s large steam locomotives of this era were: a Reading RR-based heavy 2-8-0 Consolidation (lead superstructure), a Southern Pacific-based P-7 Pacific 4-6-2 (lead superstructure), a freelance 4-6-4 Hudson (used the same bronze boiler as on the Mikado) a freelance streamlined Pacific and Hudson (bronze boiler, and identical except for trailing truck— Photo 5), a freelance 4-8-4 (cont’d. on Page 7)



The two photos at the left show versions of the 4-8-4 Northern kit.

Photo 1: shows the bronze super structure casting, and a one piece (non-sprung drive wheels) brass frame with a DC-71 motor mounted. Note the separate boxes for each Section (1 & 2) mechanism and motor (3 & 4) engine trucks and cylinder assembly (5) valve gear and body fittings and (6) the boiler. The box for the tender kit is also shown

Photo 2: shows the parts needed to make this kit up as a “Super” Northern: a two-piece brass frame with spacers, for sprung drivers, and a V2 motor.

Photo 1

Photo 2

(cont'd. from Page 6) Northern (bronze superstructure), a Southern Pacific-based 2-8-2 Mikado (lead superstructure same as the Pacific), a freelance 2-8-2 Mikado (bronze superstructure—Photo 3) and a very similar 2-8-4 Berkshire utilizing the same superstructure casting. The Consolidation, Pacific and Mikado were offered in “Economy” versions, with a Pittman DC-71 motor, one-piece brass frame, and non-sprung drive wheels, and a “Super” version with a Lindsay-designed V2 (ball bearing) motor, two-piece brass frame, sprung drive wheels and a more detailed valve gear. The others came as “Economy” versions only, although parts could be substituted to construct Super versions. Varney also offered a bronze or aluminum superstructure casting for a 2-8-8-4 Yellowstone articulated, which when combined with appropriate Varney parts, made up into an impressive model [Photo 4]. No complete kit for this was offered. These kits were available, in their various versions, in the 1947-58 era.

Tenders for the above locomotives, sold separately, included a Vanderbilt tender with 6-wheel trucks with a brass or aluminum body and a die cast frame. There were two long-distance coal tenders- one had rivet detail on the brass superstructure and other didn't (a “welded” tender). These each had 6-wheel trucks and a die cast frame. Then there was a wood and cardstock tender for the streamlined Hudson/Pacific. Varney also produced a die cast slope back tender that could be used with the Docksider.

The steam locomotives are all actively sought, with models of the Yellowstone most sought, the Northern next, followed by the Mikado and Berkshire, then the Consolidation, and lastly, the Pacific. Ebay prices generally range from \$500 for the Yellowstone down to \$60-70 for the Pacific, if the items are in excellent condition. The “Super” locomotives generally bring \$50-60 more than the standard versions. Un-built kits also bring more.

Greenberg's Guide to Varney Trains , by David Spanagel (1991) is an invaluable aid to the collector. It is still available from several sources.

Also note that Varney brought out the final version of their large steamers as “economy” versions of the Consolidation and Berkshire in 1958-63. These had lead-tin (pewter) “super-detailed” boilers and rode on die cast rigid frames, with DC-71 motors.



Photo 3

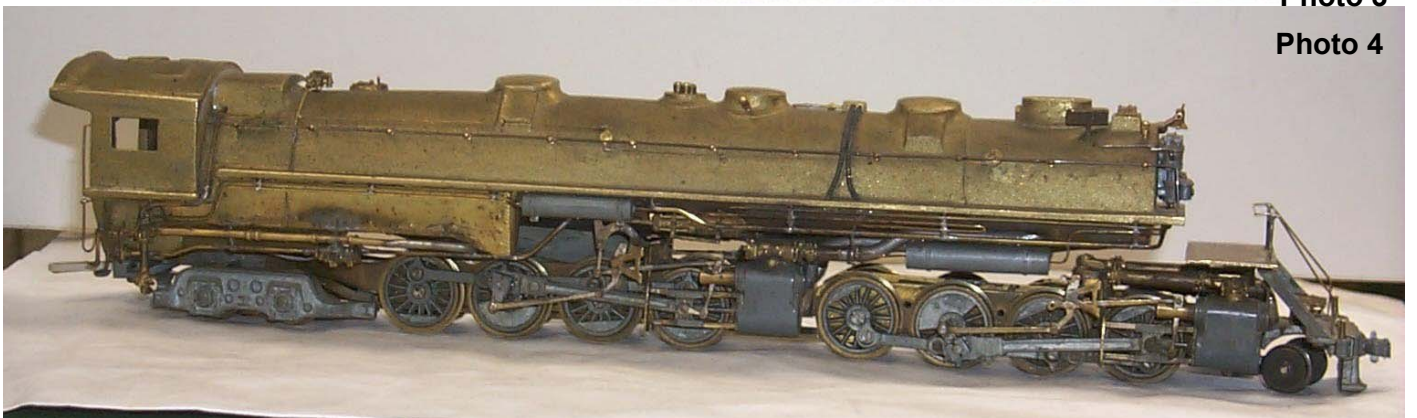


Photo 4

Photo 3: Varney “Super” Mikado

Photo 4: Varney 2-8-8-4 “Yellowstone.” Note that the running gear is identical to the Mikado in Photo 3

Photo 5: Varney Streamlined Hudson. The custom side sheathing here is different from that furnished in the kit. Also, various handrails have not yet been installed.

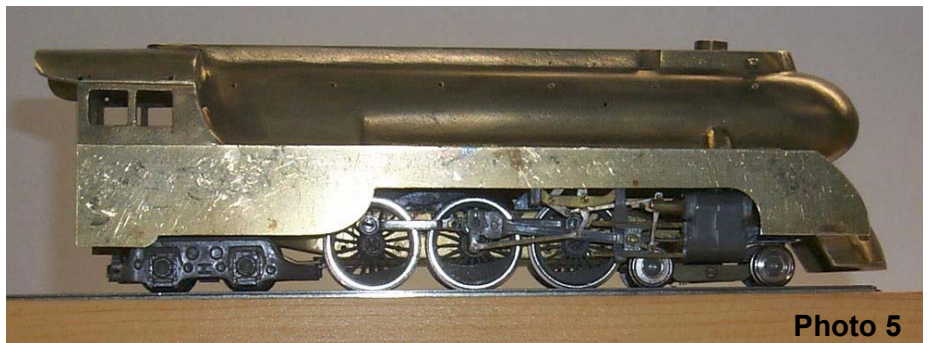


Photo 5



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Mark Boyd—e-mail:

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