



The LANTERN

Big Bend Model Railroad Association Volume 8, Number 1 Jan 2003

NEXT MEETING

Jan. 21, 2003

Myers Park

2003 Elections: Elections will be held during the BBMRA's January Annual Business meeting. The nomination slate is as follows: President - Jeremy Shaw; Vice-President - Evan Hughes; Treasurer - Sandy Scott; Secretary - John Sullenberger. The N, HO and Large Scale Divisions will elect their respective Coordinators during the meeting.

Nominations for the above listed positions can be made at any time from now until the elections are held. You may place your own name in nomination or have another BBMRA member place your name in nomination for you. Nominations for the Division Coordinators will only be taken during the January Division meetings.

2003 Membership Dues are due: Membership dues are now due for the BBMRA's 2003 fiscal year. Dues for returning members are \$20. Families are included the \$20. Dues must be paid by March 31st to remain on the 2003 roster.

If you have any questions, please contact me (John Sullenberger) at 562-5137 (h) or 410-8425 (w) or via e-mail at sullyjws@aol.com. I have voice mail on both phone lines, so please leave a message if I'm not in.

Museum of Florida History's "Children's Day" Festival: The Museum of Florida History is sponsoring their "Children's Day" Festival on Saturday, January 25, 2003 and the BBMRA's "traveling show" has been invited back. The HO Division volunteered to set up and run its layout. Set up in the first floor lobby will commence at 9 am Saturday morning and tear down will commence at 4 pm. The Festival is scheduled to run from 11 am to 4 pm. The HO "Time-Saver" will be set up for all ages that want to "run trains!"

This year's theme is "Alligators"! It would be nice if we could have a few of them riding on flat cars or in a gondola or two.

If you would like to volunteer to help set up, operate the layout or tear down, please contact me (John Sullenberger) at 562-5137 (h) or 410-8425 (w). I have voice mail on both lines, so please leave a message if I'm not in.

Sam Miller's Christmas Open House: On behalf of the BBMRA, I would like to thank Sam and Linda for opening their home and for their hospitality last December 13th during Sam's Christmas Open House. A lot of people showed up to look at Sam's layout decorated for the Christmas season. There was plenty of food and drinks and a good time was had by all.

January Program, Another Swap Meet – Myers Park Community Room: Another Christmas has come and gone. New trains and equipment galore, now if you can just find a place to store it all. Well, we may have an answer for you, the BBMRA will hold another semi-annual (semi-annual because we hold one every couple of months/years) Swap Meet during the January meeting. You know, in with the new and out with the old. This Swap Meet is open to all local club members (Gulf Coast Limited Modular Railroad, Gulf Wind Chapter NRHS or any other club in the Big Bend region.).

Spring 2003 "Whistle Stop" Layout Tour: The 2003 Spring "Whistle Stop" Layout Tour is still in the planning stages. Bob Woodard has joined Jim Faris. We now have two "Whistle Stops". If anyone is interested in hosting a "Stop", please contact John Sullenberger at (w) 410-8425 or (h) 562-5137.

2003 SCHEDULE & TIMETABLE: all meetings 7:30 to 10pm

January 21st	3rd Tuesday	Myers Park Community Room
February 18th	3rd Tuesday	Myers Park Community Room
March 18th	3rd Tuesday	To Be Announced
April 15th	3rd Tuesday	Myers Park Community Room
May 20th	3rd Tuesday	Myers Park Community Room
June 17th	3rd Tuesday	To Be Announced
July 15th	3rd Tuesday	Myers Park Community Room
August 19th	3rd Tuesday	Myers Park Community Room

September 16th	3rd Tuesday	To Be Announced
October 21st	3rd Tuesday	Myers Park Community Room
November 18th	3rd Tuesday	Myers Park Community Room
December 16th	3rd Tuesday	To Be Announced

When people complain about change they might want to remember this... Some changes are hard to accept. In 1829 Martin Van Buren, then the Governor of New York, wrote this to the President.

"The canal system of this country is being threatened by the spread of a new form of transportation known as 'railroads.' As you may well know, railroad carriages are pulled at the enormous speed of 15 miles per hour by engines, which in addition to endangering life and limb of passengers, roar and snort their way through the countryside. The Almighty certainly never intended that people should travel at such breakneck speed." (Sylvia Simmons, How to Be the Life of the Podium, AMACOM, New York, NY)

Riding "Faster-Than-A-Speeding-Bullet" Trains in Italy - Submitted by Larry Benson: My wife, Shirley, her sister and husband stood on the platform in Stazione Centrale (Central Railway Station) in Milan this past November looking expectantly down the tracks for the EuroStar bullet train. The sleek, slope-nosed blue and white locomotive with a consist of some 12 cars pulled in right on time.

We were happy our train was on time. The wind was brisk coming down out of the Dolomite Mountains not far to the north that separate Italy from Switzerland. We found our coach, which had to be reserved in advance at a cost of Euros 11 each (which equated to \$11 dollars at the time.) No porters were around to help us. We had to "slep" our own baggage up the steps into the car then load them into luggage racks.

That done, we found our reserved seats, double occupancy on one side of the isle, single facing each other on the other and collapsed a little exhausted from our ordeal. We had lugged our bags from a taxi outside the railway station, up escalators, then across the lobby and out onto the platform, a trek ideally suited to mountain climbers.

Our coach was immaculate and appeared to be brand new. The upholstery was fresh, the carpet clean, the pull-up tables between the seats spotless. Exactly as scheduled, the train began to move, but there wasn't a "jerk" or any sensation of movement. The only way to be sure you were under way was by looking out huge picture windows. The ride to our destination of Florence, took two and one half hours even at 125 plus mph. The entire trip was extraordinarily smooth with very little sound, no "clickety-clack," no bumps with just a slight swaying on curves.

About 30 minutes after our departure from Milan, a uniformed attendant passed through the coach serving complimentary hot coffee, soft drinks and sweet rolls. She was followed by the conductor who checked our reservations and EuroRail passes, which we had purchased here before we left.

Our only stop between Milan and Florence was in Bologna, about half way in between. Even at a major city stop like Bologna, and later when we rode EuroStar three other times, the train only paused briefly, perhaps five minutes at each station.

Our other three train rides were between Florence and Pisa, returning through the ancient walled city of Lucca. We journeyed from Florence to Venice then two days later, from Venice to Rome. And, with only one exception, each departure was on schedule. The tardy one was only 35 minutes late.

Four delightful train rides which are captured in my memory and on film. I'd like to take each one of them again tomorrow!

Narrow Gauge Railroading – a survey: Is anyone interested in narrow gauge, either model or prototype? If so, Drew Hackmeyer would like to hear from you. He can be contacted by phone at (850) 942-2536 or e-mail at drqw492@att.net.