Welcome to the Santa Clara Block, the quarterly newsletter of the South Bay Historical Railroad Society. We have had a great second quarter of 2023 with many activities in the Depot Museum, lots of visitors to our operating HO and N scale layouts as well as a very successful Open House held in April. Please join us at the Santa Clara Depot soon!

May 22, 2023
Photo: Brian Hitchcock
MANIFEST

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Announcements

Please review the activities shown here and plan to attend!

The Members meeting this month will be July 22nd at 11:30.

After July, Members meetings will be the second Saturday of odd months.

The Depot operating layouts are open each week on Tuesdays from 5-8pm and Saturdays from 10am-4pm.

We welcome new members, please see our website for more information sbhrs.org

Our next Open House will be in November, look for more details in upcoming newsletters!

Storytime at SBHRS

South Bay Historical Railroad Society
1005 Railroad Avenue, Santa Clara, CA 95050
Telephone: (408) 243-3969

The Third Saturday Of The Month
Time: 10:30 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.
Unless Otherwise Posted

Please join us for monthly Storytime at SBHRS with Heather Dunphy. Introduce your child to the world of trains and make new friends. Geared towards children under the age of 8, their siblings and friends. Must be accompanied by parent or caretaker.
MEET & GREET
South Bay Historical Railroad Society (SBRHS) Hosts
SCALETRAINS™

Location: 1005 Railroad Ave, Santa Clara, CA 95050

MONDAY, JULY 31, 2023 • 7:00 PM

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JOIN US FOR A SCALE TRAINS UPDATE
The Santa Clara Depot that we enjoy today has a long and colorful history and is made up of three (or four) parts. The original depot with its passenger waiting area, stationmasters’ office and baggage storage room is at the north end of the structure. Next is the freight house, which was extended so you could count it as one or two parts, and at the south end we have the former Acme Freight Company office. It seems appropriate that our board members are toiling away in the Acme offices – time to order more anvils!

Beep-beep!

The station is in the National Register of Historic Places as the oldest railroad station in California that was in continuous service. The ticket office was in use until 1997. It is also the only structure that remains from the first phase of construction of the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad (SF&S) which would become part of the Southern Pacific Railroad (SP) in 1870. Note that at this time, San Jose was the capital of California.
Building the Santa Clara Depot was started in 1859 before the Civil War. Rail service began in the fall of 1863 and the Depot was completed later that year. Rail service all the way to San Francisco began in January of 1864. The Depot's board-and-batten construction makes it distinctive as few examples of this type remain. The clear heart redwood used to build the Depot came from the local mountains.

The Depot is also unusual in that still and is largely in the original location. The Depot played a vital role in the growth of Santa Clara College which was started in 1851 and is now known as the Santa Clara University. The university was a stock holder in the SP so the location of the Depot, near the university was not a coincidence.
Santa Clara Depot looking south 1904-1905 photo taken from water tower below

Water tower where Santa Clara Police Department is now collapsed after 1906 earthquake
The local farming and fruit industries relied on the Depot to ship their products to market. When the transcontinental railroad was completed in May of 1869, the first fresh fruit shipment, a car full of pears, was sent from Santa Clara Depot to the east coast in October of the same year.

The Depot was originally built on the east side of the tracks, across the tracks from where it is now. It was moved in 1877 to where it is today so that it would be on the same side of the tracks as the city and university of Santa Clara. This reduced the safety issues of needing to cross the tracks to access the passenger and freight depot. The telegraph operator’s bay window was added as part of the move. The building as we know it has been in its current configuration since 1885.
Depot as seen from the northeast the telegraph operator is visible 1912

North end of Depot looking south 1912
South end of Depot looking north — what is now the Board Room 1912

SBHRS begins restoration 1985
The original structure was a way station measuring 24'x50'. When it was moved to the current location, it was joined to the existing freight house that was 32'x50' which had been built a few years before the move. The freight house was expanded to its present size of 32'x160' as the volume of freight being shipped increased.

In 1985 the South Bay Historical Railroad Society (SBHRS) was established and began restoring the building with a lease from Caltrans. The former baggage storage room now houses the SBHRS library, the original freight house is now the SBHRS meeting room and museum and the freight house extension now has both the HO and N scale operating layouts. What was the office of the Acme Freight Company has been restored as a turn of the century railroad boardroom.
THE CALTRAIN HOLIDAY TRAIN IS ALWAYS WELL DECORATED...

...AND ALWAYS STOPS AT SANTA CLARA DEPOT
Western Railway Historical Society

Chuck Sted along with a brave team of believers is building a new O-gauge layout in a secure, undisclosed location. Our stealth team was able to gain access to this highly secure facility and bring you these images of the progress so far. The prototype is located along Beaver Creek somewhere in the Great Northwest.

1802 crosses the bridge of what will soon be the wye to the second room.
Lots of wiring remains to be done

Wonderfully large radius curves for O scale
The cab forward passes Beaver Creek Depot
Cab Forward 4294 -- the detail in O scale is breathtaking

SP 2472 -- I thought it was in Schellille
The wye will lead to the second room of the layout.
Six photos showing progress in the second room of the layout.
1802 is ready to highball!
Depot Update

The Depot has seen a lot of activity during this quarter. We have many young visitors for Story Time in the museum and lots of trains are operating on the HO and N scale layouts on Saturdays and Tuesdays.

Various restoration and library projects are also underway.
Story Time continues to be popular...

...and our visitors will soon be off to enjoy the layouts next door.
Trains seen on the layouts

We see a great variety of trains operating on the HO and N scale layouts. Here are some photos of trains we saw recently.

Videos of these same trains in action are available at: eisenbahnfan.com/sbhrs/trackage-rights.
ACE Train bound for Altamont Pass

The very latest Amtrak power

CE Train bound for Altamont Pass
A quiet day at the diesel facility
Switch engines at rest

The Daylight pauses at Diridon

TS 3751 drifts through Diridon with the Express Mail
Beautiful new HO power from the lands to the north
Markers on the end of the local freight on the branch line

Taxis await arriving passengers

SP meets TS steam power south of Diridon
END SANTA CLARA BLOCK

MP 44.8

Caltrain Toy Train!