



Arizona Big Train Operators

Newsletter

Club web site: <http://azbigtrains.org>.

January 2007

Volume 15, No 1

President's Message

Happy New Year Garden Railroaders!

On December 3, 2006 ABTO had its annual Christmas party at the Ironworks Restaurant and it was another successful holiday event. I have received many comments about the party which have been very positive. This party did have a special element as Jerry McKenzie had prepared two award plaques to honor two very special members who have been with the club a very long time. Jack Slinkard was recognized for his original membership and first presidency, as well as overseeing the development of the bylaws. John Osborn was also recognized for being one of the original membership and his participation in the early days of the club. The awards were certainly a surprise to them judging by their expressions during the award ceremony. Jerry had put together two extremely nice plaques to express the club's appreciation to these two individuals. While John is a man of few words, it is safe to say that he and Jack were very surprised during the ceremony. It isn't often we get to put one over on Jack... While that was the highlight of the party, we did mention the 2007 Colorado rail fan trip that the activities committee is putting on. They are accepting signups starting this month and as space is limited to only 52 persons, you may want to book early. See Jim Kangas or Glenn Sampson for sign-up information.

On a different note, I would like to extend a word of "Thanks" to all of you who assisted on work crews at various member's railroads. I would like to make a special point of recognizing Jim Kangas as being instrumental in organizing the people and materials necessary to make the work parties successful. With the 2008 convention slightly over a year away, now is the time to begin to seriously look at your railroad, if you are on the bus or self-guided tour schedule. Please refer to the article on page 6 that addresses some of these issues.

We're looking forward to this month's train meeting at Dennis Serrine's home, and once again we will be treated to the largest train layout in the club. For those of you who were there last year, I'm sure that you are more than curious regarding the progress that has been made over the past year. While the layout is admittedly enormous, some changes are evident and you all are welcome to see for yourself. Dennis has added a piece of rolling stock that I hope he will be exhibiting which is the Southern Pacific 4-8-8-2 cab forward. Now this is a must see, as the model is exquisite and the sound system is second to none! It would be quite a show to see it pulling a string of reefers around the layout. I hope to see you all at the January meeting ready to start a whole new year of G-scale railroading! See page 9 for meeting details.

Remember, when the trains run, we all have fun!

Bob Rauperstrauch



Jerry McKenzie presents an award to Jack Slinkard as first president and devoted service to ABTO.



John Osborn receives his award for length of membership in ABTO.

ABTO Board Members

President
 Bob Rauperstrauch

Vice President
 Glenn Sampson

Secretary
 Roy Towne

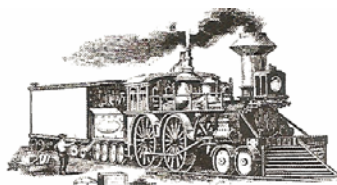
Treasurer
 Don Halver

Member at Large
 Gerry Pfeiffer

Newsletter Editor
 Sandy Rauperstrauch

LAST MINUTE CHANGES
 PLEASE NOTIFY the
 PRESIDENT or a
 BOARD MEMBER, or the
 NEWSLETTER EDITOR with
 information concerning a time,
 date, location change or can-
 cellation, in order that all mem-
 bers can be notified by Email
 and the Calling Tree can be
 activated in a timely manner.

Constructive comments are
 always welcome!



Calendar of Events
2007



Jan	20	11am - 2pm	<u>ABTO General Meeting</u> Dennis and Lizabeth Serrine
Feb	3	8am	<u>ABTO Board Meeting</u> Home Town Buffet 1312 N. Scottsdale Rd. - Scottsdale
	17	5 pm - 8pm	<u>ABTO General Meeting</u> Glenn and Katy Sampson
Mar	3	11am - 2pm	<u>ABTO Board Meeting</u> Home Town Buffet 1312 N. Scottsdale Rd. - Scottsdale
	9-11		<u>Modules</u> Ostrich Festival
	17	11am - 2 pm	<u>ABTO General Meeting</u> Pat & John Meyers
	24		<u>Modules</u> Adobe Mountain
	31	8am - 11am	<u>ABTO Board Meeting (for April)</u> Home Town Buffet 2730 W. Bell Rd. - Phoenix
April	1		<u>Spring Picnic</u> McCormick-Stillman RR Park
	7-8		<u>Spring open Houses</u>
	21		<u>NO ABTO General Meeting</u> Spring picnic is event for April
May	5	8am - 11am	<u>ABTO Board Meeting</u> Home Town Buffet 1312 N. Scottsdale Rd. - Scottsdale
	19	11am - 2pm	<u>ABTO General Meeting</u> Gerry Pfeiffer

There are several months in 2007 that need meeting hosts. June, July, August, September, and October are still open. Please call Glenn Sampson if you are interested in hosting a meeting.

2006 Christmas Tour Recap

By Ennis Thompson



When the holiday season is over, all eleven ABTO Christmas Open House Families can step back and analyze the pluses and minuses of this past experience. Since only about half of the people reported back to me about their programs, I can only state how the other half felt good about their past Open House.

Attendance was up 20% from the year before and most people felt their total was comfortable. Contributions for the Phoenix Children's Hospital (ABTO's charity of choice for this event) were very good. It was still nice to see so many children and adult's eyes shine as they watched the trains pass through in the night. Most attendees were two and three family generations enjoying an evening of trains, family, and Christmas spirit.

Two of the major accomplishments of the Open Houses were experience in preparation for the '08 National Convention Tours and the pulling together of ABTO by helping each other out during the four night openings. Since I am a member of a railroad club here in Sun Lakes, members of the club actually asked me if I needed any help. There are four members of ABTO who live in Sun Lakes now, but not in the local club. This is a great source for helpers during the convention. With our layout being new, several members helped us get our railroad ready for the tours. If it hadn't been for these members, we never would have made it.

Everyone seemed to think the four days was ample time to be open, but it still was a lot of hard work and dedication by all members to pull this off. Also, with the open houses it is a good time for new members to get involved and develop friendships within the club.

A closing evaluation is "How many people said, we'll see you next year?" We must have done something right.

President's note:

I apologize to all of you who had open houses at Christmas, that it may not have been clear, that your expenses were to be deducted from the donations. You should not have to absorb those costs out of pocket unless you choose to donate 100%. ABTO's board had decided that the charity of choice for this event was to be Phoenix Children's Hospital, with the donations sent to Don Halver. This will be the procedure for next Christmas unless otherwise mentioned.

Thanks Sandy, for the hours spent getting the maps put together, Gerry P. for lining up great newspaper contacts, and Ennis, for your hard work meeting with the newspaper journalists and getting the articles in place with photos, which really enhanced the total attendance.

Thanks to all who had open houses and I hope it was a fun experience for you showing off your trains at Christmas.



NEWS ARTICLES FROM THE RR WIRE

by Mike Lewandowski

Welcome to 2007. It appears that this year will bring more interesting electronics to the Large Scale industry. The LS world is anything but settled in what it wants. The vast majority of users employ straight track power. Battery RC is probably the second largest niche in the garden, but it is fragmented by the various proprietary RC makers. Thus, while DCC is the third largest niche, it is actually larger than any single RC solution. Manufacturers are racing to forge business relationships with many of the DCC sound and decoder manufacturers. This month will outline some general information.

- It looks like there will be plenty of new power/sound DCC track decoder options for 2007. Massoth and Zimo have Euro sounds currently and are scheduled to release American sounds soon. Loksound has a complete sound library that rivals Phoenix. It has been rumored that Lenz may enter the market in 07 as well. Most of these are rated for 3-5 amps so they may not be suitable for all engines, especially USA. It appears that the Large Scale DCC track market is finally being recognized by manufacturers.
- The Bachmann website has confirmed that the Sound equipped 55 ton 3 truck Shays have been shipped to dealers. These locos use the SoundTraxx Tsunami DCC sound decoder completely installed and programmed for an exact Shay sound profile.
- Lewis Polk of Aristo-Craft recently quoted that they are standardizing the wiring of the interior 12 pin DCC socket. This standard would go a long way to accelerating the popularity of DCC in the garden. He is also investigating a DC/DCC Sound solution.

DCC Websites & User Forums:

Airwire 9000: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AirWire/>

Aristo-Craft RC and Battery Forum: <http://www.aristocraft.com/>

DCC for Dummies (General DCC Q & A):

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DCC4EVERYONE/>

DCC WIKI: http://www.dccwiki.com/Category:Top_Level

Digitrax: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Digitrax/>

Lenz Digital Plus: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DigitalPlusbyLenz/>

Massoth Elektronik GmbH (THE OFFICIAL ELECTRONICS PARTNER OF LGB)

<http://www.massoth.com/index2.html>

North Coast Engineering (NCE): <http://groups.yahoo.com/subscribe.cgi/nce-dcc>

NCE/System One Group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/subscribe.cgi/nce-sys1>

Phoenix Sound Knowledge Base: <http://www.phoenixsound.com/kb/>

ZIMO DCC Systems: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Zimo-DCC/>

Next month: The building of a LGB MTS trailer car for battery and wireless operation.

Until Next Month, Happy Railroading!!!!

fun2rr@msn.com

An Overnight Rail-fan Getaway

By Linda Wendler

La Posada Hotel in Winslow, the “Last Great Railroad Hotel” and one of the original Harvey Houses, has been lovingly rehabilitated into an excellent overnight getaway for anyone interested in railroad history in the Southwest. As a plus, the hotel is right on Historic Route 66.



The hotel is one of the classic railroad hotels designed by Mary Colter, the greatest of all Southwest architects but had the misfortune of being opened just as the Great Depression hit the country. By 1959, the Santa Fe railroad decided to shed itself of the money-losing proposition, sold off the entire contents of the building and converted it to use as office space.

Although it is a National Historic Landmark, the building was in danger of being torn down when a trio of visionaries decided to take on the enormous task of bringing La Posada back to life. Although the restoration is still underway, the parts of the building that are currently open are simply magnificent and reflect the bygone era of luxury rail hotels. Be sure to view the video on the restoration that runs continuously in one of the many lounge areas. Then wander around and enjoy the artwork and furnishings that give the hotel its period ambience.

Our room was large and comfortable and reasonably priced for the type of accommodation. The hotel dining room, dubbed ‘The Turquoise Room’ after the Santa Fe dining cars of the period, is moderately upscale price-wise but the food justifies the prices. Breakfast was very reasonably priced and also of excellent quality. Try the bread pudding for breakfast or as a dessert. For additional atmosphere, the waitresses are dressed in Harvey Girl costumes and the service is excellent.

Winslow is about 170 miles from Apache Junction via Payson. Or, take the 17 out of Phoenix to Flagstaff, and then take 40 east to Winslow. More information is available on the hotel website at www.laposada.org

ABTO’s November meeting hosted by Arizona Garden Railway Society at Adobe Mountain.

The early pancake breakfast held in the club house was a huge success and quick presentations were made by Mike Lewandowski and Larry Hatch from AGRS.



Gail Halver and Sandy R. flip pancakes for the eager breakfast line. For those attending, it was a good time to socialize and eat with the delicious pot-luck breakfast selections that were brought.



A rare moment for ABTO presidents gathered together for breakfast. From left, Ennis Thompson, Jim Brown, Al Wendler, Bob Rauperstrauch, and seated, Jack Slinkard and Tony Vacek. Ed Dunshie not present.



After the meeting, tours of the various railroads were given as well as rides on the 1-1/2” railroad. It will be interesting to see progress being made on the G-scale RR.

This will be an event to be remembered and we will repeat it next Nov.