Trellis & Trestle

Volume XII, Number 8 Editors: Joseph & Irene Zajac August 1999

BAGRS Big Events!

September 19, 1999
BAGRS Swap Meet & BBQ

Mark your calendar now!

Wind Down from the Hectic Holidays!

Come to:

The Function at the Junction!

BAGRS Junction!

January 7-9, 2000

Vendors! Short Line! Prizes!

Be There with Your Fellow BAGRS!

HELP!

Volunteers needed for a variety of jobs for the Function at the Junction!

BAGRS Annual Meeting 2000

Call/Sign-Up.....Ken Martin 510•727•9296

or

Jack Verducci 650•341•4088

New Members

Marquardt, Don & Fatima
398 Whitclem
Palo Alto CA 94306
H: (650)493-7435
W: (510) 683-9234
F: (650) 493-7418
lizbryan@aol.com

McRory, Clayton
Jim & Carol McRory
2109 Clinton #D
Alameda CA 94501
H: (510)523-1258
F: (510) 865-9190
carra-baby

Nichols, Donna & Earl
5022 Glochester Ct
San Jose CA 95136
H: (408)365-9301

Overall, David
1121 Queenbridge Way
San Jose CA 95120
H: (408)323-9366

New Members

Stephenson, Bill & Barbara
4344 Haines Ave
San Jose CA 95136
H: (408)265-3715
W: (408) 565-2105
F: (408) 265-3715
waste576@aol.com

Stuff, Don & Elaine
1137 Corvallis Dr
San Jose CA 95120
H: (408)268-0875
d.e.stuff@juno.com

Welcome Back

Bradshaw, Scott & Louise
1050 Ralston #17
Belmont CA 94002
H: (650)592-8441
zugbug@hooked.net

Address Changes

Allen, Charlie
1681 Meadow Vista Rd
Meadow Vista CA 95722
H: (530)878-4202
F: (530) 878-4603

Blackmore, Ronald & Patricia
10705 Torrey Pine Rd
PO Box 4234
Truckee CA 96161
H: (650)359-6764
F: (650) 359-6764
transdr.@aol.com

Coleman, C Patrick & Kathy
1989 Robin Ridge Ct
Walnut Creek CA 94596
H: (925)820-2164
W: (510) 432-3399
F: (925) 820-2948
cpat@slip.net

Corley, Robert & Marisa
Eric Corley
85 Cedar Dr
Watkinsville GA 30677
H: (706)310-1189

Lonn, Wallace & Dorothy
8322 Marion Cir
Westminster CA 92683
H: (650)583-1064

Mara, Frank & Robin
Kathleen Mara
460 Ponza Ln
Soquel CA 95073
H: (408)557-8525
W: (408) 557-8525

Please!
Wear your BAGRS badge!
While attending BAGRS
Meetings
Open Houses
Short Line Events
Live Steamer Events
Your Badge—Identifies you
To your Host & Other BAGRS Members

From the President

By Jack Verducci

The West Coast Regional Meet hosted by the Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society (SVGRS) was a big success. Since Railfair was also taking place at the same time, it was a really great train weekend.

For those of you who have never been to a regional meet, they are more leisurely than a national convention. Tours are self-guided and railroads are open longer hours so generally there are fewer people at each railroad. This allows you to visit with the host and hostess and get a better look at the railway. SVGRS did a great job this year. Thank you SVGRS for your hospitality.

Speaking of the West Coast Regional Meet, we will be hosting the event in 2002. We do not have the date yet. The date will be set when we know when and where the National Garden Railway Convention will be held that year. Originally the group in Long Island, New York was going to host the "2002 National" but they had to cancel due to difficulties in securing a facility at a reasonable price.

An event a little closer at hand is the BAGRS annual meeting "The Function at the Junction" scheduled for January 7-9, 2000. We need help. We do have the nucleus crew, but we need volunteers for a variety of jobs at the event. As you know BAGRS is a team and it takes teamwork to make our functions successful. To sign up to help please call **Ken Martin** or me (see inside back page for numbers).

Wanted: Members to host an open house. We are looking for first timers whether the railroad is finished or not. We are looking for old timers who have not had an open house for a while and anyone else who would like to host an open house. An open house serves as an incentive to get things done.

If you're interested or not sure about it give me a call.

For Sale
LGB Engines, Cars, and Track

SASE for list or email: kcbruce@aol.com

Ken Bruce
1429 Kyle Ct
Sunnyvale CA 94087-3153
Phone/Fax 408-739-3269

August Open Houses

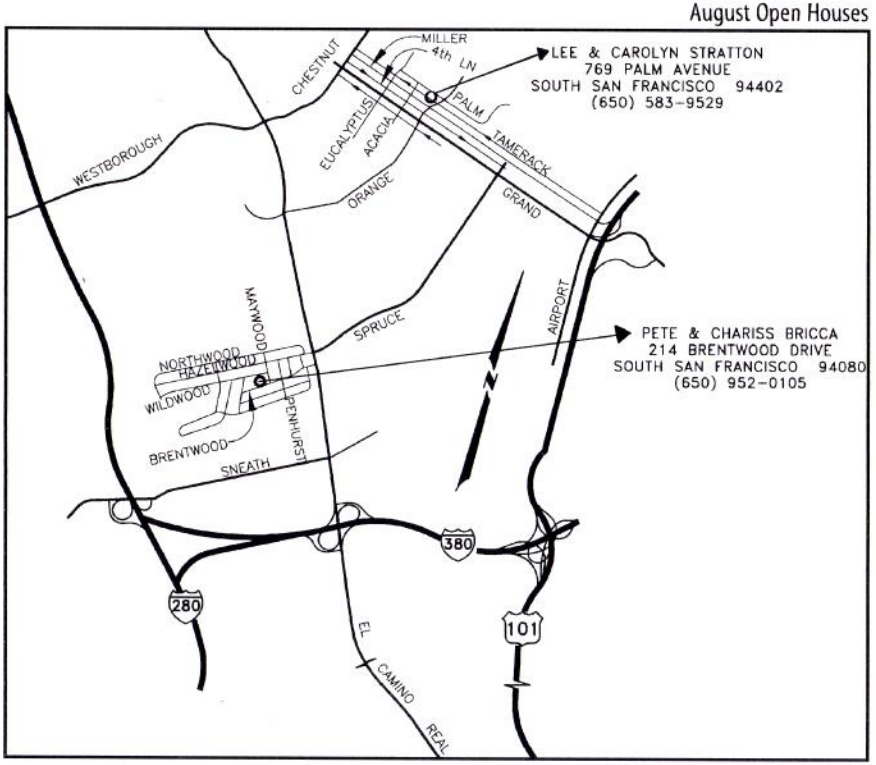
by Ken Martin

Due to a cancellation, the date and location of this month's open houses have been changed. The hours are still our standard Noon to 4 PM. Please be sure to wear your BAGRS badge.

August 22—Pete & Chariss Bricca, 214 Brentwood Drive, South San Francisco—(650) 952-0105. This eclectic railroad is an outstanding example of how much can be done effectively in a relatively small space. There is lots of action and many interesting points on this well designed layout. Guest trains are welcome, including steam. Enter through the garage.

August 22—Lee & Carolyn Stratton, 769 Palm Avenue, South San Francisco—(650) 583-9529. Early narrow gauge is the theme on this layout. Many interesting features, like the 8' mountain and 27' trestle over a large pond, make this a railroad at which to spend some time. It is still somewhat of a work-in-progress but well worth the visit. "Spectacular" is a good description. Guest trains are welcome (no steam). Enter at the left side of the house.

August Open Houses



Morgan Hill Railroad Days Huge Success

by Mark Grzan

The Morgan Hill Railroad days hosted in July was once again a huge success. Success by the families hosting the event is never rated on attendance but on the social opportunities it brings. The annual event brings us all together, and it is this gathering that makes the event worthwhile.

Months before the event the group begin planning. We begin by contacting each other, through whistle signals and email to determine a convenient date. A flyer is prepared and distributed. All of us work very hard in preparing our layouts. After the event our families got together for a celebration. Over the years it's either been at a local restaurant or at one of the layouts for a barbecue. This year we got together at the Bramlette's. There we run more trains and share the events of the day, many of which cause a belly laugh and more.

The idea of hosting a local or regional open house is not new to this organization. Over the years multiple open houses based upon geographic area have become more of the norm. Establishing and rotating regional open houses events can build local relationships and create new opportunities for local socialization. As an organization we are spread throughout the Bay Area. It's difficult to build relationships across water, bridges and great distances, but within each locality we ought to be able to get together to build closer relationships and even host other events as a small trunk line or a sort of maintenance-of-way crew of a larger organization.

The Morgan Hill GRRs have achieved this. Aside from the annual open house, we are active in other areas. A year or two ago we were invited to the rededication of the Gilroy Train Depot. With the help of **Gary Broeder** of Llagas Creek fame, we set up a portable layout and promoted the hobby before 2000 visitors. Two months ago we very much did the same at the rededication of the Centerville station in Fremont. Next month we will be back in Gilroy on August 14th and 15th to celebrate the Century Express and the new 20th Century Limited stamp (this is an awesome looking NEW steam locomotive featured stamp). The event is hosted by the US post office. The train station will display the Century Express, a specially outfitted Genesis #100 diesel locomotive with a consist of a baggage car, a modern exhibit car featuring Celebrate the Century stamps and related displays, along with a restored Southern Railway Post Office car and a pre-1940s business car. Recently promoted Commander **Bruce Walton** will coordinate the event.

Continued on page 6

Right in front of the Century Express, Morgan Hill Garden Railroaders will set up a new portable layout designed and graciously built by Llagas Creek. Over the two days we'll run trains, pass out BAGRS flyers and promote this wonderful hobby of ours. Aside from the event itself, enjoyment will come from the simple pleasure of being with friends and family.

This association among the Morgan Hill GRRs came about though local organization fostered by hosting a regional/ City wide open house. The group reaches out to participate in many other events. I hope that as an organization BAGRS continues to encourage regional open houses, to promote and foster local organization. By doing so we stimulate local relationships, and camaraderie, which strengthens the larger organization thereby insuring our continued and prosperous growth.

Size Matters

By Mark Grzan

I enjoy writing an article or two in this newsletter. It allows me to share thoughts and to receive information from other hobbyists. The articles are all very important and can not be found anywhere else. The hobby is by most standards very young and finding resources can be extremely difficult. Where else can you find an article that tells you how to rotate the crank pins on the Bachmann Climax to achieve prototypical sound or maps to Swanton and other places? At one time, the *Trellis & Trestle* was produced on standard 8 $\frac{1}{2}$" x 11" paper stock. The cover was heavy and one could three-hole punch the whole publication and place it in a binder for easy reference.

Today, it has been cut significantly down in size though it is now published monthly, but its lack of size will be its demise. I've lost at least two previous publications and I fear that I will lose others. The paper quality has been reduced to that of tissue paper. I've heard some say that the new size fits in your back pocket. Which is true but I am afraid that is where it stays. Oh gawd!, the thought just occurred that I should perhaps check the laundry room for remnants of those two missing publications!

Time for a return to the past. Time to restore funding to the original publication and its size. Our dues have gone up and I believe there is sufficient resources to cover those costs. It is the only publication that links our members and therefore is vital to it. If you agree with me let your Board know, or email me at mgrzan@ix.netcom.com and I will pass along your thoughts.

ADVENTURES IN BACHMANNLAND

by Ken Martin, the Bachmann Guy

There are some exciting things going on in Bachmannland, both with product upgrades and aftermarket items.

The Big Hauler ten-wheeler has undergone its umpteenth upgrade. This time it looks like the Bachmann people finally got it right. They did it so quietly that even **Dick Maddox**, Bachmann VP, didn't know about it.

I recently received a Bachmann "Tweetsie" set. I wanted it because the last existing East Tennessee & Western North Carolina locomotive, #12, is still running at the "Tweetsie" amusement park in Blowing Rock, North Carolina, and I felt it would complement all my other ET&WNC equipment. When I first ran the engine, I noticed it had excellent extreme low speed performance. I figured I just got lucky and got a good one. But the sound wasn't working.

I checked it out and determined that everything from the engine connector plug on back was OK so the problem had to be in the locomotive. I removed the bottom plate from the loco to see what the problem was. Revelation time!! What I found was a completely new drive and power pick up system! I also found a broken sound switch wire.

The drive resembles the previous one but now has an idler gear and appears to be geared slightly lower. The important thing is the gears fit right! Operation is the bet I have ever seen in a ten-wheeler.

The other thing that improves the operation is an entirely new system of getting power from the wheels. There are no more contact brushes riding against the back of the drivers. Instead they have widened the axle bushings and have long brass arms mounted on the bottom plate that contact the bushings. No more burned out brush springs! This system is similar to the one used in the Porter which makes it run so well. Also a nice little touch is small plugs where the motor wires connect to the brass pickup arms so you don't have to leave the plate dangling on the wires when you service the locomotive.

Another item that makes it run well is the front drivers are now articulated so they can rotate from side to side for better track contact. This is something I advocated a couple of years ago so I am glad to see Bachmann is listening.

With all these improvements, it is the best running ten-wheeler to date, even better than some I have worked over with some success. These engines can be identified by looking at the bottom plate. The little bulge for the gear is now smaller and offset to one side. Other than that, everything else looks the same. Unfortunately, these locos are not sold separately

but can be found in the "Tweetsie", "Bumble Bee", "Great Northern Express", "Rocky Mountain Express", and "Prospecter" sets. Now if Bachmann will only do something about the front truck, the ten-wheeler will have virtually the same quality that is present in all of their other current products.

While wandering around the Big Train Show last June, I came across the Hillside Railway booth. Hillside normally specializes in firebox lights but now has a new product that is a must for every Shay owner. They are producing brass wheel contact kits for the Shay. One of the most recurring problems with the Shay has been melted wheel contacts, especially on those that have had the Phoenix Big Boost installed. One of mine had a melted contact housing and I don't have a Big Boost. As with the early ten-wheelers, Bachmann has insisted on running all the power current through inadequate contact springs. When any extra load is applied, these springs light up like a light bulb, lose their springiness, and melt the plastic contact housing, so nothing works anymore. The Climax and now the current ten-wheeler are the first large locomotives in which they have departed from this practice.

Anyway, the Hillside sets are all brass so the current is carried through the housing rather than the springs. I have installed these kits in both my Shays and highly recommend them. They are easy to install (in the 25 to 30 minute area if you don't have to do too many gymnastics getting the little balls in). The kits are complete and include eight new contact balls and a small Allen wrench that is used on the installation. They vastly improve Shay operation. The instructions are very good and well illustrated. The only thing missing is the part that tells you to put the flat side of the housings toward the bottom of the engine. If this isn't done, the bottom plate won't go back on properly. If you think your Shay runs well now, wait until you see it with one of these kits in it! **Dick Maddox** was so impressed, when I showed him the kit, he took the time to go talk to the Hillside people!

To obtain these kits, contact **Dennis Kliesen**:

Hillside Railway
25746 Po Ave
Mission Viejo, CA 92691
Phone: (949) 586-6292
Fax: (949) 768-8705
Email: HillsideRy@aol.com

They are $40.00 plus tax (if any) and $4.00 S&H and each kit contains all the stuff for one engine. This is another "Try it. You'll like it"!

Chatty Choo Choo

ONE-OF-A KIND THE TRAIN PLACE

The Train Place a casual, family-friendly sandwich shop opened just a few months ago already has a loyal following of sandwich lovers—and *model train fans.*

Six "G" gauge trains run through a detailed model railroad which surrounds diners. Extras: To go, large order discounts and trains, trains, trains!

The Train Place is located at: 5340 Scotts Valley Drive, Scotts Valley

Open	Monday—Saturday 11 AM to 7:30 PM
Summer	Sundays 11 AM to 4 PM (June 6 — August)

WHO'S IS CHARGE AND WHO'S DOING WHAT!
WANT TO BE A PART OF THESE SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS?
THEY'RE WAITING FOR YOUR CALL.

BAY AREA GARDEN RAILWAY SOCIETY
LIVE steamers

Interested in Live Steam?
Contact: Harlan Barr
510•278•2699

SHORT LINE MODULE Coordinator

Bruce Jahn
925•455•9409
or
bjahn@home.com

BAGRS Annual Calendar of Events (Revised 6/3/99)

August 10
Board Meeting—5 PM
Sherman Zell's office/San Jose

August 15
BAGRS Open House
Arul & Gauri Tandavan/San Francisco

August 23—27
LGBMRRC Convention
Durango, Colorado

September 18 & 19
BAGRS Short Line
Truckee Railroad Days/Truckee

September 19
BAGRS Swap Meet & BBQ
Ken & Pat Martin/Castro Valley

September 25 & 26
BAGRS Short Line
Taste of Morgan Hill

October 5
Board meeting—7 PM
Coco's Restaurant/Sunnyvale

October 17
BAGRS Open Houses—TBA

November 21
BAGRS Open Houses—TBA

November 27 & 28
BAGRS Short Line—GATS
Pleasanton Fair Grounds

December 5
BAGRS Annual Christmas—Tour #1

December 7
Board Meeting—5 PM
Sherman Zell's office/San Jose

December 12
BAGRS Annual Christmas—Tour #2

2000—Calendar of Events

January 7-9 BAGRS/Bay Area
2000 BAGRS Annual Meeting
Crown Plaza—Foster City

July-August 21st Century Limited
(NMRA National Convention)

July 5-9 San Diego, CA
16th Garden Railway Convention

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Conventions & Meets

2000
16TH National Garden Railway Convention
July 5-9, 2000
San Diego, California

2001
17TH National Garden Railway Convention
Seattle, Washington

2002
West Coast Regional Meet
BAGRS/Bay Area

2002
18TH National Garden Railway Convention
Location—To be announced

2003
19TH National Garden Railway Convention
Sacramento, California

2004
West Coast Regional Meet
Location—To be announced

2004
20TH National Garden Railway Convention
Denver, Colorado

Short Line Module—Coordinator
Bruce Jahn
Phone: 925•455•9409 or bjahn@home.com

BAGRS BOARD

President—Jack Verducci—San Mateo (650) 341-4088

Vice-President
Ken Martin
Castro Valley (510) 727-9296

Secretary
Bonnie McGhee
Los Altos (650) 968-0599

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Sherman Zell
San Jose (408) 997-1992

Board Members

David Gill
San Jose (408) 371-7472

Al McCracken
Santa Clara (408) 249-2953

Chuck Sanfilippo
Sunnyvale (408) 736-4541

Membership Committee

Chairperson—Irene Zajac (541) 779-3420

Area (408)
Mark Grzan 778-7816

Areas (510 & 925)
John & Barbara Bierie (925) 736-1120

Area (650)
Leo Schlocker 341-0731

Hospitality Committee

Mark Grzan—(408) 778-7816 Al McCracken—(408) 249-2953

Scheduling Coordinator
Ken Martin—(510) 727-9296

Club Historian
Chuck Sanfilippo—(408) 736-4541

BAGRS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting Schedule

Meetings start @ 7 PM

1st Tuesday
every other month

August 10, 1999
October 5, 1999
December 7, 1999
February 2, 2000
April 4, 2000
June 6, 2000

BAGRS Baggage Car

BAGRS Apparel Source

Items are blue with BAGRS logo in yellow.

Jackets	All Sizes		$35
T-Shirts	Adult Sizes	(M, L, XL)	$10
		(XXL)	$12
		(XXXL)	$15
	Youth Sizes	(S, M, L)	$6
Caps	Mesh (Adjustable)		$6
Caps	Poplin (Adjustable)		$8
Golf Shirts w/Pocket		(L,XL,XXL, XXXL)	$20
Sweat Shirts	(L, XL)		$15
		(XXL)	$20
		(XXXL)	$25
Tote Bags		Small 14"	$10
Coffee Mugs—Blue w/Yellow Logo			$5

To order:

- List the items you wish to purchase (be sure to note sizes).
- Send a check for the total amount plus 15% for shipping to:

Ken Martin—3785 Somerset Ave., Castro Valley, CA 94546
510•727•9296

Deadline for *Trellis & Trestle* 10th of every month

Newsletter Editors

Joseph & Irene Zajac—(541) 779-3420 Fax (541) 779-5069 E-mail: zajac@aol.com

Mail all submissions to:
BAGRS Editors
424 Girard Drive
Medford, OR 97504-6314

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Submissions are due by the 10th of the month preceding publication. Any format is acceptable. Line drawings and black/white artwork are not only acceptable but desirable and can be scanned in for inclusion in the newsletter. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and length.

BAGRS Timetable

August 1999	
~~15—Layout Tour~~	~~Arul & C~~ CANCELLED ~~5 Clement Street~~ ~~San~~ ~~415•751•7698~~
22—Layout Tour	Pete & Chariss Bricca—214 Brentwood Dr South San Francisco—650•952•0105
22—Layout Tour	Lee & Carolyn Stratton—769 Palm Ave South San Francisco—650•583•6529
September 1999	
18 &19—BAGRS Short Line	Truckee Railroad Days
19—BAGRS Swap Meet & BBQ	Pat & Ken Martin—3785 Somerset Avenue Castro Valley —510•727•9296
25 & 26—BAGRS Short Line	Taste of Morgan Hill
October 1999	
5—BAGRS Board Meeting	Board meeting—7 PM Coco's Restaurant/Sunnyvale
17—Layout Tour	BAGRS Open Houses—To Be Announced

••• Layout tour hours are Noon until 4 PM Unless Otherwise Noted •••
Please respect these hours for the benefit of our hosts.

BAGRS Members are welcomed to attend Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society events.
Contact Judy Arrigotti at—916•933•4663 for directions and times.

BAGRS—*Trellis & Trestle*
Joseph & Irene Zajac—Editors
424 Girard Drive
Medford, OR 97504-6314

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