



The Semaphore

North County Model Railroad Society (NCMRS)
Boney's Market, 2nd Floor
1820 Oceanside Boulevard, Oceanside CA 92054
(760) 722-7366

Work Schedule

Thursday and Saturday are work days at the club. There are plenty of tasks to perform.

Visitor Schedule

Thursday 3 - 8:00PM
 Saturday 9:30AM*- 4PM
 *11:00AM meeting days

Upcoming Operations Dates

Tuesday, May 5
 Setup time 1:00 pm
 First Departure 4 pm
 Last Departure 7 pm

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The Chicago Loop. Wabash Ave. at Lake St., looking North

President's Message

A Great Club

Next January NCMRS will celebrate its 20th anniversary. We have come a long way from our beginnings in a store front at 817 San Marcos Boulevard. It has been interesting for me to track the clubs history and understand how we have evolved into the very active club we are today.

I am relatively new to the club having been a member for just 3½ years, so I don't have a lot of direct knowledge of the club in the pre-Boney's era. I have learned some things from our long time members. As near as I can figure out, Tom Ashton and Charlie Tucker are the most senior members, having joined the club in 1992. These two and the group that joined the club after 1994 at the Melrose location have all seen a lot of changes during the years of the club's existence.

When the club moved to Boney's in December of 2004, and decided to build a permanent layout, I am not sure the members realized what a momentous decision was being made. A lot has been said and written about the cultural change from 15 years of building and operating a modular model railroad, to starting over in the planning and construction of a permanent railroad. I think it is safe to say that we successfully made the change. Our museum quality railroad, which is being built with extensive planning and a lot of consensus building, is proof that we have successfully made the transition.

We are told that we are part of a hobby that is in a slow decline. When you look at the growth of NCMRS, that has certainly not been our experience. I am told that we had 24 members when we made the move to Boney's. We now have 51 members.

I am amazed at what we have accomplished since making the move. The infrastructure work at the club, and the railroad construction is the result of the ongoing efforts of a lot of very skilled members. All of this is very visible. What is less evident

is the detailed planning, specification writing, training and administration activities that all come together to make our club what it is today.

I believe that we are the most visitor friendly model railroad club in the county. Visitors to our club have said very complementary things to me regarding the excellence of our railroad, and about our engaging and helpful members. It is no wonder that our membership continues to grow.

I see a lot of energy in our members. Our monthly formal operating session has evolved into a great evening of prototypical operation. Our newly adopted training program is excellent. This program will increase the competence and skill level of our entire membership. We have recently spent a lot of time planning how to modify the Peninsula D tracks to allow entry into the back room expansion area. Almost immediately after the track plan was approved a construction crew went to work. I expect the track work will be complete by the time you read this.

There is a lot of energy and enthusiasm in our club today. All of you are what make our club great. Pat yourselves on the back for a job well done

All aboard ,

Dick Miller, 5/1/09



Buy, Sell, or Trade (This column will appear each month if there is sufficient interest.)

Pennsylvania 4-4-2 (circa 1952). This is a nice example of an Atlantic locomotive. Just the thing for Pennsy fans or collectors. Checked out by the NCMRS maintenance department. Price \$37.57. Contact Dick Miller

Mantua Southern Pacific 0-6-0. Near new. Shows a little wear. Just the thing for the family Junior Engineer. Price \$12.57. Contact Dick Miller



Waiting for the Train in Budapest

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The Afghanistan National Railway

By Howard Levine

Many years ago my cousin Laura was the Executive Secretary at the Broadway Department Store, at University Towne Center. As such, she new every employee at the store, and many of its sometimes strange customers*. But most of all, she knew Paulette.

Paulette was a saleslady in the shoe department, but more importantly she had had an exciting and eventful life, including marriage (since dissolved) to the heir apparent of a large Canadian fortune. She had traveled extensively, and frequently regaled Laura with stories of her world wide adventures. These I learned of second hand, when Laura would visit, only to greet me with the words "Guess what Paulette told me last week!" I don't recall most of these stories, but one in particular I do, because it is related to railroading.

It seems that on one jaunt, Paulette was by herself in Afghanistan, traveling about on the National Railway. During one trip, an argument broke out between two men who were sharing the compartment with her. When the violence escalated, the train was stopped, police boarded, and then entered the compartment.

The men were calmed and then questioned. Because she did not speak Afghani, Paulette was not certain as to the questions, but from the ensuing events she could surmise their nature. After a few minutes of conversation, both the men and two police officers began to chuckle in amusement, and shortly thereafter the two men, simultaneously, pointed at Paulette. Whereupon she was immediately arrested, removed from the train, and hauled off to the local jail.

Luckily for her, the jail was in a town where her ex-husband's company had a local representative, so after a few days of effort she was able to get herself released. She did not explain how she left Afghanistan in the aftermath, but obviously did so, and eventually worked her way to the Broadway.

When I was told this story I was puzzled, since it seemed to fly in the face of my admittedly limited knowledge of British occupied India. I seemed to recall that the British had built a railroad from inside India (now Pakistan) up to the Khyber Pass, with the intention of continuing over the Pass and down into Afghanistan. However, I also recalled that the project was halted at the Pass by a combination of financial difficulty and tribal warfare. So, if I remembered correctly, there were no railroads in Afghanistan.

Of course, I checked this out at once in of my old reliable Encyclopedia Britannica.

And there in Volume 1, page 245, of the 1963 Edition appeared the indelible words: "Communications: There are no railways and virtually no navigable rivers in Afghanistan."

So here is the railroad question of the month: Who is right: the Encyclopedia Britannica (and me) or my cousin's old friend Paulette? Do not answer too hastily. The wrong answer may cause you serious trouble with Paulette, and also with Laura.

* As Executive Secretary, Laura had the final word about questionable returns by irate and/or oddball customers. Unfortunately, the very funny stories she told me don't have the "railroad angle" required for publication here.

