



THE ORDERBOARD

News from Houston N'Crowd



August 2009



Trains are running on the BC&G!

Despite a few last minute problems, the first official run on the N'Crowd's new Bayou City & Gulf took place on Aug. 19. The passenger extra was made up of members' cars primarily representing railroads that connect with the BC&G. Turn to page 4 for more photos and details on this exciting event!

At left, the BC&G special pulls away from the depot at Bennett. Below, members await the delayed train's arrival while Ray Byer does some electrical troubleshooting.



"GREEN EYE" - CLEAR BLOCK

by Ted Davis, President

We must have done something right because we had 17 members present at the August meeting! I don't know if it was the 2003 mug giveaway, the reduced price on 2003 polo shirts, the desire to share comradeship or the first official run on the layout. In any case, we were glad so many people could make it.

Now we no longer own any 2003 mugs unless there is another box lurking in the shadows. We sold seven shirts at \$5 each so we have only nine left in stock. Do I smell a two-for-one sale in the making?

We had two former members reenlist this month. They are the Valdez brothers, Dominic and Jason! Welcome back!

I know everyone has been enjoying the recent *Orderboards*. Be sure to tell Tom what a great job he is doing. At this point I would like to encourage you to write an article about your layout and include a few photos to be published in a future issue. In fact, your article can be about a layout you are planning to build or your collection of railroad models, or another topic. Gordon Bliss has promised us an article on Santa Fe's Big Dome lounge cars in the near future.

Included on page 6 in this month's *Orderboard* is the updated edition of the club's Truck Pin Color Chart. This represents your reserved color(s) to paint your truck pins in order to distinguish your cars from those belonging to others when they are on the layout. Please confirm your choice or reserve available colors now by sending me an email. The updated Truck Pin Color Chart will be posted in the layout room.

We are currently working on the Club Loco Roster as both the electronic and paper copies are

missing since the move from the old store. There seems to be some confusion as to what type and how many BC&G decorated locos we had at that location. I am told we had a total of 10 which were painted by Loren Neufeld years ago. I remember about six on the former layout. Marty Giesecke recently sent me the following information:

"Back in the days that the N'Crowd hung out at Pearlman Productions, we had a number of U-25Bs, SD-40s and U-30Cs. I may still have the parts for the U-25Bs. They stopped running years ago due to drive train slippage issues. I needed to rebuild the drives or place each of the old body shells on a new chassis. The problem with the latter option is that the old body shells and the new body shells are just different enough that the old ones don't fit the new chassis well. I know that a couple of the SD-40s and U-30Cs melted their truck frames. Some of these were repaired with truck replacements. I don't know what happened to all those locos, though we did have them when we first were building our layout at the old Papa

Ben's. None of them had decoders, to my recollection."

The loco roster appears on page 6 and is also posted in the layout room for reference and updating.

In the "oversight" department, Eddie Aycock will fill the vacancy in the Board of Directors. His term starts immediately. This was a position we failed to fill last year.

In other business, I have sent an inquiry to the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club to see if we can be on the fall layout tour schedule. Note we have participated in the past but last year we were in the process of moving. They have tentatively scheduled us for the weekend of Dec. 5-6. Now yours truly must write directions and a layout description to be included in the tour information. I hope some of you will jump on board to man an open house. Note there will be no construction performed that weekend, but we will need help with housekeeping to make a good presentation.

Finally, Happy Birthdays go to Dominic Valdez and Eric Baugham who have birthdays in August.

Houston N'Crowd 2009 Officers and Volunteers

President	Ted Davis	tedjr1@swbell.net
Vice President	Steve Lancaster	jlancaster1973@sbcglobal.net
Secretary	Rick Gonzalez	qqe3985@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Tom Marsh	tom@houstonNcrowd.org
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Board Member	Gordon Bliss	gtbliss@aol.com
Board Member	Eddie Aycock	efaycock@aol.com
Layout Master	Charlie Aselin	caace@hal-pc.org

Houston N'Crowd Membership Meeting Report

August 19, 2009 - Prepared by Rick Gonzalez

Meeting called into session at 7:11 pm, Aug. 19, 2009.

President's Report

- Introductions
- Missing member call to Doc Moore - no answer. Vince Walker was the next call.
- President Ted Davis will not attend next meeting as he will be in New York attending his son's wedding.
- Ted brought in TV dinner trays for use in layout construction.
- Homework - Tom Wayburn brought in some trees he had been working on.
- It has been determined that the Milby Shops did have a roundhouse. As to when it was demolished and how many stalls it had has yet to be discovered.
- Membership surveys - 17 have been received.
- Dominic Valdez and Jason Valdez have renewed their membership. The motions passed unanimously.
- Ted found some of the club's old newsletters. He passed them around for those interested in seeing them.
- Ebay sales - In the past month, Ted has sold approximately \$70 worth of cars. He has one buyer in Canada, but Ted is not sure that he wants to ship to Canada because of the hassle. The club's website has the convention car 2-pack listed at \$65. There have been very few sales through the website and Ted wondered whether we should remove the price. Gordon and Rick argued that we should leave it so those who buy them on ebay can see what a great bargain they got.
- The truck pin color guide has been located. Members who were present were allowed to review their information and make changes as necessary.

Vice President's Report

The Orderboard will feature a monthly column highlighting member's layouts and model train collections. Any volunteers for next month's column?

Treasurer's Report

- We are still waiting on a second bid for the club's shirts.
- A check for approximately \$300 was written to Papa Ben's to settle our account.

Secretary's Report

- We have 18 members in attendance at today's meeting. That's the most we've had all year!

- Any change of information can be sent to the secretary for updating. 2-3 members had changes.
- The official roster will be updated this weekend and sent to the President.
- The board of directors has a vacancy. Eddie Aycock was nominated to fill the post until the election in November. The motion carried. Per the club's by-laws, a list of nominees will be due at the October meeting to fill positions. The list will be published and a vote will be held in November. Please consider running for office!

Old Business

Last meeting Ray Byer introduced and then tabled a motion to buy Ted Davis' tools for the club pending a cost estimate. A combo kit was found for \$289. The motion was reinstated to replace Ted's tools, and it passed with 15 in favor, two against, including President Davis.

New Business

- Show & Tell - Kirk Poorman went to see the Amtrak train that Disney commissioned to promote their upcoming movie, "A Christmas Carol." He said that it was a long three hour wait in the hot Houston summer, but that it was worth it. He took some pictures and shared them with his fellow members.
- The San Jacinto Model Railroad Club's open house tour begins in mid-October. The club does not have a date scheduled, but we will see about being included on the tour.
- After the meeting, the club will run an inaugural train on the Bayou City & Gulf. Members were invited to bring a passenger car for the train.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was passed at 7:59 pm.

Members present:

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Gordon Bliss | 10. Dominic Valdez |
| 2. Kirk Poorman | 11. Ted Davis |
| 3. Tom Wayburn | 12. Ray Byer |
| 4. Steve Redd | 13. Eddie Aycock |
| 5. Vern Burnett | 14. Frank Wyatt |
| 6. Rick Townsend | 15. James Senneff |
| 7. Steve Lancaster | 16. Rick Gonzalez |
| 8. Bob Folser | 17. Tom Marsh |
| 9. Jason Valdez | 18. Robert Moore DDS |



Trains are running on the BC&G! *from page 1*

N’Crowd members interchanged 14 passenger and head-end cars to the BC&G for the railroad’s “First Official Run” special train.

Unfortunately, after an initial mechanical inspection by the BC&G car inspectors, two of the cars had to be bad ordered and excluded from the train. One car, the round-end observation *Houston* N’Crowd special run car commemorating the first national N scale convention in 1983, had a defec-

tive rear coupler. Another, a nice-looking 19th century wood coach, turned out to be too light for service in the heavy train.

In addition, last-minute problems with the scheduled motive power, BC&G U-30C No. 4130, resulted in the substitution of BC&G B-23s No. 4025 and 4016, which performed well.

The full consist is shown in the table below.



Bayou City & Gulf Passenger Extra 4025 “First Official Run” August 19, 2009		
Road No./Name	Type	Owner
BC&G 4025	GE B-23	BC&G
BC&G 4016	GE B-23	BC&G
UP 5665	baggage	Dominic Valdez
ATSF	combine	Charlie Aselin
SP Golden Crest	sleeper	Steve Lancaster
CZ Silver Bronco	dome coach	James Senneff
SP 2473/2474	artic. coach	Jason Valdez
SP 3601	dome coach	Phillip Senneff
CZ Silver Ranch	dome coach	James Senneff
ATSF 501	dome lounge	Gordon Bliss
ATSF 1490	diner	Tom Marsh
Oilers the dome	dome lounge	Tom Marsh
BC&G Houston	Business Car	BC&G
UP Nob Hill	Observation	Kyle Senneff

Thanks to everyone who participated!



Above: Eastbound BC&G Extra No. 4025 glides into Bennett behind BC&G high-nose B-23s. The GEs substituted for ailing BC&G U-30C No. 4130, which suffered an apparent traction motor failure just before departure.

Opposite page, below: The BC&G “First Official Run” departs Bennett.

Below: The special on the return westbound run passes through Bennett.



Houston N'Crowd Truck Pin Color Chart: July 2004

	Purple	Brown	Gray	Silver	White	Green	Blue	Yellow	Orange
Red		Eddie Ayccock		James Senneff	Steve Redd	Rick Gonzalez	Steve Lancaster	Vince Walker	Gordon Bliss
Orange									
Yellow			Ray Byer	N/A		Frank Wyatt		Ted Davis	
Blue			Charlie Aselin		Tom Marsh		Sven Engdorf		
Green			Doc Moore	Dominic Valdez	Al Hague	Marty Giesecke			
White									
Silver				Terry Hooks					
Gray			Rick Townsend						
Brown									
Purple	Club Equipment								

BC&G LOCO ROSTER (REVISION 2 - 8/22/09)

BC&G OWNED

ROAD NUMBER	RR	DCC/DC	MODEL	PAINT	STATUS
1471	BC & G	DCC	SD-9	BLUE	RTR
4002	BC & G	DCC	B-23	BLACK	RTR
4016	BC & G	DCC	B-23	BLACK	RTR
4025	BC & G	DCC	B-23	BLACK	RTR
4130	BC & G	DC	U-30C	BLUE	RTR
5453	BC & G	DCC	SD-40	BLUE	RTR
5464	BC & G	?	SD-40	BLUE	BAD ORDER

BC&G LEASED

ROAD NUMBER	RR	DCC/DC	MODEL	PAINT	STATUS
34	AMTRAK	DCC	P-42	SILVER	BAD ORDER
539	BNSF	DCC	8-40B W	WARBONNET	RTR
1288	UP	DCC	RSC-2	YELLOW	BAD ORDER
1293	UP	DCC	RSC-2	YELLOW	CLEAN & LUBE
2380	UP	DDC	SD-60M	YELLOW	CLEAN & LUBE
6053	SP	DCC	E8/9-A	DAYLIGHT	RTR
8034	CHICAGO & NW	DC	SD-60	YEL/GRN	BAD ORDER
747 / 714	AMTRAK	DCC	MP-15	SILVER	RTR
N/A	N/A	DC	PA-1 & PB-1	UNDEC	RTR

The Dangers of the Internet

by Jason Shron, President
Rapido Trains Inc.

Over the past couple of weeks I have been reminded of the perils of paying attention to the internet for market research. Theoretically, as the internet is a democracy, it should theoretically be an accurate cross section of age groups, modelling interests, favourite prototypes, etc. But the problem is that theory and reality are often far apart from each other. This is especially acute in our hobby, where most modellers are in their 50s and 60s, but the majority of internet users is much younger.

Consider the internet forums. Chat groups, like CanModelTrains and the Atlas Forum are great places to hang out and talk about model trains with like-minded people who understand your passion. But if you were to peruse the (pretty awesome) modelling that is most often showcased on these forums, you would be forgiven for thinking that the most popular thing to model out there is modern freight. In actual fact, the 1950s are still modelled by more than twice as many people as the modern era.

CanModelTrains is a great forum for talking about Canadian topics, but you'd be forgiven for thinking that 93 out of 100 Canadian modellers are

in HO scale, six are in N scale, and one is in G (his name is Dave and his modelling is fantastic). Of course, the actual breakdown according to industry surveys is nothing like that.

This causes a real dilemma to manufacturers as most of us are fairly well integrated into the internet. We read and participate in the forums, we visit web sites, and most importantly, we receive hundreds of emails from current and potential customers with requests for specific models. It is possible for a handful of very dedicated fans of a rare prototype to talk about it so much on the internet and contact so many manufacturers that we end up with more than one model of an oddball prototype from different manufacturers and only a handful of people who actually want one! Believe me, it's happened.

When we showed our FP-9A sample at the National Train Show, photos of it started to float around the internet... without the card that was beside it stating that it was just a test model and we were still making changes. The debate which ensued (on the CanModelTrains list, especially) was massive, even though it was started by comments from just a handful of people... Reading



At left, Rapido Trains' new HO FP-9 will be the first mass-produced, ready-to-run model of this locomotive with Canadian prototype details. In addition the Rapido model will provide a level of detail top and bottom not seen in earlier models.

After inspecting the pre-production samples shown here, Rapido president Jason Shron determined that a number of modifications were needed, including a reworking of the headlight casing and nose profile.

these emails, you would think that everyone and his brother has ordered an FP9A. Oh, if only that were true...

The reality is, the internet has shown not only to be an inaccurate gauge of modelling interests, but internet discussion forums can give a skewed impression on what model railroaders feel to be of genuine importance.

The internet, by its democratic nature, will never be a totally reliable snapshot of our hobby. However, the means to improving it is in your hands. There are hundreds (sometimes thousands) of people on the model railroad internet discussion forums who enjoy them as passive bystanders. I have personally met well over two hundred transition-era modellers who have told me they are on various forums but don't participate. This tells me the transition era is not being represented in the mainstream forums as well as it could.

Sometimes people stay in the sidelines for fear of having their comments proved "inaccurate" or their modelling efforts laughed at. If you actually build model trains, you are light years ahead of the armchair guys. You should share your modelling, even if your buildings are in LEGO and your road vehicles are your old Hot Wheels. If you've got a train running, you are model railroading. It's worth taking part, sharing your work, and discussing your favourite modelling techniques and prototypes. The more people contribute, the more accurate a cross-section of modelling tastes and experiences we will see on the internet.

Jason and the staff at Rapido Trains invite your questions and comments about their products at www.rapidotrains.com or by telephone at 1-877-738-6445. This article reprinted with permission of Rapido Trains.

A new Rapido Trains N scale coach visits the BC&G. The models have a level of detail not seen before on mass-produced N-scale passenger cars.



TIME TABLE

September 5-6

Alvin Depot Days and All-American Festival

September 16

N'Crowd Membership Meeting at Papa Ben's Train Place

September 19-20

27th Annual Temple Model Train Show, Frank Mayborn Convention Center, Temple

October 3-4

AMRE 21st Annual Model Train Show, San Antonio

October 10

NMRA LSR Div. 8 Annual Meeting, hosted by Houston Area Live Steamers at Zube Park

October 21

N'Crowd Membership Meeting at Papa Ben's Train Place

November 7-8

New Braunfels Railroad Museum 1st Annual Layout Competition

November 14-15

Texas City Train Festival

THE ORDERBOARD *from Houston N'Crowd*

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