San Fernando Valley Model Layout Tour

October 30, 2021

Model Railroads of Southern California's sixty-fourth layout tour takes place on Saturday, October 30, in the San Fernando Valley Area. This is a self-guided tour of eight HO scale layouts and one riding train. The tour is a free event and you may bring relatives and friends. The details for this tour, including layout descriptions, are below. Persons taking this tour assume all risks and liability for their personal safety. Although I am the Moderator of Model Railroads of Southern California, I am not responsible for personal loss or injury to persons taking this tour. Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult to visit the layouts. Please do not bring pets into the home locations. Face masks are required regardless of vaccination status. Be sure to review our website the day before the tour to check for any changes to the schedule or layout lineup.

Bob Chaparro
Moderator
Model Railroads of Southern California
https://groups.io/g/ModelRailroadsofSoCalif

Clark Bauman, 10:00 – 4:00
800 N. Niagara Street, Burbank

Rob Caves, 9:00 – 9:00
2085 Santa Rosa Ave, Altadena

Glendale Model RR Society, 1:00 to 4:00
619 Hahn Avenue, Glendale

Rick Graves, 1:00 to 5:00
5212 Redwillow Lane, La Canada

Paul Koehler, 1:00 to 4:00
1317 Oak Circle Drive, Glendale

Santa Susana RR Historical Society, 10:00 to 4:00
6503 Katherine Road, Simi Valley

Jeff Traintime, 10:00 – 5:00
1126 N. Fairview St., Burbank

Travel Town 10:00 – 5:00
5200 Zoo Drive, (Griffith Park) Los Angeles

Dan Wexler, 11:00 – 5:00
16407 Hamlin Street, Van Nuys

NOTES:

Glendale Model RR Society: The left turn from Pacific Avenue on to Hahn Avenue is a bit tricky. Consider using Arden Avenue.

Travel Town – Admission and parking are free. See below for miniature train ride prices.

PERSONS TAKING THIS TOUR ASSUME ALL RISKS AND LIABILITY FOR THEIR PERSONAL SAFETY.

Face Masks Required At All Locations Regardless Of Vaccination Status.

LAYOUT DESCRIPTIONS

Clark Bauman - This is a 15 foot x 30 foot HO scale layout with a 9 foot x 6 foot extension into the garage. Two railroads are represented, the Southern Pacific based on the late 1960s to early 1970s, and the fictitious CR&B Railroad that satisfies Clark's short line switching addiction. The railroad is on two levels, connected by a helix The top level is at 59 inches above the floor and the bottom is 49 inches.

Clark uses EasyDCC with iPhone throttles and CTI's Train Brain to control the signals, switches and trains. On the upper level the scenery is based on the Tehachapi area and how it appears in the summer time. Clark used town names from the area, but none of the models represent anything that is/was there. The lower level is a mixture of Bakersfield and the Burbank Branch as it was from Verdugo Road in Burbank to Van Nuys

The railroad supports operations by up to four operators with a Dispatcher that is located in the room. Car routing, scheduling, Manifests, and Switch Lists are managed JMRI Operations. Decoder Pro is used to manage all the Decoder programing needs through a dedicated programing track attached to a Digitrax PR3.

Rob Caves – The Christmas Tree Lane Model RR Society operates two layouts on historic Christmas Tree Lane in Altadena at the home of Rob Caves. EASTERN CALIFORNIA

The main layout is HO Scale, operating modern equipment across Union Pacific, and BNSF tracks from San Diego, California to Seattle, Washington. The layout is predominantly quad-deck shadow-box style with some sections five decks high starting about 2 feet off the ground going up to eye level.

The layout is still under construction and makes use of indoor and outdoor sections. It occupies a footprint of approximately 80 feet x 40 feet and is growing. Scenery has progressed as track and bench work have expanded. In its unfinished state the layout is actually three separate layouts comprising:

The Surf Line: San Diego to Mojave, California

The Inside Gateway: from Sparks, Nevada, to La Pine, Oregon

Stampede Pass: Seattle, Washington to the east side of Stampede Pass

Eventually all the sections will connect modeling a proposed route of the Carson & Colorado Narrow gauge as if it was standard gauged and operated today by Union Pacific.

The Surf Line section is all double tracked with reverse loops at San Diego and Mojave. The section includes the Los Angeles Union Station complex with 15 station tracks. Downtown LA features several skyscrapers as well as the Faller Car System. We recently added Carson HO scale RC cars to the mix.

Scratch built prototype depots can be found all along the route, and more recently we have switched to 3D printing them. The Amtrak station in Oceanside as well as the Metrolink stations in Lancaster and Palmdale, are examples of what can be accomplished with 3D modeling. Many of the modern passenger trains from Surfliners to Metrolink equipment also have been 3D printed.

The Inside Gateway comprises the two middle decks of the layout and features rugged mountain scenery. Temporary reverse loops allow for continuous operation of this section which is single track with sidings. Train movement is governed by ABS signaling using the Atlas Signal System. Scenery highlights include the Keddie Wye, Williams Loop, and plenty of bridges and tunnels. Abundant industries for switching are also located on this section.

The Stampede Pass section features Seattle and the King Street Station along with a scaled down version of the Space Needle. After leaving metro Seattle the line climbs Stampede pass and enters a snowy winter wonderland. A reverse loop again provides a way to turn trains around at the top of the pass, the highest point on the layout.

Grades on the layout are often true-to-prototype, reaching as high as three percent. Trains are controlled with the NCE DCC system as well as Wi-Fi. Control points are operated with Berrit Hill Touch panels while yards and industries are typically ground throws.

The second layout is the Horseshoe & Cottonwood featuring both HO and HOn3 operations which span two rooms measuring roughly 20 feet x 30 feet. The setting is the Owens Valley and the eastern Sierra Mountains, circa 1911. The Carson & Colorado has been purchased by the Southern Pacific and standard gauge has arrived from Mojave. The freelance Horseshoe & Cottonwood connects with the SP at Owenyo and winds its way westward up the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada Mountains to mining towns at nosebleed altitudes. The dual termini for the line are in the 11,000 foot high Cottonwood Lakes mining region and the larger supporting town of Horseshoe Meadows.

The SP Narrow gauge is modeled on the lower level from Laws to Owenyo with dual gauge tracks to Lone Pine, California. From there the narrow gauge climbs three percent grades through the Alabama Hills, up the Sierra and through numerous switchbacks and tight curves. The layout features working turntables, desert and mountain scenery using dirt and rocks from the actual locations, photo backdrops of the modeled setting, mining operations, cattle ranching and logging operations. Switching is assisted by touch panels with illuminated track diagrams created in Photoshop.

The layout was completed in 2018 and is set up for continuous operation or point-to-point with reverse loops at each end. The layout is run using the MRC Wireless system to avoid conflicts with the nearby NCE main layout. This layout will likely be dismantled in the next couple of years with the decline in availability and interest in HOn3.

Glendale Model RR Society - The 25 foot x 40 foot HO scale Verdugo Valley Lines portrays 1950s Southern Pacific operations between downtown Los Angeles and Bakersfield. Intermediate stations represented are San Fernando, Saugus, Lancaster, Mojave and Caliente. Represented facilities include the Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal and supporting coach yards, roundhouse, diesel facilities, Taylor Yard, the Glendale Station and the City of Burbank.

Trains headed west originate from Union Station, Taylor Yard or Glendale. En route to Bakersfield they will meet and pass eastbound trains by the means of sidings at intermediate stations. Between stations trains will often disappear into tunnels and on to hidden tracks, only to reappear later on the way to their destination. Bakersfield, the point of origin for eastbound trains is hidden under the mountains at the rear of the layout where there is a yard with holding tracks for trains awaiting departure. All trains traverse a replica of Southern Pacific's Nineteenth Century engineering marvel, the Tehachapi Loop.

Trackage includes 400 feet of mainline, ninety feet of branch line, 120 feet of narrow gauge and 150 feet of trolley. The four main yards have a capacity of over 300 cars. Improvements are continually being made during weekly work sessions, all in the interest of creating a better miniature railroad. Due to planned local street improvements there is the possibility that the current clubhouse may be moved or replaced so see this layout while it exists.

Rick Graves - Rick models the Tehachapi Loop in the spring of 1950. His layout completely occupies a 14 foot x 12 foot spare bedroom. The layout is DCC controlled (Digitrax) and the locomotives are sound equipped.

Rick runs run both steam and diesel appropriate to the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific motive power in use over the line at that time. One interesting and extremely well done feature of this layout is the use of shallow relief hills to duplicate the Tehachapi loop area. The hills are painted and sceniced using a shading technique which gives them depth well beyond their quarter-inch thickness. Up to five trains are staged behind the hills and in other areas to allow a parade of Southern Pacific and Santa Fe consists typical for the time modeled. Rick's layout was featured in Kalmbach's Great Model Railroads 2009.

Paul Koehler - The Oak Circle Division is a fictitious division of the Southern Pacific located somewhere between Los Angeles and the Bay Area. The time period for this layout is between 1940 and 1955. It is an all steam powered division except for the Pacific Electric branch which is electric.

The railroad is in its own source-built room located behind my garage. It is nineteen feet by twenty-one feet. The bench work is all 1" by 1" steel tubing welded in location. Sub Roadbed is ¾" and the roadbed varies from mainline at 1/2", sidings at 3/8" and spurs and yard track at ¼" all cut out of clear pine. Track

is all Atlas Code 83 with #6 and #8 switches. The layout is NCE, DCC wireless controlled. Switched are all powered with either Tortoise or Model Railroad Control Systems MP5 switch Motors.

The layout was designed for operations and on any given night we will operate four locals: Pacific Electric hauler, Interchange train and two or three interference trains. The railroad will eventually have car cards but for now we operate with Switch Lists. The layout can be run with one person and up to seven when completed. There are two hidden storage tracks that can each hold 20-foot long trains. We normally run six car locals, but I can run full length passenger trains when I want. The locals only switch trailing point switches and we run both Eastbound and Westbound locals.

The layout is about one third completed with scenery and all track is laid except the Pacific Electric.

All locations named on the layout are named after or for a friend including most of the industries. All motive power is brass, and the cars include a high number of resin kits.

For the open house I will have one of my regular operators running one of two trains. Due to space limitations, we will be limiting viewers to no more than six at one time in the layout area.

Santa Susana RR Historical Society - The Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society's DCC-controlled HO scale layout generally represents the Southern Pacific's coast line between Los Angeles and Portland in the early 1950s. The layout has over 400 feet of mainline on two levels of wall-mounted shelves and two peninsulas. Special emphasis is placed on the fictional Santa Susana Pacific Railroad serving the needs of Ventura County farms and industries. Features include the Cuesta loop that climbs from the lower to upper level of the layout, four freight classification yards and three passenger stations along with numerous bridges, sidings and industrial spurs.

Although the layout's scenery has been 100% complete for a number of years, the club is constantly planning and implementing improvements to enhance both the visual and operational aspects. Most recently, the club's scenery committee completed updating features on the front peninsula which includes Santa Susana, Moorpark, Camarillo and Corriganville Movie Ranch. The club is undertaking a project to add overhead LED lighting throughout the layout and adding a round house with turntable to the Dunsmuir area. Plans are underway to upgrade scenery in the Salinas area of the layout. Work there will include a sugar beet plant and associated track that will service it. The club is also working on installing a layout-wide centralized traffic control signaling system and is also constantly upgrading track work in order to increase operating reliability.

The layout is located in the freight room of the historic former Southern Pacific Santa Susana Depot. The railroad built this depot in the early Twentieth Century in order to serve eastern Ventura County. The depot opened for business in 1903 and remained in service until the late 1960s. Guests of the Society are encouraged to visit the museum located in the passenger section of the depot to view many artifacts and photos that detail the history of railroading in Southern California. There also is a large collection of vintage Lionel O gauge locomotives and cars on display in the depot's community meeting room.

Jeff Traintime - Originally the 1850s mainline between Milwaukee and Portage, Wisconsin, the Northern Division was rendered secondary within ten years by a shorter, straighter route between the two cities. In spite of this demotion, the Northern Division prospered and grew, with a branch added to Berlin and Ripon in 1857 and another to Fond du Lac in 1877. Centrally located Horicon became the Division Headquarters, while important interchange traffic with the Soo Line was exchanged at Rugby Junction near Slinger.

Although mainline service had disappeared, several freight and passenger trains moved on the Northern Division daily. In addition, when weather or repair work closed the mainline through Watertown, all Milwaukee to Minneapolis traffic was diverted to the Northern Division, including the famous Hiawatha streamliners.

This current HO scale view of the Northern Division is set during September 1957 in Southeast Wisconsin, as baseball's Milwaukee Braves are about to embark upon a World Series victory. Business may be down in Fox Lake, Slinger, Menomonee Falls, Horicon, Fond du Lac and other cities along the Northern Division, but hopes are still high for a return to better times.

This double-deck layout is 12 feet x 30 feet. Benchwork is L-girder and shelf heights are 41 and 60 inches. There is a variety of roadbed and track. The mainline run is 160 feet with sixty feet of yards and forty feet of staging tracks. A standard helix and spread helix are used to move trains between the levels. The minimum mainline radius is thirty inches. Mainline turnouts all are No. 6 and the maximum grade is two percent. Control is NCE DCC w/Tam Valley Depot power boosters. All locomotives are sound-equipped.

Jeff credits Jack Paul Miller with having made this layout possible, saying "Although I'm the 'owner', the layout wouldn't exist without Jack's input, skills and hard work over the past five years.

Travel Town - Travel Town is a unique display of vehicles representing many modes and eras of conveyances.

In addition, The Griffith Park Railroad at Travel Town operates a 16" gauge miniature train ride. The train takes museum visitors on a grand circle around the Travel Town complex and operates throughout the day. The first train leaves the station shortly after the museum opens each morning and the final ride is given 30 minutes before Travel Town closes.

Prices:
Adult (12 years and over) $ 3.50
Child (11 years and under) $ 3.00
Seniors (65 and over) $ 2.75

Dan Wexler - The HO scale Hamlin & Valley Central Railway has been in constant use and in the same 18 foot x 20 foot air-conditioned garage for the last 42 years. The layout you will see is version 4.6. It is a double decked point to point switching layout. It is a freelanced railroad representing a short line

servicing over forty industries. The time period is late summer early fall of 1964. We interchange with the ATSF at Descanso and follow their standards and practices whenever practicable.

There is more than 300 feet of running track with a minimum 24-inch radius and over 70 turnouts controlled by Tortoise machines or ground throws. The railroad is powered by Digitrax® using a combination of tethered, Duplex and Wi-Fi throttles. Due to a ruling grade of 2.3 percent, short trains (under 12 cars) running on frequent schedules are the rule. Traffic is controlled by a fully operational ATC signal system.

Motive power is a combination of first- and second-generation Alco, EMD, GE and FM diesels and most are equipped with sound decoders.

Railroad operations are governed by switch lists using the Rail-Ops system. A typical operating session takes four operator three hours to complete.