

The Santa Clara BLOCK

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SUPERBOWL 50 — THE TRAINS



BNSF Special, originating in Topeka KS, passes the Santa Clara Tower on February 7, 2016, on its way to Diridon Station.

On Sunday, February 7, 2016, worldwide attention was focused on Santa Clara, CA, and Levi's Stadium, where Super Bowl 50 was played. Total attendance at the stadium itself was estimated at over 75,000. Of these, approximately 10,000 people arrived by rail. Caltrain, Amtrak California, Altamont Commuter Express (ACE), and the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe (BNSF) railroads were involved, as well the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA).

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Caltrain added four special trains southbound on Sunday morning, as well as adding one car to all of the regular Sunday schedules. Caltrain discharged stadium-goers at the Mountain View Caltrain station, where VTA light rail shuttle trains operated to the Great America station, which is directly adjacent to Levi's Stadium. Amtrak California, ACE and the BNSF dropped their passengers at the Great America station on the Union Pacific trackage, where VTA light rail shuttle trains also operated directly to the Stadium.

All of these extra trains laid over at the San Jose Diridon Station, until it was time to be dispatched for post-game trips.

The BNSF operated a 12 car special passenger train that originated in Topeka, Kansas several days before the Sunday game. This train departed Oakland CA, at 11 AM bound for the Great America UP station. Since the BNSF is a freight railroad, and no longer operates any passenger service itself, this train was of special interest. Even more noteworthy is the fact that the BNSF railroad does not own any trackage south of Richmond, CA, so the train was operated by an Amtrak crew.

Some interesting operations during the Pre Game rail activity included the Caltrain arrival at Santa Clara at 12:15 PM, which was a 12 car M.U. train. This was accomplished by two regular schedule six car trainsets coupled together.

The BNSF train included the cars listed below:

Mt. San Antonio (generator car), *Trinchera Pass*, *Topeka*, *Gerald Grinstein*, *Mountain View*, *Canyon View* (dome), *Lake Superior*, *Missouri River*, *John S. Reid*, *Stevens Pass*, *Marias Pass* and *Raton Pass*. BNSF Tier 4 locomotives 3951 and 3920 completed the trainset.

One locomotive was coupled at each end, making the train double ended. This meant that the train would not have to be turned in San Jose, for the return trip to Topeka.

The Following Photo By James Bartolotta shows Diridon Station during the layover, awaiting the game's finish. Note there's even a VTA light rail train visible.



Review of Covenant Activities in 2015

Lorie Garcia, Covenant Representative

There were several projects in 2015, that required review by the SBHRS under the Preservation Covenants on the depots along the Caltrain line, which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These projects involved the depots at Millbrae, Burlingame, Santa Clara and Diridon in San Jose. There was no activity at San Carlos, Menlo Park or Palo Alto.

In November, we were notified that the roof at Millbrae had started to leak and needed repair at the north end of the station (above the railroad museum). Material and methods planned for the work were reviewed. The scope of work was slightly revised following review by Robert Marshall. The material were found to match the existing historic fabric and the work to comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Result: roof repaired.

In March, we were contacted by JPB with regards to their efforts to secure a tenant for the Burlingame Station. The tenant was proposing renovations for the building and by terms of the preservation covenant, JPB could not proceed with the lease until the SBHRS reviewed and commented on the renovation.

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tions. A request for more detailed information was sent to JPB as the attached plans were not detailed enough to ensure that no impact any of the character defining features that could affect the depots NR eligibility would occur. After reviewing more information, including photos of the areas to be affected, several concerns were raised by the proposed reconfiguration of interior spaces, wall removal and impact to historic finishes. Result: prospective tenant withdrew application.

Santa Clara had a couple of issues arise in 2015. In April we received a request to for the approval of the installation of Closed Circuit Television Cameras (CCTV). These were proposed to be placed on different elements of the station. No CCTV cameras would be installed at the Depot, itself. All cameras were to be mounted on existing poles or shelters along the platforms and the underground pedestrian crossing. Result: project approved.

The second issue was far more serious. In July the installation of a new AC unit in the window by a JPB contractor resulted in severe damage to the window. We immediately notified JPB and sent them an official notice of violation of the preservation covenant on the Santa Clara Depot (with photos), by the inappropriate installation of this AC unit. After receiving no response, in August JPB was further informed that there would be no SBHRS review or approval of proposed projects, occurring at any the Depots listed on the National Register of Historic Places, until a reply was received that addressed how JPB proposed to correct the violation at Santa Clara. JPB responded that due to their limited capacity for email size they had not received the original notification. In September a meeting was held with JPB and members of the SBHRS at Santa Clara to review the damage and discuss repairs to the window. The SBHRS recommended Wooden Window to do the repair. due to their wide expertise in working on National Register buildings. Wooden Window inspected the damage at Santa Clara and JPB entered into a contract with the firm. Result: in February 2016, window repair was completed.

Two issues also came up at Diridon in 2015. In April, a project to install electronic train departure monitors, which would basically be a replacement of existing posters, was proposed. This project had originally been reviewed and approved in 2009, but JPB

did not have the funding to proceed at that time. In addition to the original approval for monitor placement, an additional monitor was proposed to be hung at the top of the ramp leading to the underpass. This also would replace an existing large framed poster. Result: project approved in May.

In September we were notified about a proposal made by the City of San Jose to have Greyhound as an additional transit provider at Diridon station. (San Jose, JPB, VTA and Amtrak had previously met at Diridon to hear Greyhound's proposal for using the station.) While Diridon would not be used as a "terminal station," Greyhound operations would require using two existing non-utilized ticket counter windows, some small space in the existing Amtrak office, the reconfiguration of the taxi area to accommodate two buses and pedestrian signalization. In October, meeting with all the transportation entities involved and Robert Marshall and Joe Hoffman representing the SBHRS was held at Diridon to review Greyhound's presentation of the graphics/materials etc. that depict the areas proposed for their use. Following the meeting Robert provided JPB with detailed comments on specific impacts to the historic fabric the proposal could cause. As of yet, the proposal is still under review.

BART

In March we received the VTA Board of Directors' invitation to participate in the Santa Clara community working group (CWG) of VTA's **BART Silicon Valley Phase II Extension**. Thus group includes official representatives from Santa Clara University, The Santa Clara Chamber of Commerce, Earthquakes, The Old Quad Residents' Association, Bellarmine College Prep., Transform, The Newhall Neighborhood Association, Santa Clara Police Department and the San Francisco Forty Niners. Jack Morash was appointed to represent the SBHRS and has been attending the meetings. Of great concern at this point is that, unlike many discussions during Phase I, we have had no input on effects/questions at Diridon, which has its own community working group.

Lorie Garcia, Covenant Representative

THE HISTORY OF TROLLEYS IN SAN JOSE

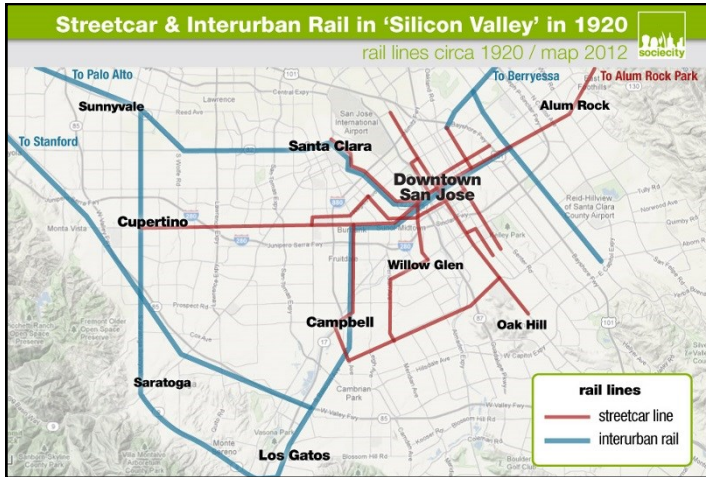


Photo Courtesy Patrick Lydon, Sociecity

There is scant evidence these days, but San Jose, as well as most neighboring towns and communities, once had streetcars operating on its streets and roads.

The very earliest efforts to build a traction line trace back to the 1890's. Electricity was becoming more easily available. Traction appeared as an alternative to horsecars, as it was viewed as faster and less visibility to the public, especially as horsecars usually left evidence of their passing. The average speed of a horsecar did not exceed 10 mph.

The first trolley line appeared on The Alameda, and connected San Jose with Santa Clara. These first trolleys took on the appearance of San Francisco's California Line cable cars, with some open air bench seating on both ends. Trolleys appeared on the Alum Rock line in 1902, replacing the existing steam line with a narrow gauge electric traction line.

One of the first intercity routes, known as an interurban line, was the San Jose to Los Gatos line, including Saratoga. This was completed in 1903. Although it was originally started by independent private parties, Southern Pacific acquired the line in 1904. At that time the SP was facing heavy competition throughout the Bay Area from other electric traction operators, whose equipment was much faster than SP's steam trains. So SP had begun an ambitious program to electrify their existing lines and acquire electric routes that had already been built.

The San Jose Railroad had emerged as the largest operator of

core routes in San Jose proper, when the 1906 earthquake struck, totally destroying its garage at First and Oak Streets. By 1910 it had long since recovered, and many lines through Central San Jose were operating, but the system was still narrow gauge. In 1911, following several mergers and court actions, the Southern Pacific Railroad acquired the San Jose Railroad including all of its routes. Plans were immediately announced to standard gauge the system, as well as adding several new routes. The Alum Rock line, which was still narrow gauge, was considered a high priority. It was re-gauged in 1912. At the time, standard gauge was referred to as broad gauge by traction operators, as some had been originally built narrow gauge due to cost considerations and no need for very high speed.

The SP would own the San Jose streetcar system for the next 28 years. In 1912, SP re-incorporated the San Jose Railroads to include the subsidiaries it had acquired earlier. While the public knew the system as the San Jose Railroads, the SP kept total financial control of the operation.

During 1921-1922, Southern Pacific accomplished some major revisions to routes, schedules, and also acquired some Birney streetcars. Birney cars are short, single truck trolleys, designed for short haul service. After this was completed, San Jose featured 9 trolley lines. This including a fairly dense network in the downtown San Jose area, including First Street, Santa Clara Street, San Fernando, San Carlos, Market Street, King Road, Willow Street, Delmas Avenue, and Oak Street. Adjacent communities included Saratoga, and Santa Clara, for example. San Jose Railroads also operated the now standard gauge line to Alum Rock, which at that time was also considered a separate community. The SP also operated two bus lines during this era, First and Walnut to Hobson Street, and a Sunday only service to the Oak Hill Cemetery.

During this time, the Peninsular Railway operated

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routes from northern peninsula city into San Jose, and shared some trackage with the San Jose Railroads.

Beginning Of The End

By the mid 1920's, profits were taking a downturn on all of those operations, as the recession and burgeoning auto traffic took their toll of rail passengers. Palo Alto lost its streetcar operation by the Peninsular Railway to buses in 1930.

By the mid 1930's, virtual wholesale abandonment of the remaining trolley lines was begun. The very last day of streetcars in San Jose was April 10, 1938, with free rides from 9 pm to midnight. After this date, there was one more "operation," in technicality only. On June 14, 1938, four cars that had already been stripped down to the floorboards, participated in a parade as foundations for moving floats. Following that, rail removal began. On December 29, 1938, the mayor announced that all tracks had been removed from San Jose streets.

When the Southern Pacific exited San Jose streetcar operations, San Jose City Lines took over the SP and San Jose Railroad equipment, routes and franchises in March 1939. They provided bus service for several decades, until the County Transit took over San Jose City Lines.

As with some traction operations in the north Bay Area (Southern Pacific and Sacramento Northern), one could speculate that if the remaining trolley lines had survived three more years, some of them would have likely continued to operate through the war years.

For detailed information and photographs, the SBHRS Library has "*Tracks, Tires & Wires*," #960.241-083, as well as "*Prune County Railroading*," #960.161-084.



Book Review: AMERICA'S COLORFUL RAILROADS

Don Ball, Jr.

Reed Books 1978

Here's a book with 200+ pages and all photos are in color. There are five sections, starting with the (1) East Coast, (2) New York City Area served by 10 railroads, (3) Eastern to mid-continent area including 17 railroads such as the RF&P, B&O, C&O, NYC, and even the Virginian, among the 17, (4) Mid-America with 24 railroads, (5) Distant Horizons – meaning western/west coast area, Santa Fe, Southern Pacific, Union Pacific, and more covering a total of 15 railroads. An important consideration is that many railroads, such as the B&O and C&O for example, are covered in each area that they provide(d) service.

Each section begins with a map of the area it covers, and even details that area with a numbered legend. Following that, the section has a brief description, and then come the photos. There are no more than two photos per page, and many are a single page, with one exception where three photos are on one page. Printed on semi-glossy paper, the book is high quality.

The way it is organized allows one to find the operations of a specific railroad in a specific area that it serves (or served).

While there is no index, the table of contents described above almost eliminates the need for one. There is an epilogue that tells how some of the pictures were taken, and what happened during that time.

Available for checkout in the SBHRS Library.

Reviewed by Norman Spaulding



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The South Bay Historical Railroad Society is located at the Santa Clara Caltrain Depot, in the Museum building adjacent to Caltrain, at 1001 Railroad Avenue. The Museum is open to the public Tuesdays from 3 PM to 9 PM, and Saturdays from 10 AM to 3 PM. Museum exhibits, the Library, and Train Room all provide many items of interest to a wide variety of age groups. The Train Room features both an HO and N gauge operating model railroad, and members can operate their equipment during those times.



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EDITORIAL COMMENT

Leave a recorded message at the phone number listed below if you have any suggestions, or if you have inputs, comments, or ideas for this newsletter.

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