

**Upcoming
events**

**APRIL 18
MEET AT THE
BARBER'S**

**MAY 16
MEET AND
PLANT EX-
CHANGE AT THE
BARBER'S**

**MAY 29 & 30
MIDLAND
MODEL TRAIN
SHOW—
MIDLAND
ARENA**

**MAY 31
NORD OPEN
HOUSE
RAIN DATE JUNE
6**

Backyard Railroaders

ISSUE # 4

APRIL 2010



PHOTO FROM THE PAST—"THE HOBO DINER"

MARCH MEET

The March meet that wasn't was held on the 21st at the Barber's. Due to vacations, illness and family commitments only Ian arrived. It was disappointing that more members couldn't make it, as we the steak and

lobster was great. Maybe we can have it again another time.

The weather was great and looks like an early start to spring. It's hard to tell yourself not to do certain things outside as we could still get poor weather and even that

four letter word "snow". As of April 2nd we still had frost a few inches in the ground.

We hope everyone will be back from their various activities and ready for the upcoming season.



TAMPA/YBOR CITY STREETCARS

In a previous newsletter we featured the "Bethlehem Central RR" of Dothan Alabama, The owner Tom Rudell was instrumental in the return of streetcars to Tampa when he lived there. The following is an article by Bruce Nord who travelled

there earlier this year.

TAMPA'S REPLICA STREETCARS

The streetcar system of Tampa, Florida began in 1892, reached a peak of importance in the 1920's and ceased operations in August of 1946. No doubt the closing was considered a progressive measure at the time, but

gradually there was reconsideration and streetcars began operating again in 2001. The total length extends to only 2.4 miles, but they are an interesting 2.4 miles. Everything about the project is well-done and a one-third mile addition is to open this December (2010) with the possibility of further

additions in the future. The eight cars in service are replicas, not rebuilds, and they are really quite magnificent. Everything about them gleams, the outside, the inside, the plentiful woodwork and the metalwork. If someone out of mischief told you that the first day of operations was yesterday you might be inclined to believe. Obviously those making this project work, take pride in what they are doing. Modelers who regard weathering as the crowning touch may experience some disappointment. Those most familiar with the TTC, especially when visiting in winter months, may notice the lack of dirty snow-melt from passengers' boots, which runs to

the back on start-up, and forward coming to a stop, making for an enduring memory and an illusion of basic Newtonian physics. The cars are replicas of the Birney Safety type, about which I claim to know nothing except that they closely resemble the Bachmann offering many of us own. I don't think the TTC had any but the speed controllers on older models that they did operate, were certainly similar, and hence the movements of the motormen were similar. Controls are duplicated at each end, seatbacks flip over and there are no loops in the trackwork. There are two powerlines overhead spaced about eight inches apart. Power poles

must trail of course. Change of direction procedures involve bringing down the power pole no longer to be in use, by means of its rope, and putting the opposite pole into use on the other power line. Poles must be moved to get the right polarity you might say. Never thought of it before but this must have happened at Sutton (Ontario) and at North Toronto station. The trackwork of excellent quality, is partly single line, partly double. There are considerable lengths of two way trackage and there are passing tracks of minimal length. The street car tracks crosses a railway track at right angles.



While walking about Ybor City, we observed an Amtrack train departing Tampa Union Station which is about a mile west of Ybor City. I also observed that motormen were extra attentive about their interlocking signal and found that reassuring.

The 2.4 miles divides itself into three sections: Downtown, channelside, and Ybor City.

Downtown serves a sport arena, a history of the Tampa area museum, a convention centre and an aquarium. These are all large and impressive structures. There is also a cargo ship on display as a museum but not visible from the streetcar.

Two floating drydocks of moderate size could be observed from the streetcar in the Channelside area.

Ybor City was founded by Vicente Ybor over a century ago as a centre for hand-rolling cigars. It was a company town inspired by a degree of idealism. Workers, almost entirely of Cuban, Greek or Italian origin could make a decent living on a piecework basis. They could come and go as they pleased. Workers contributed something like a dime a week to engage a reader, who sat on a slightly elevated platform and read the news and classics of latin literature. These workers were the residents of Ybor City and gave it its distinctive flavour.

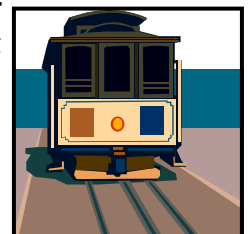
I have emphasized that the streetcars in present use are replicas. There is a streetcar society which has an original Birney to work on so that is an example of reconstruction.

At the Downtown end of the streetcar line, there is a connection with so



Called “trams or trolleys”, which are really buses pretending to be something else, and gain nothing by the pretense, so might be termed shams or simply mistakes.

In Ybor City we had lunch in an Italian restaurant, in business since 1948. No doubt they had upgraded for handling of cash and cards, but the décor and ambiance and style of service, appeared unchanged since 1948 (if they said 1908 it would be plausible). An example of freedom from the pursuit of trendiness.





**PHOTO
IS OF
TAMPA
YBOR CITY
STREETCAR
PASSING
SIDING**

**YORK CENTRAL RR
DINING CAR RECIPE
OF THE MONTH**

By Julie Barber

**JALAPENO PEPPER CORN
CASSEROLE**

- 2 TSP. CHOPPED JALAPENO PEPPER**
- 8 OZ. CREAM CHEESE**
- 1/2 STICK BUTTER**
- 1/2 CUP MILK**
- 2 CANS WHOLE GRAIN CORN**
- SHREDDED CHEESE**

Combine first 4 ingredients in heavy saucepan and heat until well mixed. Add corn. Pour in casserole dish and sprinkle with grated cheddar cheese (or Velveeta slices). Bake 20 minutes or until cheese melts and heated thoroughly at 350 degrees.

**THIS MONTHS AT-
TEMPT AT HUMOUR**

A man and a woman, who had never met before found themselves assigned to the same sleeping room on the transcontinental train. Although initially embarrassed and uneasy over sharing a room, the two are tired and fall asleep quickly, he in the upper bunk and she in the lower. At 2:00 am, he leans over and gently wakes the woman saying "Ma'am, I'm sorry to bother you, but would you be willing to reach into the closet to get me a second blanket? I'm awfully cold." "I've a better idea," she replies, "Just for tonight, let's pretend that we're married." "WOW! That's a great idea!!" he exclaims. "Good," she replies, "get your own damn blanket."

NOTICES

FRED ALDRED Jr will have his G scale display at the MIDLAND TRAIN SHOW.

**OPEN HOUSES
Please advise Ian asap when yours will be.**

**PLANT EXCHANGE
Please have your plants ready Or come prepared to take some home.**

**REPORT ON ECLSTS
IN NEXT ISSUE**

**SORRY THIS ISSUE IS
LATE AND SHORT BUT A
FEW FAMILY EVENTS
HAPPENED ALL AT
ONCE.**

