

Volume 13  
Number 3  
Fall 2004



*The Santa Clara*

# BLOCK



*Published Quarterly by the South Bay Historical Railroad Society, Inc.*



www.sbhrs.org

## *America's Last 'New' Streamliner*

*by Joe Hoffmann*  
Editor and Publisher

**Santa Fe's**

***San Francisco***

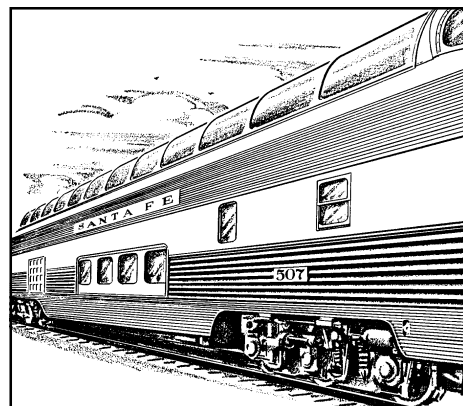
***Chief:***

**1954-1971**

Perhaps it was a shock to the railroad industry in 1954 when the Santa Fe Railway introduced a totally new streamlined passenger train to the American traveler. By that time, many railroads were withdrawing from the passenger business, often by degradations and reductions in services that led to requests and approvals for trainoffs. Yet it was in this setting that the Santa Fe introduced the *San Francisco Chief* to the traveling public.

What is difficult to understand is why Santa Fe, which had pioneered transcontinental passenger train service between Chicago and Southern California, had never established through passenger service from the Midwest into the

*(Continued on Page 4)*



**SEATS WITH A VIEW** — Centerpiece of the new *San Francisco Chief* when it was introduced in 1954 was the Big Dome Lounge Dormitory car, similar to the one illustrated here. Santa Fe car series Nos. 506-513 were built by the Budd Company for the *El Capitan* and the *Chicagoan-Kansas Cityan* services. The six cars for the *San Francisco Chief*, numbered 550-555, included a smaller downstairs lounge and a crew dormitory, and thus a slightly different window arrangement than the one shown here. The *San Francisco Chief* cars had a loading capacity of 75 on the upper level, and 10 passengers in the lower-level lounge.

— Graphics: Author's Collection

## Lorie Garcia Honored; Named City Historian

The Santa Clara City Council recently bestowed the title of Honorary City Historian upon Lorie Garcia, a member of the SBHRS and this organization's Covenant Representative for many of the former Southern Pacific Railroad depots along the San Francisco Peninsula.

Ms. Garcia was formally recognized at the city council meeting of Tuesday, 24 August 2004 in ceremonies that included presentations by Mayor Patricia Mahan, City Manager Jennifer Sparacino, and Director of Planning and Inspection Geoff Goodfellow.

A proclamation in recognition of the honor was read by Mayor Mahan.

Following the formal honors, the council and an audience of nearly 100 paused to enjoy a sheet cake in honor of the occasion.

Ms. Garcia is the first citizen of the community to be presented the honorary title. She was recognized for her long term efforts on behalf of historical activities in the city, her work on both the city's Landmarks Commission and the Planning Commission, and her work over a three-year period in spearheading and guiding the celebration of the city's Sesquicentennial throughout the year 2001.



**ACE SPECIAL ARRIVES FOR JAZZ FESTIVAL** — With F40PH-3C No. 3103 on the point (lower right), the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) train bound for the San Jose Jazz Festival on Saturday, 7 August, arrives in Santa Clara with a trailing "double consist" passenger train. The "mid-train helpers," a pair of F40PH-3Cs separate what are actually two trains. After dropping some passengers at the Great America stop for a day at the amusement park, the doubled train arrived in San Jose around 11:00 a.m. In the evening, these trains were split to enable departures at 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. This is the second year ACE has operated special trains from the Central Valley (Lathrop/Manteca) to San Jose for the Jazz Festival.

— Photos: Joe Hoffmann

## Toys for Tots Train Scheduled for Santa Clara Stop

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For the fourth consecutive year, the South Bay Historical Railroad Society will be an active participant in the annual Toys for Tots program coordinated by Caltrain on behalf of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, and several corporate sponsors.

A specially decorated *Trains for Tots* Caltrain will participate in a program that brings Santa Claus and his elves to the Santa Clara Depot to lead a holiday sing-along that includes a Salvation Army brass band and on-board carolers.

The train will be at the Santa Clara Depot on Saturday night, 4 December, from 7:55 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. The depot will be open for visitors between 7:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. to entertain the public with operating model trains of both the N- and HO-scale layouts.

During that time, volunteers will accept

new, unwrapped toys for Bay Area needy children. Caltrain and the Golden Gate Railroad Museum are joining other partners to sponsor the train to help generate toy donations for the Salvation Army and the United States Marine Corps Reserves' Toys for Tots Program.



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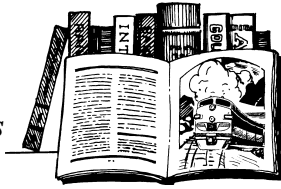
# Book Review

## *Santa Fe Streamlined Observation Cars*

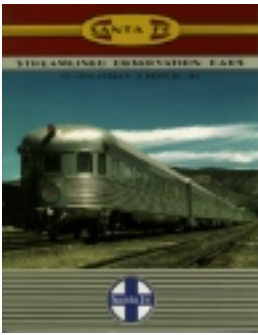
by Jonathan J. Boyle, Sr.

78 Pages, Color and Black & White

©2004 by TLC Publishing, Forest, VA



It has been with great anticipation that we have awaited the distribution of this softcover book, first promoted in Spring 2004 for release over the summer. As a long-time fan of the Santa Fe Railway and its passenger trains, we anticipated a book of great significance, one that would add immeasurably to our knowledge of Santa Fe. After all, this railroad was particularly noteworthy for its streamlined observation cars, whether they had served on the *Super Chief*, or on the *Golden Gate*. For it was Santa Fe which included these cars on trains of all types: first class streamliners to streamlined coach consists.



Well, we have been sorely disappointed in this issue.

From this reviewer's perspective, so much could have been done to produce a first class publication.

Let's start with the cover. Why would an author or publisher place a photograph of the original Santa Fe streamlined observation car in its final days of operation, sans the colorful drumheads so prominent when these cars were introduced, now adorned with what appears to be an ordinary automobile bumper sticker?

From the cover, where the author's name is stated as Jonathan J. Boyle, Jr., we go to the title page, where the author's name is Jonathan J. Boyle, Sr. I had to carefully read the Introduction and Acknowledgements page to understand just who this author is.

The subject of this book is a niche interest, at best. But while the subject is narrow in scope, so much could have been done to provide readers with a comprehensive cache

of information.

Meanwhile, objectivity is thrown aside by the author, as he all too frequently interjects personal and family railroading experiences in the course of what should be a documentary presentation. If one is to use family-based anecdotes, we believe they should be placed in their own chapter.

A technique in presenting historical information on a subject like this is to utilize the tabular presentation. A table listing each car (there were only 25), its name and (if appropriate) its number, its manufacturer and construction date, its train assignments through its history (where known), and its retirement, resale, or scrapping dates (or otherwise its current disposition) would be an invaluable asset to this book.

I also dislike the total disregard for proper use of English language, punctuation and syntax. This book is, unfortunately, too typical of one that is written without the assistance or review of a literary editor. As such, it is a grammarian's nightmare, often forcing one to re-read portions to ensure they have understood what has been placed on the printed page. On top of that, it appears that no one proofread the finished pages prior to submittal to a printer.

While we will not just discard our personal copy of this book (there is valuable information; one just has to decipher it!), we doubt the book will be purchased for the SBHRS Library.

— Joe Hoffmann

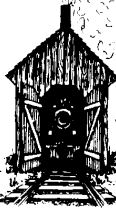
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## Baby Bullet Wins Grand Award from Bay Area MTC

Caltrain's Baby Bullet commute train has won a prestigious award from the Bay Area's Metropolitan Transportation Commission in recognition of the new train's contribution to meeting "the needs of 21st century commuters."

The MTC made the award early in October. The Baby Bullet, which provides Peninsula commuters with a 57-minute alternative to hour-and-a-half travel time between San Jose and San Francisco during peak commute hours on weekdays is a result of a farsighted approach to commute development, and \$127 million in funding secured by state Senator Jackie Speier. The funding was used to pay for a two-year, \$110 million construction project that included laying bypass tracks in Brisbane and the Lawrence station in Sunnyvale, and the purchase of six locomotives and 17 double-deck passenger coaches.



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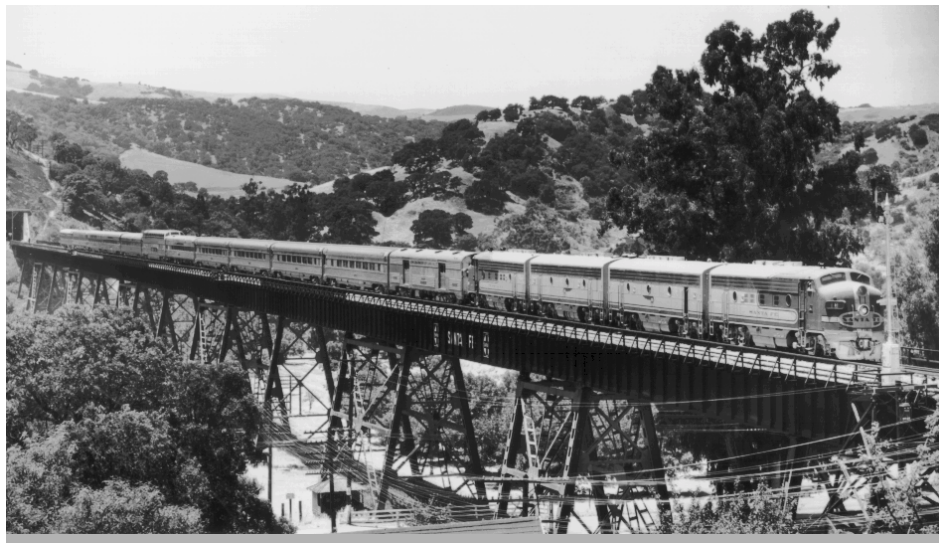


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# Santa Fe Upgrades Its Service to Bay Area



**EASTBOUND AT MARTINEZ** — The Chicago-bound *San Francisco Chief* has just emerged from the short tunnel and onto the Alhambra Viaduct (Muir Trestle) in Martinez in this time-honored Santa Fe publicity photo. This shot was made prior to the addition of the Hi-level chair cars into the consists, which would occur in 1964. This consist was typical during the 10 years following the train's inauguration in June 1954, with single-level chair cars up front, divided by the big dome lounge dormitory car and a diner, followed by a collection of sleeping cars assembled from Santa Fe's pool.

— Photo: Santa Fe Railway from the Author's Collection

(Continued from Page 1)

San Francisco Bay Area. Yet the Bay Area long had played a prominent role in the railroad's freight traffic, having operated trains from Oakland through the San Joaquin Valley and east to Barstow, where they connected with the transcontinental line from Los Angeles, since 1898. That was the year Santa Fe's directors voted to acquire the San Francisco and San Joaquin Valley Railroad.

To best undertake an examination of *San Francisco Chief* service between its end points, one first has to take a quick look at Santa Fe's convolution of passenger train services between 1931 and 1954 that included the Bay Area. Such services are too complicated to delineate at length.

By May 1931, however, Train No. 23, the *Grand Canyon Limited*, which had been established in 1929 between Chicago and Los Angeles, would carry a Chicago-Oakland 10 section, 1 drawing room, 2 compartments (10-1-2) standard heavyweight sleeper that was cut out at Barstow and added to a local train for Mojave, Bakersfield and the Bay Area. In 1934, a Barstow to Oakland Train No. 23, sometimes referred to as North 23, carried a 10-1-2 picked up at Barstow from

the *California Limited*, plus a variety of head-end and passenger cars picked up at Barstow or Bakersfield. In 1946, a North No. 23 operated Barstow to Oakland with head-end cars from Stockton, Fresno, Kansas City (the latter at Barstow, by way of the *Fast Mail*), chair cars from Kansas City, Chicago and Houston, and sleepers from Dallas and Houston, all of which had arrived in Barstow on the second section of the *Grand Canyon*, which by this time had been stripped of its "*Limited*" name and status. Also between 1936-1949, the mix at various times included through cars passed on at Barstow from the *Scout* and the *California Limited*.

In the early 1950s immediately preceding the inauguration of the new streamliner, Nos. 123 and 124, the *Grand Canyon* (a mostly heavyweight consist with some streamlined equipment) operated in two sections, one via Santa Fe's northern district (La Junta, CO) and one over the southern route (Amarillo, TX and Clovis, NM). By January 1955, six months after the inaugural *San Francisco Chief*, all connections from the *Grand Canyon* trains to points north of Barstow were off the timetables.

So it was against this historical background that the Budd Company unveiled on 10 February 1954 in Philadelphia, PA, the first of Santa Fe's fleet of 14 "Big Domes": six for the *El Capitan*, two for the *Chicagoan/Kansas Cityan*, and six cars for the soon-to-be-inaugurated *San Francisco Chief* that were dissimilar to the other eight. The two types of Big Domes shared an upper level configuration of 57 coach seats and an 18-seat lounge. The first series delivered, Nos. 506-513, had a 28-seat bar-lounge and a room for a courier nurse downstairs.

Santa Fe had purchased Budd products since the late 1930s, when much of the fleet of streamlined cars assembled for the first *Super Chief* was acquired from the Philadelphia car builder. Car Nos. 550-555, therefore, were built specifically for the *San Francisco Chief*. They had a much smaller lounge on the lower level, seating only 10, which then left room for a crew dormitory accommodating 12 train personnel.

Technically they were Big Dome Lounge Dormitory cars, ordered in July 1953, and delivered in April and May 1954. The small lounge was the only passenger amenity on the lower level. Located at the vestibule end of the car, the 18-seat upper lounge on both cars was served from the lower level bar through a dumbwaiter positioned at the back of the bar against the outside wall.

On all of Santa Fe's Big Dome Lounge cars, the main seating area at the front of the upper level had low-back coach-type seats that were angled 10 degrees toward the windows for better visibility. Decoratively, these cars' motif continued Santa Fe's homage to the southwest and the American Indians, as the railroad had done with its other transcontinental streamliners.

The Big Dome Lounge Dormitory cars were to be the centerpiece of the *San Francisco Chief*. That train is considered to be the last major passenger train to be launched in the United States by any railroad. As Karl Zimmerman notes in his book, *Santa Fe Streamliners: The Chiefs and Their Tribesmen*, "Santa Fe's willingness to enter this competition so late was an impressive statement of the railroad's abiding faith in the

(Continued on Page 5)



**ALCO POWER ON THE POINT** — Behind an A-B-A set of Alco passenger locomotives, the *San Francisco Chief* passes through Antioch, CA in 1960. Alcos powered the train often during its 17-year history, especially along the flat terrain of the San Joaquin Valley. The most prominent power lashups, however, were EMD F3 and F7 locomotives. However, in the final couple of years, newly delivered EMD FP45 warbonnet-painted, and F45 bluebonnet scheme power was used, as the railroad retired much of its first-generation power, or designated it for freight service.

— Photo: Robert Morris, from the Author's Collection

(Continued from Page 4)

passenger train.”

Changes to the railroad's passenger operations in the 1954 period generally were of the negative, based on the need to cut costs and to reconfigure services to meet decreasing passenger demands. On 10 January of that year, the streamlined *Chief* (Chicago-Los Angeles) lost its all-Pullman status with the addition of four 48-seat coaches and a lunch-counter diner. Concurrently, its transcontinental sleepers, which provided through service to New York and Washington, D. C., were switched over to the *Super Chief*.

### ***Used Equipment, But Not Used Up***

Other than the single Big Dome Lounge for each of six trainsets, the *San Francisco Chief* was begun six months later with used streamlined equipment. Forty-eight seat coaches — from an order of 45 cars delivered by Budd in late 1953 — comprised the chair car equipment. Its sleeping cars were an eclectic mix of hand-me-down equipment from the existing pool of Santa Fe streamlined sleeping cars: 24-duplex-roomette cars

from the *Indian* series; *Pine-* or *Palm-*series 10-roomette, 6-double bedroom sleepers (10-6s); *Blue-*series 10-roomette, 2-compartment, 3-double bedroom cars; *Regal-*series 4-compartment, 4-double bedroom, 2-drawing room cars, and Indian-named 8-section 2-compartment 2-double-bedroom sleepers. The 36-seat diners dated from 1937 as part of the first streamlined *Chiefs*. The lunch-counter diner-dormitories were Pullman-Standard products from 1950.

One must remember, however, that Santa Fe equipment, while perhaps used, was not used up. The railroad's noted attention to maintenance of its rolling stock made its older cars the equal of other lines' newest units.

Unlike the premier passenger trains which often targeted the cherished end-point to end-point passenger (i.e., Chicago to Los Angeles), the *San Francisco Chief* was more than happy to serve riders to the intermediate markets. In the Valley, the train welcomed passengers traveling between Bakersfield, Fresno, Merced and the Bay Area. In the Midwest, the routing there served well those passengers traveling between Chicago and cities in Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico, such as Amarillo,

TX and Clovis, NM. Connections (through sleeping cars in some cases) could be easily made to Phoenix, AZ; Lubbock TX; or Los Angeles, CA — all with through car service on connecting trains, such as the *Grand Canyon* between Barstow and L.A.

The train also catered to families by offering courier-nurse service, an attraction especially welcomed by women traveling with small children.

Upon its inauguration on 6 June 1954, the train's western terminus was the Santa Fe station at 40<sup>th</sup> and San Pablo Avenues in Oakland, with connecting motor coach service provided into San Francisco over the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. By 1959, Santa Fe had changed the terminus of the trainset to its large facility in Richmond, which was better suited to servicing the train during the turnaround for the eastbound runs.

For awhile starting in 1955, the *San Francisco Chief* carried a 4-drawing room 1-double bedroom lounge in the consists. These cars were former lightweight *Chief* round-end observation cars, squared off for mid-train operation. In 1958, the train welcomed former *Vista-*series observations, which had been squared off in 1956 after they were dropped from the *Super Chief*. The *San Francisco Chief* trainsets operated with equipment of these types through its first 10 years of service, during which time it provided Santa Fe's first (and only) first-class streamlined transcontinental passenger service to the San Francisco Bay Area.

### ***Historically Consistent Schedules***

From its inception, the *San Francisco Chief* maintained a fairly consistent schedule, as least until the last couple years. Generally, the train departed Chicago at 3 or 3:15 p.m. and arrived in Richmond at times listed as 1:30-2:20 p.m. Eastbound, trains consistently departed Richmond between 11:15 and noon, arriving in Chicago around 2:00 p.m. the second day. By 1970, however, the schedule had been shifted considerably, probably as a result of the numerous trainoffs experienced beginning in late 1967 with the discontinuance of most U. S. mail contracts on Santa Fe and a need to make connections with some of the remaining trains. Trains

(Continued on Page 6)

# 1964: SF Chief Enters Hi-level Era

(Continued from Page 5)

now departed Chicago in mid-morning; Richmond at 4:30 p.m.

During the 1960s, the train grew to be one of Santa Fe's longest consists. Santa Fe's Topeka shops, meanwhile, built several flat cars during 1960-62 for use as mail transporters in passenger trains. These flexi-van trailer cars were introduced into *San Francisco Chief* service as head-end revenue cars, carrying U. S. mail in specially designed containers. Traditionally, these flat cars were placed at the head of the train directly behind the diesel locomotives.

## Second Phase for San Francisco Chief

The year 1964, meanwhile, would initiate the second phase of the *San Francisco Chief*, one that would last until its cancellation at the inauguration of Amtrak in May 1971. But to discuss the second phase, we must first back up to 1954, and the development of Santa Fe's Hi-level passenger equipment.

Testifying again to the Santa Fe's faith in the passenger customer, the railroad in 1954, in coordination with the Budd Company again, rolled out a totally new concept in passenger cars from the builder's Red Lion, PA car building facility. These "Hi-level" cars were a totally new technology, so innovative that at first the railroad acquired only two such cars. They were placed onboard the *El Capitan* for traveler and railroad management evaluation.

All the seating for passengers was on an upper level. Entrance doors, restrooms and luggage storage were on the lower level. Air conditioning equipment and other machinery were placed on the lower level, provid-

ing greater accessibility for servicing. The upper area could comfortably seat 67 passengers, compared to 44 to 48 in the more familiar streamlined single-level long-distance coaches. Management was pleased both with the performance of the cars and the public's overwhelmingly favorable response (more than 90 percent of passengers on one trip approved of the new concept in coach travel).

For the *El Capitan* in 1956 then, five new trainsets each were equipped with seven coaches (expandable to nine during peak travel periods), one full-length diner, one full-length lounge, plus a preexisting baggage dormitory

car retrofitted with an aerodynamically-styled adaptor to soften the visual transition from the single-level car to the first Hi-level chair car. No special tail-end or observation car ever was built to go with these trains, as by this time, Santa Fe had soured on such amenities, as witnessed by removal and conversion for mid-train operations of

the boat-tail observations from the *Chief* and *Super Chief*.

The new "El Cap" cars as they became known were virtually identical in design to the two prototype cars.

The only significant difference was that the newer cars' sides were perpendicular, while the upper portion of the two prototype cars tapered inward slightly.

The Hi-level cars stood 15 and one-half feet tall, two feet more than conventional streamlined cars. The main floor was eight feet above the rails. As promoted in ATSF Time Tables, the "Hi-level cars on *El Capitan* and *San Francisco Chief* put travelers at the scenic level for daytime enjoyment, and offer a quieter, smoother ride day and night." And from a business sense, a train of the new cars could host 41 percent more passengers in the same numbers of cars, thus improving the revenue per mile.

Only a step box was needed to enter the car's lower level — remember that most of that equipment that used to hang under a car now was stowed on the lower level — and only then did the travelers make their way up a serpentine stairway to the upper level. For transcontinental chair car travelers, fully-reclining seats with a new type of leg rest greeted their arrival on the upper level.

At each end of the *El Capitan* were transition cars, wherein the ends of the cars included stairs to the "normal" floor level of a single-level car. A transition car was used adjacent to the baggage-dorm car and would later play a vital role on the *San Francisco Chief*. So, it was with great fanfare and high expectations that the Hi-level *El Capitan* was inaugurated on 15 July 1956.

The original Hi-level cars operated on the *El Capitan* for eight years. In 1964 came entirely new equipment (except for the diners and lounge cars): 24 new Hi-level chair

(Continued on Page 7)

### TYPICAL SCHEDULES

	Spring-Summer 58	Fall 1961	Fall-Winter 65	Spring-Summer 67	Summer 1970
Lv Chicago	3:15 CT	3:15 CT	3:00 CT	3:00 CT	10:00 CT
Ar Richmond	2:20 PT <sup>(1)</sup>	1:30 PT	1:45 PT	1:45 PT	10:00 PT
TOTAL TIME	49:05	48:15	48:45	48:45	50:00
Lv Richmond	11:25 PT <sup>(1)</sup>	11:59 PT	12:01 PT	11:15 PT	4:30 PT
Ar Chicago	2:00 CT	2:00 CT	2:00 CT	2:00 CT	8:00 CT
TOTAL TIME	48:35	48:01	47:59	48:45	49:30

NOTES:

(1) In 1958, train terminated in Oakland, vice Richmond.

(Continued from Page 6)

cars for *El Capitan*, releasing enough of the “old” 1956 Hi-levels to give three or four to each *San Francisco Chief* consist on 4 May 1964, just a month shy of the train’s 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The infusion of Hi-level cars lightened the train’s weight, as by this period, it had become very heavy due to lengthy consists. So, once again, the *San Francisco Chief* was the recipient of hand-me-down cars.

It is ironic, then, that on a train whose centerpiece initially was its Big Dome Lounge Dormitory car (open to all passengers), the introduction of the Hi-level chair cars produced a unique situation.

As on many railroads, the dining car was used to separate coach travelers from first class passengers. In the 1950s-60s, the chair cars were placed in the front of the train, followed by the dining and lounge cars, followed by the sleeping cars.

But upon introduction of the Hi-level cars to the *San Francisco Chief*, they were placed immediately ahead of the big dome lounge dormitory car, thus blocking any straight forward view from the car! The better seats for watching the passing countryside, therefore, were those near the rear of the seating section in the car — or in the lounge. The *San Francisco Chief* carried the dome car (followed by the dining car) in this configuration until it was terminated in 1971.

Those Hi-level transition coaches — the

**MODERN TRAVEL ON SANTA FE**

— Innovative incentives for travelers going by Santa Fe trains included the Santa Fe Dining Club, wherein meals for the entire journey could be prepurchased along with one’s railfare. And the cost was most reasonable: \$2.40 per meal as illustrated here. In addition, the Santa Fe in the 1960s offered bargain fares, and in 1967, began honoring bank credit cards, offered gift certificates, 20 percent off-season fare reductions, and seven-day-a-week family fares, as well as tour packages. In the mid-60s, passenger revenues actually increased every year but one.

**Santa Fe Dining Club**

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— Santa Fe Time Tables (Various)



**FISHERMAN’S WHARF PROMOTION** — Before the introduction of Hi-level chair cars to the *San Francisco Chief* in May 1964, a typical trainset was placed on public display on Fisherman’s Wharf, San Francisco. The transcontinental Richmond-Chicago train had been in service on its 2,535-mile route just short of 10 years by this time, and would remain in operation until Amtrak undertook most U. S. passenger train operations in May 1971.

— Photo: Santa Fe Collection, California State Railroad Museum

ones with the steps at one end — were important too. Operated in pairs, or more, they allowed the placement of single-level coaches ahead of the first Hi-level car, while enabling access to the Big Dome Lounge Dormitory on the other end of the second car. Those cars, of course, had been designed to the more conventional streamlined standards.

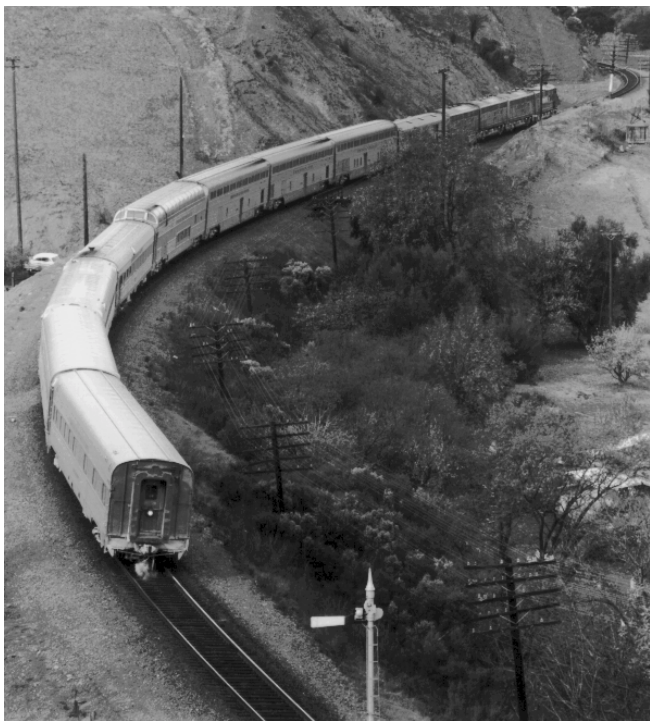
Over its 17-year career, the *San Francisco Chief* was the benefactor of numerous Santa Fe promotional programs. System-wide during the 1960s, the Santa Fe instituted numerous passenger incentive programs, including bargain fares and budget meals, as well as well-conceived advertising programs in national media. In the mid-60s, passenger revenues actually increased every year but one. In January 1967, Santa Fe began honoring bank credit cards, offered gift certificates, 20 percent off-season fare reductions, reduced meal costs under a dining-club program, and seven-day-a-week family fares, as well as tour packages.

By 1958, the train’s schedule operated 48

hours, 35 minutes westbound; 49 hours, 5 minutes eastbound. At this time, normal equipment westbound included streamlined sleeping cars, including a 10-roomette, 3-double bedroom, 2-compartment car, and a 4-drawing room, 1-double bedroom sleeper lounge car (a former boat-tail observation lounge that had been blunt-ended for mid-train operation) between Chicago and Richmond, one or more 10-6 sleepers, plus reserved seat chair cars. Along the way from Chicago, the train dropped a 6-section, 6-roomette, 4 double bedroom (6-6-4) sleeper (at Amarillo, TX, destined for Lubbock, TX on another train), and picked up other equipment, including a sleeper at Kansas City, another at Clovis, NM, from Houston via the *California Special* services, and still another from Dallas destined for Los Angeles (and carried west of Barstow on the *Grand Canyon*).

The 1961 one-way coach fare between the end points was \$67.39 (plus a 10% Federal tax). One-way first class was \$85.56, plus

(Text Continued on Page 9)



**DESTINATION RICHMOND** — The *San Francisco Chief* arrives at Richmond, CA, on 4 October 1968 following its transcontinental run from Chicago to the Bay Area. The unique placement of the train's Big Dome Lounge Dormitory cars behind the Hi-level chair cars precluded straight-ahead viewing, but nonetheless enabled both chair and sleeping car passengers with panoramic views of the western scenery.

— Photos: Joe Hoffmann

**TRAVERSING FRANKLIN CANYON** — The *San Francisco Chief* wends its way westbound through tranquil Franklin Canyon in Contra Costa County in this 1968 photo. The consist is typical of the summer travel season, with an A-B-B-B set of warbonnet F-units, a Baggage car, three Hi-level Chair cars (208 seats), a Big Dome Lounge Dormitory car, a 36-seat Diner, and three sleepers (approximately 60 passengers) in a variety of bedroom configurations. The last car is a Budd-built 10-6. At Barstow eastbound, the train routinely picked up an additional sleeper off eastbound No. 24, the formerly named *Grand Canyon* from Los Angeles for connection at Clovis, NM, to Dallas, TX.

— Photo: Robert Morris, from the Author's Collection

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 Big Dome Lounge Car . . . Chicago—Richmond.  
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 Dining Car . . . Chicago—Richmond.  
 Hi-Level Chair Cars . . . Chicago—Richmond.  
 Stretch-out, reclining seat with legrest, all reserved.  
 Chair Car . . . Chicago—Los Angeles (during summer season).  
 (on Trains 23-24 Barstow—Los Angeles).  
 Chair Car . . . Chicago—Richmond (during summer season).  
 Sleeping Cars . . . Chicago—Richmond.  
 Sleeping Car . . . Chicago—Los Angeles.  
 (on Trains 23-24 Barstow—Los Angeles).  
 Roomettes, Bedrooms, Compartments and Suites.  
 Courier Nurse Service.

**CHICO AT WORK** — Santa Fe's mascot, Chico, reminds travelers of the choices for accommodations aboard the *San Francisco Chief*.

— From the 8 June 1969 Santa Fe Timetable



# Amtrak Serves *SF Chief's* Former Route

(Text Continued from Page 7)

tax. A single roomette cost an additional \$33.80.

The Spring-Summer 1964 issue of the Santa Fe Time Table trumpeted the introduction of Hi-level chair cars on the *San Francisco Chief* (while also heralding the new Hi-level cars on the *El Capitan*). The sleeping car configuration remained essentially the same as in prior years.

The train continued to operate on a schedule of about 48 hours, give or take a half hour, in either direction.

For most of its life, the *San Francisco Chief* operated with EMD F3 and F7 motive power in Santa Fe's famous warbonnet paint scheme. For several years, especially in the flat terrain of the San Joaquin Valley, the train might operate with Alco PA/PBs

on the point. In the final couple of years, however, the train used six-axle EMD FP45s in the warbonnet paint scheme, sometimes teamed with an F45 freight locomotive in the blue and yellow paint scheme. The last runs of the train, which arrived in Richmond and Chicago a day after Amtrak took over most rail passenger service, were so powered.

Amtrak omitted service along the California routes of the former *San Francisco Chief* (and SP's *San Joaquin Daylight* line) when its national rail services were inaugurated in 1971. The Valley lines between the Bay Area and Bakersfield were without rail passenger service until 6 March 1974 — nearly 3 years — when Amtrak scrambled enough equipment to start valley route service at a level of one train per day each way. Today, the state of California subsidizes what has become the very successful *San Joaquin* route services, which today provide 12 daily trains between Bakersfield and the Bay Area/Sacramento.

The Bay Area trains continue to use the former route of Santa Fe's *San Francisco*

*Chief* between Bakersfield and Port Chicago where the Bay Area-bound trains switch to former Southern Pacific tracks between Martinez and a new Amtrak depot at Jack London Square in Oakland. 🚂

## The Santa Clara BLOCK



South Bay Historical Railroad Society, Inc.

### EDITORIAL COMMENT

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

SBHRS at Santa Clara Depot:  
1-408-243-3969

Website:  
www.sbhhs.org

#### SBHRS Board of Directors

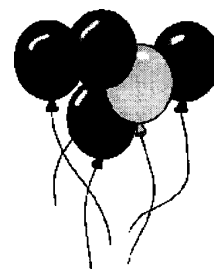
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Joe Hoffmann  
Newsletter Editor and Publisher

Items in this newsletter may be reproduced in whole or in part. Credit for source is appreciated.

This newsletter is published quarterly as a service to members and friends of the South Bay Historical Railroad Society, Inc., a California non-profit public benefit corporation.

Want to learn more about the *San Francisco Chief*? See *Santa Fe Streamliners: The Chiefs and Their Tribesmen*, by Karl Zimmerman, ©1987 by Quadrant Press, Inc., New York, NY; *Valley Division Vignettes*, by J. L. Krieger and Glen Icanberry, ©1983 by Jack L. Krieger, published by Valley Rail Press, Hanford, CA; *The Passenger Car Library, Volume 5: Santa Fe - Southern Pacific*, by W. David Randall, published by RPC Publications, Inc. Alton, IL, ©2002; and *Santa Fe Passenger Time Tables*, various editions: 1939-1971. For information regarding Santa Fe's service to the Bay Area prior to 1954, see *The Grand Canyon Limited*, an article in *The Warbonnet*, the Official Magazine of the Santa Fe Historical and Modeling Society, Fourth Quarter 2002.



Host a Youth  
Birthday Party  
or other Special  
Occasion Event  
at  
Santa Clara Depot

Santa Clara Depot provides a unique setting for birthday parties, or anniversary, retirement or other special occasion events.

The South Bay Historical Railroad Society offers:

- The Freight House Meeting Room, with space for 45-50 persons, seated
- Folding tables and cushioned chairs
- 32-inch color TV, plus a DVD/VCR combo player
- 5 x 9-foot projection screen
- Small kitchen/serving area with microwave oven, refrigerator and sink
- The Train Room, with model railroad layouts (docent-operated trains, by arrangement).



For arrangements and reservations:

Telephone:  
408-243-3969,

or e-mail:  
Info@sbhhs.org



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## TIMETABLES — A Calendar of Events

### RECURRING EVENTS

**Every Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**  
Open House at Santa Clara Depot

**Every Saturday, 9:00 a.m.**  
Work Parties  
for Depot and Tower Restoration,  
and Facility Maintenance  
Wear Appropriate Clothing

**Second Tuesday  
in February, April, June,  
August, October & December**  
**7:30 p.m.**  
Bi-Monthly Meetings  
of the Corporate Membership  
of SBHRS  
Santa Clara Depot

### SPECIAL EVENTS

**Saturday and Sunday  
6-7 November 2004**  
**10:00 a.m. to 5:00p.m.**  
*Model Train Show  
and Open House*  
Santa Clara Depot

**Saturday and Sunday  
13-14 November 2004**  
**10:00 a.m. to 5:00p.m./4:00 p.m.**  
*International Railfair*  
Placer County Fairgrounds  
Roseville

**Saturday and Sunday  
27-28 November 2004**  
**11 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day**  
*Great American Train Show*  
Alameda County Fairgrounds  
Pleasanton

### SPECIAL EVENTS (Continued)

**Saturday, 4 December 2004**  
**7:00 to 8:30 p.m.**  
Santa Clara Depot  
Open to the Public  
for  
*Toys for Tots Train*  
(Train stop: 7:55 to 8:15 p.m.)

**Saturday and Sunday  
18-19 December 2004**  
**10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day**  
*Great Western Train Show*  
Marin Center  
San Rafael

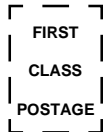
Items for the Calendar of Events that are of interest to SBHRS members and friends must be submitted to the club office or to the editor not later than the deadline of:

**Tuesday, 13 January 2005**



SBHRS Website: [www.sbhrrs.org](http://www.sbhrrs.org)

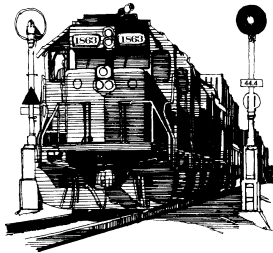
South Bay Historical Railroad Society, Inc.  
Santa Clara Caltrain Station  
1005 Railroad Avenue  
Santa Clara, CA 95050-4319



## First Class Mail

Date Sensitive Material

**FALL 2004  
MODEL TRAIN SHOW  
AND  
OPEN HOUSE**



**Saturday and Sunday,  
6-7 November 2004**  
**10:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m.**  
Santa Clara Depot