



Photo Courtesy of Nancy Bacon Franck

Karl Bacon

Tubular Steel Track Roller Coaster

U.S. PATENT NO. 3,114,332: Bobsled amusement ride

Inducted in 2025 Born: Feb. 16, 1910 Died: Nov. 14, 2008

Primary Connections:

- Arrow Development: Co-founder and Engineer, 1946-73
- Hendy Iron Works: Head of Machine Tool Maintenance

Key Memberships/Awards:

- American Coaster Enthusiasts: Coaster Landmark Award for Matterhorn Bobsleds, 2003
- International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions: Hall of Fame Award, 1998

Karl Bacon and Ed Morgan engineered the world's first tubular steel track roller coaster. Matterhorn Bobsleds, which debuted in 1959 at Disneyland in Anaheim, California, set the standard for roller coaster design technology and paved the way for future innovations in the amusement park industry.



Full Bio: <https://www.invent.org/inductees/karl-bacon>

Things You Should Know:

- Bacon was born in 1910 in Oakland, Maine.
- He was a self-taught engineer with a naturally mathematical mind.
- Bacon and Morgan met in 1943, when they worked together at Hendy Iron Works, a U.S. Navy contractor in Sunnyvale, California, that built torpedo launchers and marine steam engines.
- In 1953, Walt Disney hired Arrow Development to work with WED Enterprises, now Walt Disney Imagineering, to design and construct original rides for the Fantasyland area of Disneyland, which would open in 1955.
- He and Morgan remained close friends for life.
- When Bacon passed away in 2008, Morgan reflected on his drive to innovate, stating, "The most important factor is that Karl was a genius."
- Bacon had 12 U.S. patents.