

BAY AREA GARDEN RAILWAY SOCIETY

# TRELLIS & TRESTLE

NOVEMBER 2022



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## PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES

As I write this, I am looking forward to my second open RR of 2023. I opened my RR in October 2021 and it started to rain halfway through, The forecast this year is way more encouraging. Indeed, with no smoke, this has been a great October to spruce up my RR: sunny days, little wind and warm evenings for night running.



Every club like BAGRS relies on a small number of members to do most of the work for the benefit of members at large and BAGRS is no exception, and we need to expand that small number!

Members like Russ Miller, Ray Turner, Greg Hile, Richard Murray, Lynn Gerber & Larry Silverman have and continue to dedicate countless hours to running BAGRS and the pressure is mounting every day our 2023 convention gets closer. We are drowning and need help. Here are some examples:

- ◇ Our monthly newsletter where we need 'Associate Editors' to support Editor, Greg Hile, sourcing and preparing contributions on topics like gardening and RR enhancement projects.
- ◇ Our upcoming March Annual meeting supporting the meeting Chair, Channing Cheng.
- ◇ Our social media helping to source images and videos for our Facebook, Instagram & YouTube channels.
- ◇ Convention: Numerous opportunities like, registration coordination and welcome desk,.

Please step up! None of the above require service on the Board nor attendance at lots of meetings. (I will have more to share on those opportunities next month.

Send me an email. Share which of the above interest you, and either I, another Director, or Russ Miller will get back to you to discuss your interest . You can even suggest an activity not listed above.

We need to expand our team by the end of the year to make it through 2023, so if you can help, please don't delay.



This image was posted on GR News' social media by Shawn Viggiano from NJ recently, and it got me thinking.

Let's have a '**Loco of the month**' featured in T&T. We would need one or two images of the loco and brief notes about it.

Images don't have to be as spectacular as Shawn's but would need to be sharp. Notes would be a couple of sentences mentioning manufacturer, loco modelled on & role on your RR.

If you are interested in having a loco featured, please email me at [president@bagrs.org](mailto:president@bagrs.org)



# BOARD NEWS

## CONVENTION REGISTRATION FEE FOR BAGRS MEMBERS

BAGRS Members have been asking - Do we have to pay the registration fee for our 2023 National Convention? And the answer is:

- ◇ The registration fee will be waived for BAGRS Members located in the 12 Bay Area Counties who have paid their dues for 2023. Once you have paid your 2023 dues, the registration fee will be waived when you register via the Convention website, [www.NGRC2023.org](http://www.NGRC2023.org) so pay your 2023 dues first!
- ◇ Note that you will still need to pay for optional activities like the Roaring Camp Ride & BBQ, the Convention Banquet and the Napa Valley Wine Train.
- ◇ We are doing this for BAGRS Members in the 12 Bay Area counties because a majority of you will be giving time to support aspects of the Convention. (Not all Hosting clubs do this!)
- ◇ BAGRS Members beyond the 12 Bay Area counties will pay the registration fee unless they are in a position to donate time to support the Convention playing roles here in the Bay Area.
- ◇ The 12 Bay Area counties are Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano & Sonoma.

## 2023 DUES

The Board of Directors has set Annual Dues for 2023 at \$40, an increase of less than 50 cents a month. The increase of 14% is the first dues increase since 2009 and we all know that prices of most everything have increased way more than 14% in the last 13 years.

- ◇ During the last 13 years, some of BAGRS major expenses have increased far more than 14%, especially in the last several year: For example:
  - ◇ Insurance +75%
  - ◇ Annual Meeting Expenses above what members pay to attend + 50%
- ◇ There are also new expenses to cover:
  - ◇ Annual maintenance for our website to keep it up to date (which it is not today)
  - ◇ A BAGRS Dropbox Account for efficient file sharing

We still have significant financial reserves generated from past conventions' profits, and our policy about those reserves remains unchanged. The reserves can be tapped for occasional capital expenses, like the trailer used to transport our travelling steam layout, but the reserves are not used to cover regular operating expenses. We maintain the reserves to support future National Conventions in the Bay Area, to fund rare capital expense and to cover any extraordinary/unforeseen expense caused by forces outside our control. The reserves are our guarantee that BAGRS will survive unforeseen financial setbacks. We are lucky to have them. Most garden railroad societies don't.



## CONVENTION NEWS AND UPDATES

Russ Miller is the immediate past president of BAGRS and chairman of the 38th National Garden Railway Convention to be held next summer here in the Bay Area. A resident of Castro Valley, Russ also maintains and operates the Stanton Canyon Railway.

When am I going to be open during the convention? That is the question we hear every day from our members. The short answer is... We do not know yet. First, we must know which members are interested in being open. Once that happens, we will then be able to compile a map of all interested parties so that we can then "cut it up" into areas for the daily tours. This is where you come in... All BAGRS members will be receiving a link to a survey that we will need you to fill out as soon as possible. You must fill out the survey completely and quickly to be considered for next year's NGRC. Please limit your RR description... Make it like a sales brochure... You want to convince our guests to come visit your layout. But do not exaggerate or make stuff up... Just keep it honest. Once we compile all of the info gathered from the survey, we will be able to assign dates and arrange the tours. Here is what we know so far... The North Bay will hold open houses in the Santa Rosa area on Saturday, July 1 and the San Rafael area on July 2. We also know that the Peninsula will be open on the Fourth of July... The rest of the dates are still open. We are going to hold layout tours closer to the Santa Clara Convention Center on Wednesday (Roaring Camp BBQ Day), Thursday (Ice Cream Social), and Friday (Accucraft Banquet) ... That leaves Monday and the last Saturday open for the layouts further away from the SCCC. We also plan an Encore Day on Sunday plus we have some postconvention tours possibly happening in the San Luis Obispo area. So please, fill out the survey as soon as you receive it.

We are going to need everyone to volunteer in some capacity to make this a successful convention. We are going to need lots of help Sunday, July 2, in the morning to help unload the registration supplies at the Hyatt Hotel. We will then need quite a few people to stay that afternoon and evening for registration as Sunday and Monday are by far the busiest days. We are going to need 3 to 5 people each day to ride the buses and keep all of our guests entertained and in line... We are going to need people at the door of the vendor hall, so only our ticketed guest can enter. We will need help taking tickets at Roaring Camp for the BBQ and at the door of the Banquet and Ice Cream Social. Layout Hosts will need volunteers to help them run their layout during the open house and to help the buses park and our visiting guests enter and leave... Always checking their badges to make sure they are registered for the convention. If you can help one day, two days or every day, your help is greatly appreciated. Email me (at [ngrc@bagrs.org](mailto:ngrc@bagrs.org)) or Mick (at [president@bagrs.org](mailto:president@bagrs.org)) with what you would like to help with and we will steer you to the right area... We need to finalize all of this before our Annual Meeting next March...

The BAGRS Board has agreed to waive the registration fees for all local BAGRS Members and we encourage you to sign up and pay for all of the extra events planned... such as the BBQ, Ice Cream Social, and Banquet. As with all events like this, you get out of it what you put into it, and we are planning on this being even more fun than the successful 2016 NGRC... So jump on board!

Russ Miller, NGRC 2023 Chairman



**IF YOU WANT YOUR RAILROAD TO BE OPEN  
FOR THE CONVENTION NEXT YEAR  
READ THIS!**

Scheduling 75+ open railroads and the associated bus schedules over 6 days is a complex challenge.  
**We need your help to do it!**

**SPECIFICALLY**  
**We need information from you**  
**And we need it NOW**

We have put the information we need into an on-line survey powered by 'Survey Monkey'  
Completing the survey should take less than 10 minutes of your time.  
Not a big ask to be open for the biggest National Garden Railroad Convention on the planet!

**THIS IS THE LINK TO THE SURVEY**  
**<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JDFTTQH>**

**If you want your railroad to be open,**  
**We need you to complete the survey by**  
**NOVEMBER 30**

We want you to be open.  
However, if you do not complete the survey, we are not going to chase you.  
We will assume that you don't want to be open.

Thank You  
Russ Miller  
2023 NGRC Chair

Thank You  
Ray Turner  
BAGRS Membership Chair

Thank You  
Mick Spilsbury  
BAGRS President

## TO BE OR NOT TO BE OPEN FOR OUR 2023 NATIONAL CONVENTION

Many of us have been open for prior National Conventions but some of us have not.  
Here are some thoughts for the latter.

**Does your RR have to be large and impressive ?** No. Garden railroads come in all shapes and sizes. We have seen perfectly manicured 1,000 foot railroads at National Conventions but we have also marveled at creative usage of small spaces. Visitors are well aware that we don't all operate on the same RR budgets!

**Does your RR have to be finished?** No. Visitors enjoy seeing projects in progress and some of them are full of advice about the projects. Anyway, garden railroads are never truly 'finished'! (Ask my wife, Liz)

**Does your RR need to be operational?** Yes, one or more trains need to be running.

**Is it a good idea to have someone help you on open day?** Yes, yes & yes! Recruiting one or more people to run trains while you meet and greet visitors and answer their many questions is pretty much essential unless you have one of those rare RRs that can be relied on to run on auto pilot for hours.

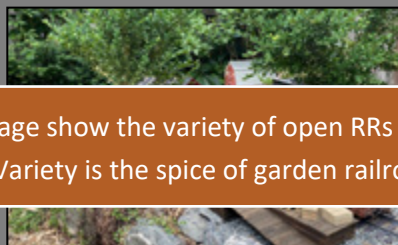
**Is being open a lot of work?** Let's not beat about the bush, yes. You will probably spend quite a bit of time getting your RR ready because you will want to make sure it runs well on the big day.

### Why be open?

- ◇ It's a very rare opportunity to have a LOT of people visit your RR.
- ◇ Visitors are garden railroad fans, They are friendly and appreciative .
- ◇ You will meet people from all over N. America and beyond.
- ◇ You will probably connect with some of the people, some of whom become GR buddies for life and people to visit.
- ◇ You may well get useful suggestions ranging from easier ways to do things to features that you later incorporate in your RR.
- ◇ All the planning, inspiration, and effort that went into building your RR will be on display.
- ◇ Visitors who have been to prior Bay Area Conventions will enjoy seeing a new RR.

**I built my first RR in 1992 and was open for the 1993 convention. I made some mistakes but had a great time, launching a pastime that has entertained me for 30+ years and given me great friends across the world.**

**Mick Spilsbury.**



Images on the next page show the variety of open RRs open at recent conventions  
Variety is the spice of garden railroading!

# TO BE OR NOT TO BE OPEN FOR THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

## The variety of Open Railroads at the last 2 Conventions



Long runs, few plants & structures



Small, on raised platform, no plants



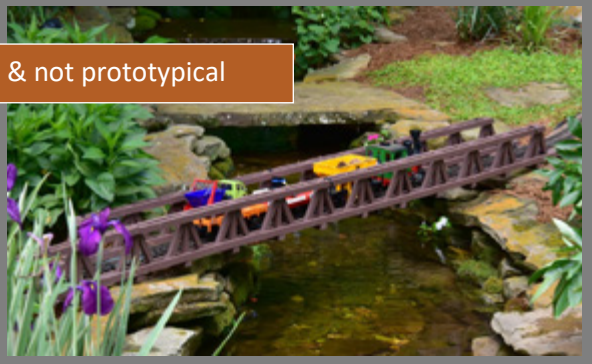
Large with detailed landscaping



Emphasis on eclectic structures



Prototypical operations emphasis



Small, simple & not prototypical



Large RR not quite completed



All about live steam operation



## RANDOM NOTES IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER

When Greg Hile gave up a promising career in major league baseball to pursue a life of creosote and whistles, little did he know how long it would take to fulfill his dream of being a garden railroad club newsletter editor. This past year he also took on the role of scheduling coordinator guy. Greg's a busy dude, and he cried when Vin Scully died, but he wouldn't have it any other way.

So, here are a few items of interest in, of course, no particular order:

1. Our 2022 layout tour season ended with the Phantom/Encore Layouts on October 23. Two brave souls opened up, one a Phantom and the other an Encore. I attended both and I have to say they were both an unmitigated success. Rob and Nancy Ronconi were open during the day down in Mountain View and must have seen close to a hundred visitors. Mick and Liz Spilsbury were open during the late afternoon and evening up in San Rafael and also had dozens of visitors. Thank you to the Ronconis, the Spilsburys, and, of course, to everyone who opened up this past year. After a couple of pandemic years it was truly wonderful to see everyone back in the swing of things.

2. Next year is going to be a bit different. Turns out we're hosting a convention! Be sure to check out convention chair Russ and president Mick's articles on the preceding pages with important information and updates on the planning and preparations for the event. Between now and July, this will be a top priority for this newsletter and for our convention website at [ngrc2023.org](http://ngrc2023.org). Things will be moving quickly from here on out and given all the uncertainties in this sort-of-post-pandemic world, there are bound to be changes arise from beyond our control.

3. It will also result in some changes in the newsletter and for our usual layout tour schedule. Some of our regular features will be moving around to make room for convention updates and there will probably not be any open houses until after the convention, but there will be other activities to fill in the gaps, like a big swap meet and, I suspect, a post-convention picnic. Stay tuned!

4. Our president Mick Spilsbury's column this month is also a call to action beyond just that of putting on a national convention for a thousand people. Simply put, we need help. As editor of this newsletter and as scheduling coordinator, I, in particular, could use assistant or contributing editors that focus on such things as the gardening aspects of gardening railroading, the design and building of new layouts, new products in the marketplace, and the coordination of calendars and events of other local model railroading organizations. If you're interested, let's talk ...

4. As I said last month, October 2 was an interesting day for open houses, and, in particular, for me, as I had the opportunity to host approximately 25 people and show off my new site and solicit input and inspiration from some incredibly talented folks. They did not disappoint. My intent going forward is to produce a series of articles on the design and building of this small and challenging layout, and it starts this month. Keep in mind I am not an expert on much of this stuff. But I know a lot of us are in the same boat and my hope is that this project will be a vehicle to stimulate thought and action on a lot of fronts.

5. Oh, did I mention that BAGRS is hosting a national convention next year? Sounds like a good excuse to play with trains ...



# DREAMING ABOUT GARDEN RAILROADING ...

Bringing new meaning to "Dream On"!

Do you dream about garden railroading? Does your partner dream about garden railing? Does your tolerant non-garden railroading partner dream about garden railroading? Would they fess up if they did?

We have one known case so far. A non-garden railroading partner of a dedicated BAGRS garden railroader fessed up to this dream.

Somehow the exact address of every garden railroad in the USA had been published on the web, addresses so specific and detailed that Google Maps could pinpoint them with remarkable accuracy.

Folks fed up with lock down and/or kids to amuse decided to show up at the published addresses to see the garden railroads.

The dreamer is hosting some friends for dinner, indoors. She observes people in her yard. Then they start wandering into her dining room and she is surprised to notice that her partner's 'garden' railroad has mysteriously penetrated her house and dining room. She can't get rid of the 'visitors' and sees more streaming into the yard.

She wakes up and demands to know whether her 'sleeping' partner has plans to run his 'garden' railroad into their house. Fortunately for him, he has no such plan! Other yet-to-disclosed expansion plans but not into the house (though it makes him consider whether he should).

We are wondering if there are other dreams like this to be shared. Of course, the more bizarre, the better!

As with this dreamer and partner, identities would remain a closely guarded secret so you could share them with us without fear of retribution or risk of appearing in the 'National Enquirer'!

Mick & Greg

## NEWSLETTER SHARING

BAGRS has a policy of reciprocal sharing of newsletters with the following garden railway clubs. We do not share private member information such as home addresses or tour information without the express permission of the particular member.

[Central California Coast GRS](#)

[Redwood Empire GRS](#)

[Denver GRS](#)

[Rose City GRS](#)

[Gold Coast GRS](#)

[Sacramento Valley GRS](#)

[Orange County GRS](#)


[Santa Clarita Valley GRC](#)

[Puget Sound GRS](#)

[The Garden Whistle](#)

# New Beginnings

By Gregory Hile



I don't exactly have a very good track record when it comes to garden railroads. My first layout back in the 1990s

was wiped out by a flood and then a broken water main that was hit by a car doing donuts in the parking lot above our house caused the demise of iteration number two. After a lull in the garden railroading world for a few years, the Carquinez & Alhambra Valley Railroad was relaunched, only to fall victim to a huge oak tree that threatened to fall and had to be removed. That episode, which required dismantling of the layout as a precautionary safety measure until the tree could be felled, was chronicled in a past issue of *Trellis & Trestle*.

In February of last year, my father-in-law passed away. My mother-in-law continued on for a year but decided to move in with one of her daughters in Oakley and their home was listed for sale back in June. The listing lasted for a week before my wife and I decided now was the time to downsize and take over the property. It came with a pool and with a fairly decent sized plot of land, flat and away (or so I hope) from water mains, crazy drivers, and falling trees. Here is a photo of the space, laid out with PVC at the desired elevation (more on that later).

And so I'm back ... and I want it all. I want to be able to run wireless, and I want to run live steam. I want to be able to run at night and I want to be able to create and display my models.

Some people are into operations, while others are content with roundy-rounds. Some are dedicated solely to live steam, while others covet the latest and greatest electronic gadgets. I want it all. But mostly live steam and models. The Carquinez & Alhambra Valley RR loosely models my adopted home down of Martinez, California around the turn of the twentieth century. I say loosely because I have found it impossible to represent the city's contours and boundaries within the size and geography of my available space. However, as a historian of sorts there are some very interesting buildings (and stories!) for me to focus my attention:

1. The front cover shot is of the original train station built in the 1860s. Still standing today, although only in portions and no longer in use, it saw the Pony Express and the Transcontinental Railroad pass through.

2. The burned-out building on the previous page is my replica of a livery stable in downtown Martinez that was destroyed by fire in 1904 (it, in turn, was destroyed by a well-meaning but over-zealous gardener in 2017 but that's another story).

3. The 1903 courthouse and jail. The courthouse is still in use as a county office building and the jail was torn down earlier this year.

4. The home and estate of the naturalist John Muir.

5. The birthplace home of Joe DiMaggio.

6. Wineries, including the original site of Christian Brothers.

So, having a pretty solid sense of what I want, where to begin? There are two schools of thought here. One is to study everything you can get your hands on and have a detailed plan in place, ready to go before moving an inch of dirt or laying a foot of track. The other is to



just get something -- anything, really -- up and running as soon as possible.

I agree with both. I have collected lots of reference materials over the years and have been going back to review them. Think about investing in the complete collection of *Garden Railways* magazine, which can be found online for a very reasonable price on trains.com. Others, such as Bob Brown's *Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette*, are also readily available. I recently rediscovered an excellent article in *Garden Railways* from 1992/1993 that laid out a number of important points about planning a new layout that I will be using today.

More importantly, the article was written by Mick Spilsbury and I was told about the article over breakfast a couple weeks ago by Mick Spilsbury. We are so fortunate here in the Bay Area through BAGRS to have a vast array of incredibly talented, like-minded individuals who love to share their expertise. All I can say is take advantage of it! Go to open houses. Host an open house yourself. Take lots of pictures and don't be afraid to ask questions.

At the same time, there is the temptation to just plow ahead and get something going. Fortunately, one can do both ... whether they like it or not. One thing that is virtually certain is that there will be changes down the road. Mistakes will happen. Thoughts will change. Directions will change. So plan for it! One can get the ball rolling and have a layout up and running that is relatively easy to modify or change out.

One of the necessities for me is that the layout be raised off the ground. I also feel the need to have no area of the layout that is outside the reach of my arms. Medical conditions -- which will not be getting any better -- make this an imperative.

Several people suggested to me that I build a frame out of PVC pipe and build it up to the desired elevation. This has been one of the best pieces of advice I have ever been given. Another solid piece of advice was to build up the structure using concrete piers and 4x4 lumber. I just happened to have some extra piers, cinderblocks, and 4x4s from a deck project and so that's what I am doing. These materials are cheap, easy to acquire and can be moved as design ideas change -- perfect for the one who wants to jump in. Attached to the top of the 4x4 supports could be cement board, wood, or other sturdy materials. I also happen to have some extra Hardie Board lying around, so I plan on trying that out. It also explains why, when everyone was taking photos of the trains on Rob Ronconi's layout a couple of weeks ago, I was concentrating on getting lots of photographs of the foundation work. Thank you, my friend!



Of course, one always needs to be prepared for the unexpected. A few weeks ago and just down the street from the new house there was a huge pile of dirt from someone's project along with a sign that said "free dirt." I spoke with the owners and was told I could have it all if I wanted. Just had to haul it away, they said. One generally should not look a gift-horse in the mouth but there was something that warned me not to grab the dirt. At least not yet ... until I had a plan.

This past Wednesday my wife sent me a Facebook post from a landscape contractor seeking to give away dirt. This time, it seemed right and I made the call. Within thirty minutes, I had a load of dirt in my driveway and two more before the day was done. All for free, including delivery, approximately 12 to 14 yards of dirt plus several more 4x4s in excellent shape.



The dirt came from a planter box that was being transformed into a pergola. Several people responded to the Facebook post after I did wanting the dirt. The dirt at the house up the street is still there, largely untouched. It is now tarped to avoid the rain and will be moved slowly to the backyard until there's a better plan.

As I said earlier, I'm no expert at this stuff. I am hoping to start a dialogue with folks about the best ways to proceed. Many of you have already done so and for that I am grateful. This will be an ongoing series of articles and I encourage others to submit articles and notes of your own. It doesn't have to be long, or it could also be a feature article -- that's up to you!

# MEMBER UPDATES

Here are photos from the October 23 Phantom/Encore open houses ...





### NOT ANOTHER ONE

Well before I start this article, I think that Al Pacino said it best in the *Godfather* Movie, "Just when I thought I was out they pull me back in."

I thought I had finished rebuilding Bill's two-car set by Locomotion. The set consisted of a 1:22.5 scale rail bus and one passenger car. During the rebuilding of these two cars, Bill asked if I would build him a third car, a combine car, which I did (see photo #1838). That photo shows the new three-car set in a test run before painting. But wait, that's not the end of this story.



Photo #1838 three car set on test run

The other day Bill brought over a 1:20.3 short single truck caboose that I had built for him a few years back (see photo on next page #2447). He asked if I could remove the roof and cut the car down to a 1:22.5 scale caboose to match the other three cars that I had just finished. Well that was going to be more work than I wanted to do. I decided to just build another caboose. It would be much easier.

After removing all the parts I could use from the 1:20.3 caboose, like the truck assembly, brake wheel, hand rails and couplers, it was time to start on the construction of the new caboose.

As always the caboose would be built of 1/8" and 1/16" styrene and styrene strips from Evergreen Plastics. The caboose would end up being 6 and 1/2" long, 3 and 5/8" wide and 4 and 1/4" high, less the truck assembly. The truck assembly is from a used Bachmann passenger car. The hand rails and brake stand are made from bicycle spokes (See photos





Photo #2447 The 1:20.3 caboose

#3430, #3431, 3432 and #3452). As always, Bill would like to paint the caboose to match his other three cars that I built.

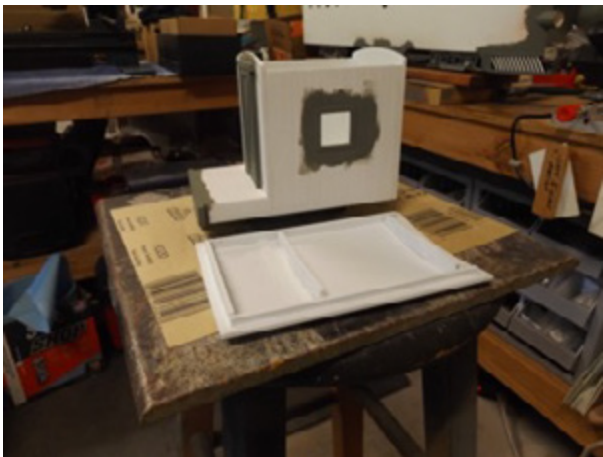


Photo #3430 the finished body with roof

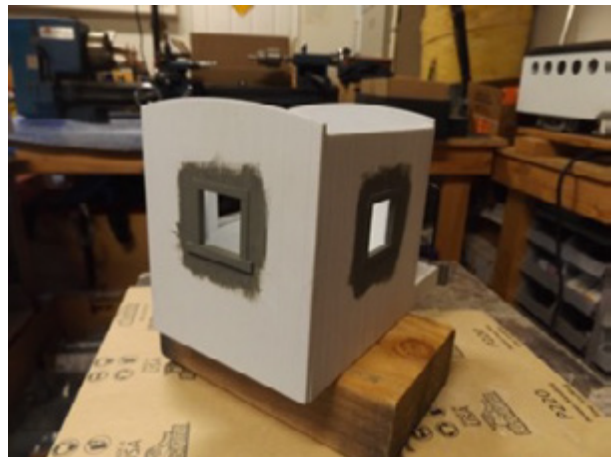


Photo #3431 shows the trimmed out windows



Photo #3432 shows the single truck assembly

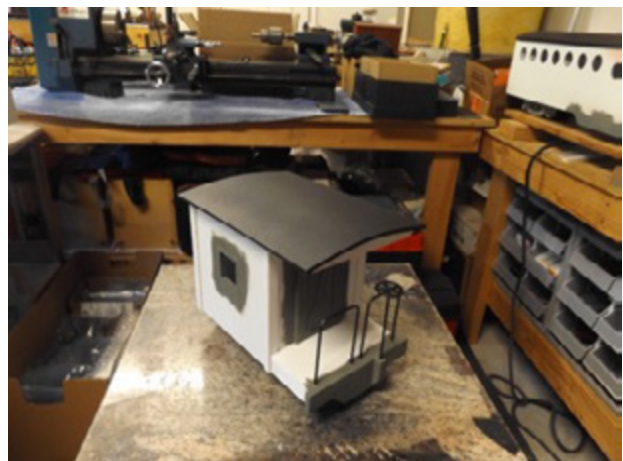


Photo # 3452 shows the completed  
1:22.5 Caboose

It was going to be a close race to finish all the painting by 10/15/22, which was the date for the Sacramento Valley Live Steamers Fall meet and steam up at Hagan Park in Rancho Cordova.

Now that I finished the four car set, it's time to get back to the 7/8 scale combine car that I had planned on using in this article. Hopefully I will be able to finish that car for next month's article. I moan and groan about being too busy but I enjoy building cars and repairing locomotives and have a hard time saying no, I guess I enjoy the challenge.

Yes, Bill Bivings won the race to finish painting the four-car set in time for the fall steam up (see photo #3477).



Photo #3477 Bill Bivings and the finished four-car set



## ALL STEAMED UP ...

A true Renaissance man if ever there was one, Richard Murray has been the BAGRS coordinator of live steam events for about twelve years. He has written many "Plant of the Month" articles over the years, knows a thing or two about British cars, and has recently taken on the detailed art of bonsai. A retired dentist, born and raised in San Francisco, Richard has been married to Melinda Murray for 53 years.

The Railroad Museum at Ardenwood presents the 22nd annual

# Rail Fair

**Labor Day Weekend**

**September 3, 4, 5, 2022 10am - 4pm**

## ALL STEAMED UP

A couple days before the Ardenwood event all the news channels predicted "extreme heat" and "dangerous health conditions." Steamers already have hot fires in their engines. What they don't need is 100 degree weather conditions, too. In spite of the predicted hot weather, many steamers still showed up to run their engines and to educate the public. We put up 3 tents to keep direct sun rays off the area inside the track. Melinda brought 80 bottles of water for Saturday so that everyone could stay hydrated. Certainly the park was not quite as crowded as it usually is. Attendance was probably off by 20%. About 5 years ago in contrast, it was so hot that by noon the park had emptied out and the park elected to close at 1 p.m. Lucky for us the temperatures this time, despite predictions, never made it into the 90s.

The liaison person for Ardenwood was very kind and gave instructions about time, access, and food. However, her supervisor was being very strict about getting the names of steamers who would attend. Apparently the supervisor was afraid that some non-volunteers might try to avoid paying at the front gate by using the back gate. Her plan was to check off names from a list before allowing admittance through the back gate. I told our liaison that I usually don't know who is coming, even for times when I ask for an RSVP. Besides, I had already sent out the email notice to all the steamers, and the notice did not include an RSVP. She was still insistent. More emails. Still more emails. I finally decided to send the entire roster, which included 145 names. I understand that some other clubs followed the same procedure. If the park had posted someone at the back gate, it would have taken an impossible amount of time to go through all the lists. As it turned out, the supervisor eventually said, "Never mind. It's not important."

The park sent me a high class, full color brochure advertising the Rail Fair. The only problem was that it was emailed the day after the event.

Gary Whaley is one of our regulars. Since he has been unable to get service for his computer, he never gets any of my email notices. He relies on Russ Miller to relay the info to him since Gary often hangs out at Russ' Tap Plastic store. This time when Gary got the info about Ardenwood, he decided to invite a friend. Although the friend knew nothing about railroads, he had a good time watching all our steam engines get prepared for steaming. Gary even gave him a BAGRS orange shirt from the 2016 National Convention so that the friend would feel part of the steamer group. Who knows-he might become a future member. Gary brought an Accucraft 4-4-0 that was bright red. It represented one of the two engines which met at Promontory Summit.

Tim Boles brought his small luki, an Accucraft small plantation engine. He also brought an Accucraft 7/8 0-4-4 Forney that was labeled WW&FRy. The initials stand for the Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington company which bought the engine in 1933. After the railroad was abandoned in 1936-37, it was purchased and stored in Connecticut. In 1994 it was returned to Maine for restoration. It once again belongs to the Sandy River and Rangeley Lakes Ry and now runs on regular excursions over a restored section of its track. Tim emailed me, "My engine burns butane but requires a fan for draft. The engine has a ceramic burner and 5 boiler tubes, so it acts like a solid fuel engine." I emailed back to Tim, "Who would have known? I didn't. Even though I learned something today, it doesn't make up for what I forgot yesterday."

Often times Seth Abrahams brings several engines of which some might not work. This time he brought just one engine, an Accucraft 1/32 0-6-0 switcher. It's one of the most reliable and easy to run engines produced by Accucraft. Being cautious, Seth started running the engine on rollers. It ran just fine and even had a nice puff of steam.

Jim Hague is a rather new member. I believe he joined last year, but I couldn't confirm that on our website. It's always exciting to see a new member attend events. Although he doesn't have his own layout, he does have a nice Accucraft Mogul 2-6-0. Welcome Jim.

Bob Chapman won the long distance mileage award for travel to Ardenwood. Blue Lake, Ca is located 16 miles north of Eureka or 268 miles from Ardenwood. The town has 397 acres. Its population is so small that I have more people peeking over the fence to watch trains. Bob complained that he wasn't receiving my steam emails any more. Upon investigation I found that his email had secretly disappeared from my list. I bet that Google canceled him. I sent my apologies to him and reinstalled him as an active steamer.

Ron Sickler was having chronic digestive problems, but like a good trooper, he was active all day. He brought an Accucraft brass prototype that never had a production run. It was a one off. After he got it, he found that it needed only a few tweaks to get it to run smoothly. What a find!

Bob Trabucco hauled the trailer both ways, helped level the track, helped with the setup and teardown, and helped to adjust parts of the track. Bob is an indispensable part of the steamers. As a repairman extraordinaire, he was Accucraft's only repairman for years.

My contribution to the trains of the day was a Critter, second edition, that I bought from Glen Simpson. It won the award for being the slowest engine of the day. It has a single oscillating piston. It hauled a load of two boxcars and one flatcar. All three cars had the theme of motor vehicles. One boxcar had an advertisement for a 1922 Autocar truck, made in Ardmore, Pennsylvania. The company was founded in 1897 and still produces trucks today. The flat car carried a tin plate 1912 Ford. Someone else looked underneath the Ford and found that it was made in Japan. It was probably made, therefore, 50-60 years ago. Surprisingly, the car and its paint were in immaculate condition. I guess that it was kept

by a collector and was never used as a toy. Another car had an advertisement for a 1919 Bethlehem Motors truck made in Allentown, Pennsylvania. The name Bethlehem is special to me because my whole family worked at the Bethlehem Shipyard in San Francisco. My dad worked there for over 40 years. My mom worked there as a secretary for a couple of years. My brother worked there as an electrician for several years. Finally, I worked there during summer vacations while going to school. Those employments took place many, many decades ago. Although the shipyard closed years ago, it is the most intact industrial complex west of the Mississippi. There is an ongoing massive restoration of the 25 acre shipyard. It boasts the potential of 3 million square feet of commercial space, including 260,000 square feet of historical structures.

No outdoor steamup is complete without Rob Lenicheck and one of his coal fired engines. Rob wrote that he scratch built the engine four years ago. It is a model of a large, narrow gauge 2-8-0 consolidation that was owned by the Rio Grande Southern. The prototype is currently in the Colorado RR Museum in Golden.

My compliments to all who participated in the Ardenwood Rail Fair under very hot conditions. Even after sweating buckets of water on Saturday, many came back on Sunday to do it all over again. We are lucky to have such a dedicated group of steamers. It was a thrill.

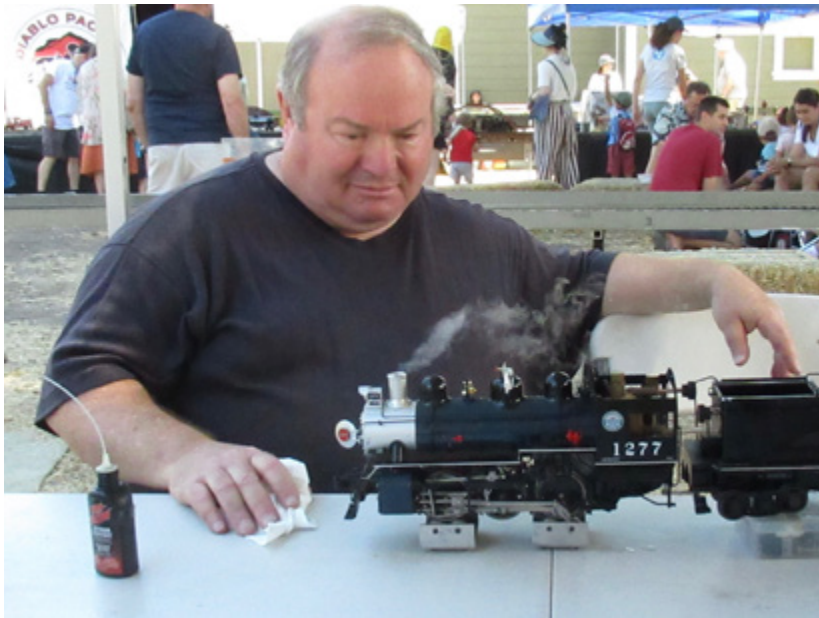
Can you host a steamup on your layout? Let me know at [steamer060@sbcglobal.net](mailto:steamer060@sbcglobal.net).



Bob Chapman has his Roundhouse engine hauling a string of cars with redwood logs.

Ron Sickler uses a simple set of straps to carry his Accucraft prototype.





Seth Abrahams is testing his Accucraft 0-6-0 switcher on rollers. A steady supply of steam is visible.



New member Jim Hague admires his Accucraft mogul.

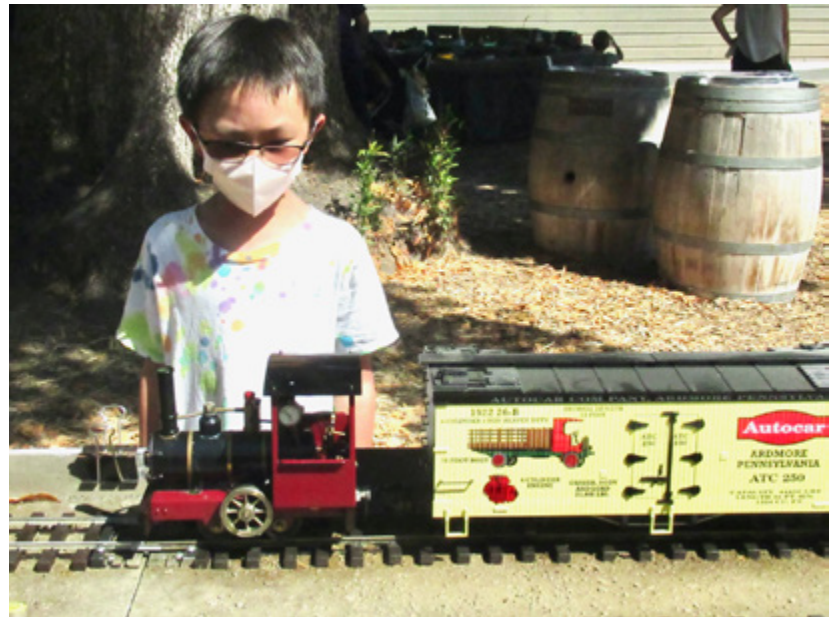


Bob Trabucco has finished his run and is tying down his engine for transport. Note Diablo Pacific in the background.



Gary Whaley fuels his bright red Accucraft 4-4-0 while his friend watches.

The author's Crickett pulls a string of railroad cars all carrying out the theme of trucks and cars.



Intense observers check out Tim Boles' 7/8 Accucraft Forney. Note the fan on the chimney stack even though the engine burns butane.



Rob Lenicheck explains the startup procedures for a live steam engine



All these sweating steamers stayed to the end on Sunday to help with the teardown.

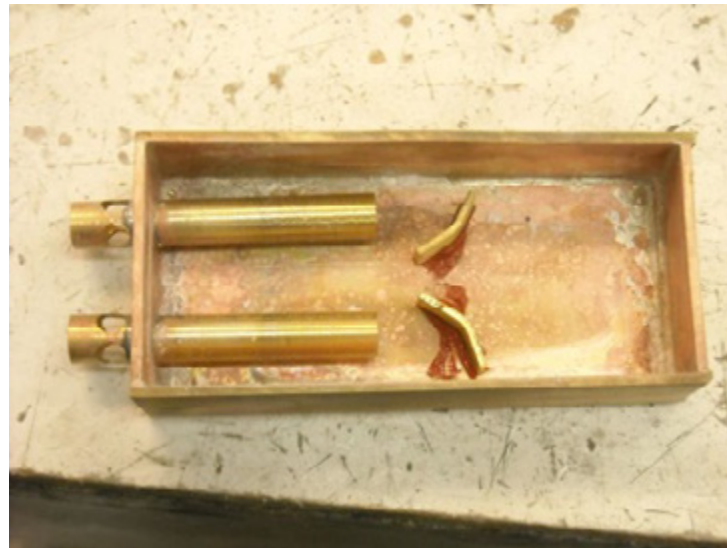




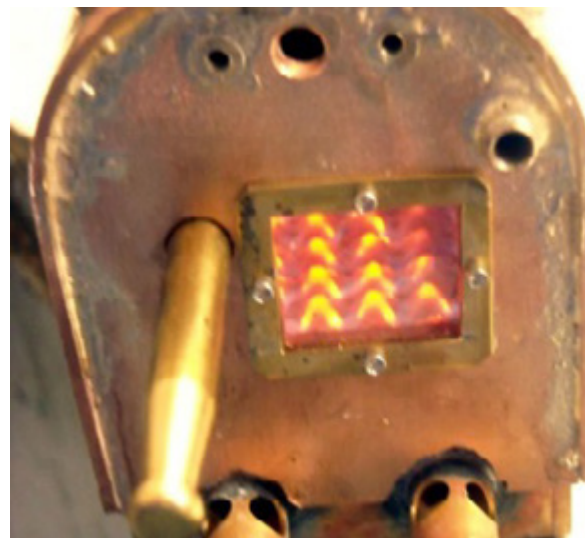
## EAST DEVIL HILLS MODELING GROUP

Formerly of Fremont, California, Henner Meinhold now resides in Berlin, Germany. Like clockwork, Henner always submits his monthly contribution on time, although sometimes it is German time he's working with. The East Devil Hills Modeling Group meets regularly to create, collaborate, and share incredibly-machined models.

This month the main focus will be on burners. After Bill Allen finally got his boiler leak-tight (first time he ever had problems), he started with the burner. As usual it is a ceramic type with the proven and now very scarce ceramic from Great Britain. In the next picture you see the two poker burner tubes and two baffles, which divert and swirl the incoming gas stream, so the ceramic will glow uniformly:

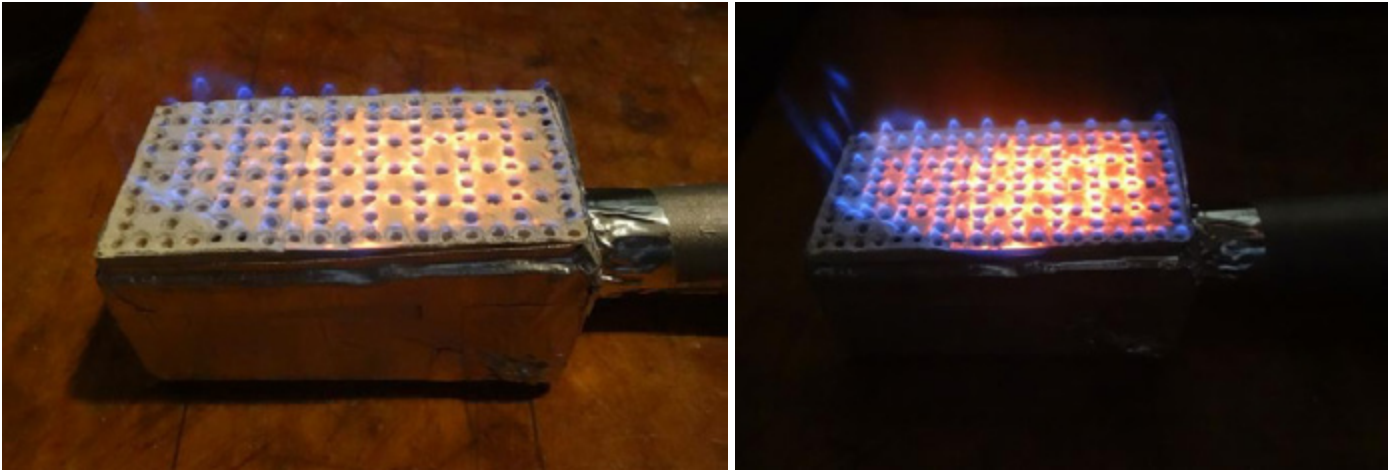


Here the burner with the ceramic attached ("glued" in with high temperature silicone):



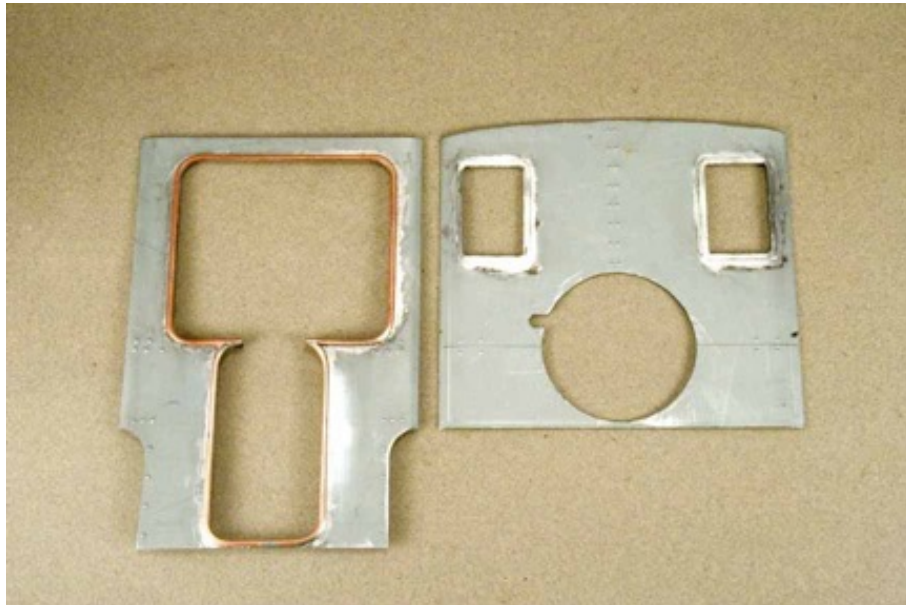
And inside the boiler with Bill's signature mica window, invented by Dennis.

As I mentioned last month, the supply of "good" ceramic from Great Britain is running out, so Dennis started making a replacement. As I reported, he tries different approaches like machining a soft fire brick or casting/firing his own ceramic using a 3D-printed mold. The results so far look very encouraging:



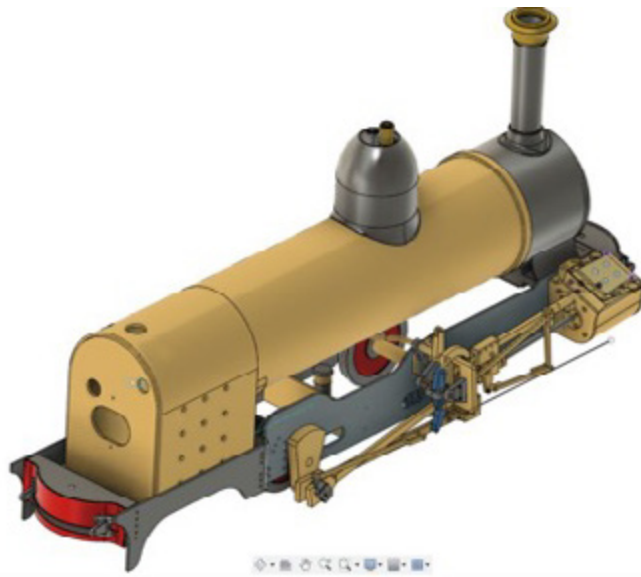
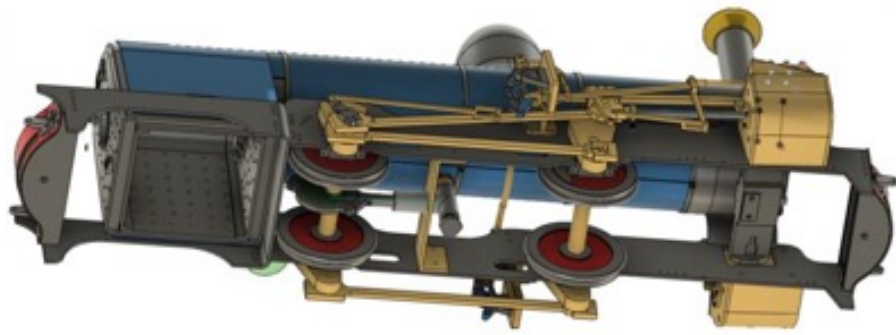
This design is already better than the current replacement ceramic. He has now finished some test castings and the mold for the final cast.

Marc Horowitz worked on the cab of his Pechot-Bourdon with the nice beading around the door. Keep in mind that he only uses hand tools:



Rob Lenicheck keeps detailing the 3D-model of the Darjeeling Class B locomotive. The advantage of such a model is that files for machining parts and making 3D-prints can be automatically derived from it.

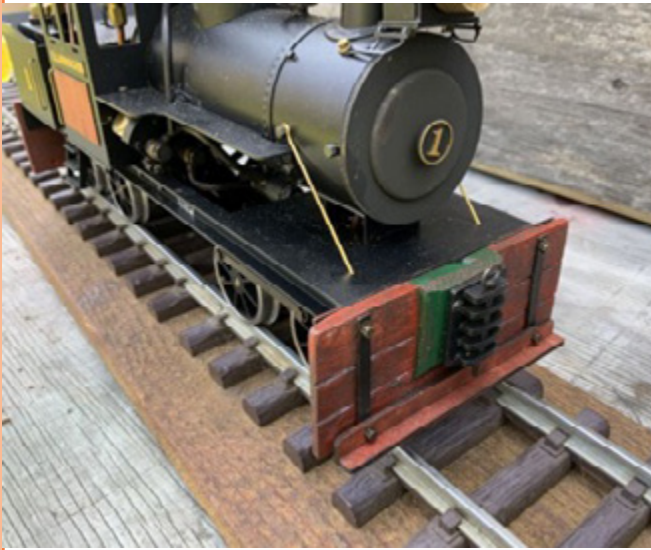
Also possible interferences or discrepancies can be caught early on:



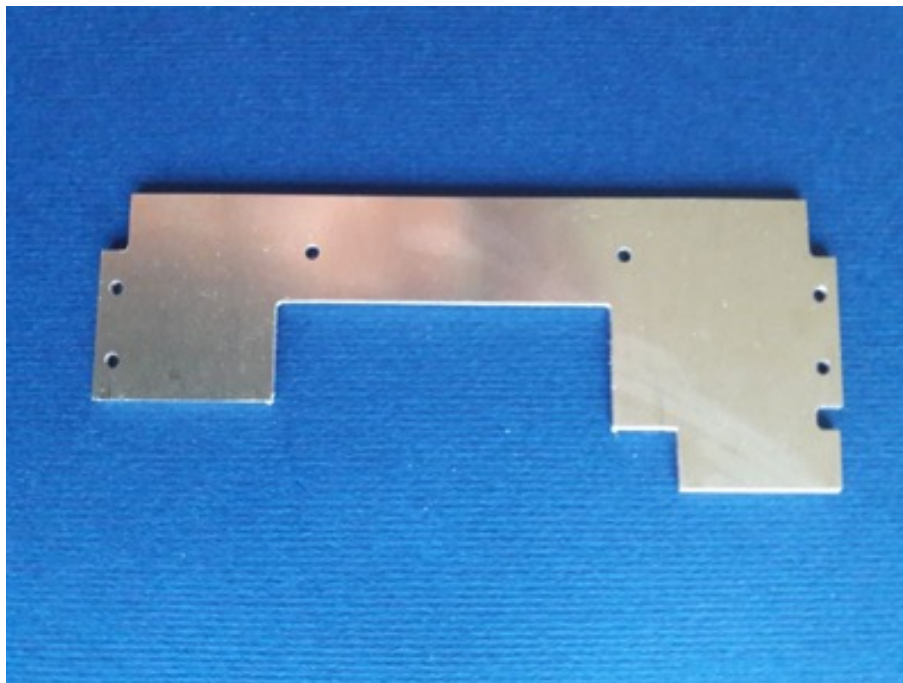
Bill Mansell made a replacement boiler for his Mamod. Keep in mind that the Mamod is the "most expensive live steamer", as you start out with a cheap stock loco and then keep adding and replacing parts ;-).



Ron Sickler acquired a Regner Heisler and improved the looks by adding nice wooden buffer beams. The gas valve also got a wooden handle painted red:



I continued with my cog loco and had to add a cab floor for attaching the steps. Due to the various fouling objects like gas tank and lubricator the shape became rather complicated. Luckily the CNC mill does not care about this and happily cuts whatever it is told to do. Even the holes are done by "spiral milling":



Finally I converted the engine of my Hit & Miss loco to "Hit only" by blocking the speed regulator. To my surprise the engine ran still pretty slow with a nice even exhaust sound. The following video was taped by my friend Bertram, who also had some problems starting the engine: <https://youtu.be/wDbafSwiszk>. As a comparison the "real" loco <https://youtu.be/CqpMq3Eo9tA> (don't get confused by the military equipment using the neighboring "track").



## POSTCARDS OF THE PAST

Retired from the publishing industry, Bill Ralph knows a thing or two about amusement parks and postcards. He is also a highly-skilled garden railroad creator. Working with brother Jim Ralph, the Porcupine Gulch Railroad, located in Fremont, California, was selected by *Garden Railways Magazine* as the Best Small Railroad in 2016 and rightfully so.



### THE FERDINAND MAGELLAN

*Traveling Home of President Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower. This 142-ton Pullman Car was rebuilt in 1942 with Bullet-Proof Glass, Escape Hatches and a 5/8 inch Steel Plate. After 16 years as "U.S. Car No.1" it was acquired by the Gold Coast Railroad in Fort Lauderdale, Florida where it is open to visitors on Sundays. The Ferdinand Magellan is a National Registered Historic Site.*

Originally built in 1929 as one of six similar private cars named for famous explorers, the Ferdinand Magellan was specially equipped to handle President Franklin D. Roosevelt's physical disabilities as well as provide armored protection. U.S. Car No. 1 was the first passenger railcar built for the use of a President since 1865 when a special car was built for Abraham Lincoln. The Ferdinand Magellan traveled more than thirty thousand miles at the rear of a Presidential Train in 1948 when president Harry S. Truman delivered nearly three hundred and fifty speeches from the custom designed rear platform including stops in the Bay Area with a brief stop in Niles during his successful cross-country whistle-stop campaign for reelection.

From the Postcard Collection of Bill Ralph

# MUSINGS OF A THEME PARK FAN



## THE DINOSAUR GARDENS Cabazon, California

*The picturesque creation of Claude K. Bell is located on Interstate 10 about 14 miles west of Palm Springs. It represents 11 years of hard work and a \$225,000 investment. Nestled in "Dinney's" heart you will find an attractive gift shop and museum, while next door the famous Wheel Inn Cafe offers the finest in meals.*

Claude Bell's first job of drawing pictures in the sand for loose change at Atlantic City led him to the Long Beach Pike where he was hired by Walter Knott to create sculptures to entertain folks awaiting restaurant seating in his new Buena Park roadside attraction. Bell's first painted concrete and steel installation was the frequently photographed "Handsome Brady and Whiskey Bill" who have been seated on the Gold Trails Hotel porch since the early 1950s, followed by "The Calico Belles" and "The Pioneering Prospector and Burro". Bell was happy as a Knott's Berry Farm portrait artist between sculpting assignments but was thinking bigger...much bigger! He envisioned a prehistoric panorama roadside attraction populated by huge cement and steel creatures on land purchased in the 1960s for a planned truck stop. His giant creations, visible for miles on San Geronio Pass, are "Dinney", a huge brontosaurus that took twenty years to complete and "Rex", a one hundred ton tyrannosaurus that have been enjoyed by countless travelers, featured in dozens of books and magazines, seen on the big screen, and are monuments that Bell fully intended to withstand the sands of time.

From the Postcard Collection of Bill Ralph

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President:	Mick Spilsbury	<a href="mailto:president@bagrs.org">president@bagrs.org</a>
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At-large board member	Richard Murray	<a href="mailto:steamer060@sbcglobal.net">steamer060@sbcglobal.net</a>
Scheduling Coordinator	Greg Hile	<a href="mailto:openhouse@bagrs.org">openhouse@bagrs.org</a>
Live Steamers	Richard Murray	<a href="mailto:steamer060@sbcglobal.net">steamer060@sbcglobal.net</a>
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South Santa Clara & San Benito Counties	Nigel Mallinson
Members Outside BAGRS Districts	Nancy Norris

# CALENDAR

December 4	BAGRS Board of Directors meeting	Zoom
January 29, 2023	BAGRS Board of Directors meeting	Zoom
March 18, 2023	BAGRS Annual Meeting	Hiller Aviation Museum
July 1-8, 2023	38th NGRC	Santa Clara and Beyond

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

### NEED A BAGRS NAME BADGE?

Send a \$15 check, payable to BAGRS, for each badge ordered. Be sure to print the name(s) and City(s) for the badge(s) clearly. Send to: BAGRS Member Badges, 210 Friar Way, Campbell, CA 95008

### BAGRS FOR SALE BY MEMBERS

List items you have for sale or items you want. You'll find it in the middle of the "Members Section" menu on our website, [bags.org](https://bags.org). Log in is required.

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Many photos & videos are hosted at: <https://photos.google.com>

Click on "Go to Google Photos", if offered.

Login with this email and password: [BAGRSvideos@gmail.com](mailto:BAGRSvideos@gmail.com) BestClub4014



# THE LAST PAGE

EDITOR'S NOTE: Matthew Malkiewicz is not going away. We greatly appreciate his contributions and invite you to visit his website for great railroad photos at <http://www.lostracksoftime.com/>. His work will continue to appear as we expand the reach of the train world around us.



I was speaking with someone recently at a BAGRS event who shared that he missed the train rides at the Nut Tree in Vacaville from his childhood.

As luck would have it, the train is still there at the outlet malls in front of Fenton's Ice Cream parlor and the Jelly Belly outlet store and I just happened to have taken a photograph of the engine only a few days before.

A couple of my grandkids live in Vacaville and there are times when Grandpa's car just goes crazy and drives out of control. Interestingly enough, it always seems to land at Fenton's and the train ride.

Occasionally, I even bring the grandkids ...



## TRELLIS AND TRESTLE

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Editor: Gregory Hile

Assistant Editor/Copyediting: Noëlla Simmons

Regular Contributors: David Frediani, Jim Maley, Henner Meinhold, Richard Murray, Bill Ralph, Mick Spilsbury

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