

# BAY AREA GARDEN RAILWAY SOCIETY

# TRELLIS AND TRESTLE

JUNE 2024



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# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES

## 19 OPEN RAILROADS IN JUNE & JULY AND ...

### MIDWEST GARDEN RAILROAD GATHERING

When you read this, I will be in Kansas City for the 2024 "Midwest Garden Railroad Gathering." The gathering is organized by the MoKan garden railroaders. I am looking forward to seeing their garden railroads and will be a keynote speaker at their banquet. Those of you who know me will not be at all surprised that the topic of my remarks will be "**Sustaining Gardening Railroading.**"



### 50th STATE for 50th ANNIVERSARY

The Midwest Gathering is conveniently located for me because I will be able to visit my 48th state, Missouri, and my 49th state, Kansas. So, when Liz and I celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary in Alaska in July, it will be in my 50th state and we will be riding trains. It has been a privilege to see so much of the USA, some while working but many areas on vacation.

On my return, I will have a couple of weeks to get ready for my open railroad on June 23. (I am also opening for friends and neighbors on June 22 and BAGRS members would be welcome on that day too.)

### NEW WEBSITE PRE-LAUNCH TASKS

Meanwhile, the Board is working through some pre-launch tasks for the new BAGRS website. The most important of them is identifying which Board positions will be responsible for monitoring areas of the site and identifying necessary updates. Our current website was not kept up to date and ended up with a lot of junk on it. We don't want that to happen again! We are not a New York Steet! (*Seen outside the most excellent NY Transit Museum!*)





# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES

## 12 OPEN RAILROADS THIS MONTH AND ...

### TWO MORE MEMBER PROFILE CHANGES

We have made two more changes to the construct of member profiles. We have added an option for members to express interest in helping other members build and/or expand their railroads.

We have removed the option for members to express interest in the East Devil Hills Modeling Group, because that group recruits members with specialized skills, to be a part of the group which does things like scratch-build live steam brass locomotives.

#### Interests

Would help to operate other members railroads?

Would you help other members build/expand their RR?



### AN OPPORTUNITY

There is an opportunity for a modeling group for members like me who build structures, customize cars and create trackside dioramas, but certainly not brass, live steam locos! If anyone is interested in coordinating such a group, please reach out to me to at [president@ bagrs.org](mailto:president@bagrs.org) to discuss the opportunity.

### ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY

Bill Ackerknecht shared a story about a young man who is into trains, volunteers at Roaring Camp and acquired a previously owned Bachmann locomotive to be his first step in building a garden railroad. Unfortunately, the Bachmann locomotive crapped out on him with shot gears.

Rather than finding a way to replace the gears on an aging Bachmann locomotive, we are hoping that a member will donate a working locomotive to inspire this young man's enthusiasm. **If that member is you**, please contact Bill at [willeacker@aol.com](mailto:willeacker@aol.com)

*(Not THE LOCO - From the superb Living Desert RR)*



# OPEN RAILROADS MAY - JULY

This is the schedule. It is of course subject to change based on the vagaries of life. However, upcoming open railroads will be featured in each edition of *T&T* and any changes will be reflected therein, so we will all have final information month by month. (We no longer send open railroad postcards which have been replaced by the great information in *T&T*)

BAGRS OPEN RAILROADS - MAY THRU JULY 2024								4/30/2024
May 11	June 1	June 23	July 13	July 28	Name	Email		Both Days?
Saturday May 11					Joyce Hennessey	metronome7@aol.com	El Cerrito	No
	Saturday June 1				Paul Wallace	pwallace@outlook.com	San Carlos	No
	Saturday June 1				Robert Burrill	Robert.Burrill@me.com	Milpitas	No
		Sunday June 23			Dart Rinefort	dartdot@comcast.net	San Rafael	No
		Sunday June 23			Bob Guinan	bobguinan@comcast.net	Novato	No
		Sunday June 23			Mick Spilsbury	president@bags.org	SanRafael	No
		Sunday June 23			Michael Laine	michaeldlaine@gmail.com	San Jose	No
		Sunday June 23			Ray Turner	rayjturner@ieee.org	San Jose	No
			Saturday July 13		Rich K Johnson	rjlatheart@gmail.com	Los Banos	No
			Saturday July 13		Ron Malouf	rcmalouf@onebox.com	Burlingame	No
			Saturday July 13		Richard Murray	steamer060@sbcglobal.net	Millbrae	No
			Saturday July 13		Thomas Elam	thomas_elam@yahoo.com	Belmont	No
			Saturday July 13		Bill and Katy Ackerknecht	willeacker@aol.com	Santa Cruz	No
			Saturday July 13		Jim Hays	jamesohays@sbcglobal.net	San Jose	No
			Saturday July 13		Gene Rickey	gene@rickeyfamily.net	Campbell	No
			Saturday July 13		John LaBarba	fjohnlab@earthlink.net	Santa Cruz	No
				Sunday July 28	Lawrence M. Silverman	LMSMD@outlook.com	Danville	Yes
				Sunday July 28	James P Burke	Jim@burke-design.com	Vallejo	No
				Sunday July 28	Don & Becky Herzog	beckyjoherzog@gmail.com	Sebastopol	No
				Sunday July 28	Robert Elia	rj67felia@msn.com	Gilroy	No

## VISITING OPEN RAILROADS

- ◇ Railroads will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. unless otherwise noted in *T&T*.
- ◇ BAGRS members are encouraged to wear their BAGRS badges.
- ◇ BAGRS Members are welcome to bring guests (especially prospective members!).
- ◇ If you want an unaccompanied prospective member to visit a railroad, you must get the railroad owner's agreement in advance.
- ◇ Closely supervised children (no touching/running/shouting) are also welcome unless noted otherwise in *T&T*.
- ◇ Railroad owners often provide water/light snacks but this is not a requirement, so visitors are encouraged to bring water. Sunscreen and hats are also recommended.
- ◇ Please get the railroad owner's agreement to take photos before you start snapping.

# From the Editor's Desk



**Roger Nicholson** grew up in Fremont, California, and operates the [Crystal Cove & Rose Railroad](#).

**On the Cover:** The “golden spike” from the Promontory Party that was hosted on May 11, by Joyce Hennessy and Bill Lavender. Yes, it may not be to scale, but it is a real honest to goodness spike, and it’s golden. This spike played a number of roles in the role playing exercise as we reenacted the driving of the golden spike. If you missed it . . . well, it was a lot of fun. More on the Promontory Party in the “Member Updates” section. There will be a video . . . I just didn’t have time to put it together yet because “other things” were happening.

**Other things:** In this case, the entire issue of the June *T&T* that was about 90% complete went someplace that only Microsoft knows about apparently. The files were all corrupted, and I literally had to re-create the entire issue from zero. So, if I missed anything, I apologize. I’ll hopefully do better next time.

**3-D Printing stuff:** I am including Part 2 of my OpenRailway SW 1500 3D printing odyssey in this issue. Somehow, I’ve now ended up making *three* of these things, with a fourth under construction. Why, you ask? I just like 3-D printing, and painting, and wiring up electronics I guess. One thing I *do* know is that my wife might be happier with me if I was renovating a bathroom instead.

Roger



# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome BAGRS' newest members and invite you to tell us something about yourself. We are happy that you decided to join us, and we hope that you will enjoy getting to know other members.

**Remember, you do not have to have a garden railroad to participate in the club or have to contribute to BAGRS or the *Trellis & Trestle*—approximately half our members do not have their own railroad.** Also, if I get some information wrong or misspell your name, please let me know and I'll take care of it.

If you would like to submit an article, member update, fun train-related thing you saw while traveling, open house you visited, photographs, videos, or have any questions or corrections, please contact me (**Roger Nicholson**) at [communications@bagrs.org](mailto:communications@bagrs.org).

- **Benjamin Hunter**, Vallejo, CA. Joined 3 May 2024. Garden railroad is under construction.
- **David and Sally Tucker**, Rohnert Park, CA. Joined 12 May 2024.



# OPEN RAILROAD—Saturday, June 1, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## White Oaks and Eaton Railroad



### Wallace—2052 Eaton Ave, San Carlos, CA

The White Oaks and Eaton features a garden railroad in 12" gauge that circles the house. The locomotive is an Ottaway steamer.



OPEN RAILROAD—June 1, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## Rural Burrill Garden Railroad



### **Burrill—817 Calero Street, Milpitas, CA**

The **Rural Burrill Garden Railroad** is a homage to the Maine Central Railroad depicting the years that my grandpa Charley Burrill worked track inspection:(1890–1941). Come meet Charley in the studio through his photos. In 1995, LGB tracks were laid out by sight into a right-of-way found by removing edgestones of a meandering walkway, then over a fishpond to tunnel 25 feet to complete the first loop. SP railroad tie-ends form a series of walking paths to follow 5 AirWire controlled locomotives powered by Li-ion batteries.

See this railroad on YouTube:

[Rural Burrill Garden Railroad at the 2023 National Garden Railway Convention](#)

[The Rural Burrill Garden Railroad—A Retrospective](#)

[America's First Streamliners. Lifting the Spirits of America 1934–35](#)

Photo by Jeff Namba



# OPEN RAILROAD—Sunday, June 23, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## OS&F Railroad

### Rinefort—101 Wimbledon Way, San Rafael, CA

Due to the success of the local gold mine in the early 1900s the town of Loganville has grown rapidly. Winding its way through tunnels and canyons and across bridges spanning rivers with cascading waterfalls, the **OS&F Railroad** provides both passenger and freight services as it travels through the California foothills. There are many scratch built buildings with highly detailed interiors, including a Victorian House modeled after the historic Lyford house in Tiburon.

See this railroad on YouTube: [The OS&F Railroad - 2023 NGRC Preview](#)

Photo by Jeff Namba

**OPEN RAILROAD—Sunday, June 23, 2024**

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Deer Island Railroad****Guinan—1144 Lea Dr, Novato, CA**

The **Deer Island Railroad** (DIRR) is an imaginary railroad operating in a western “High Sierra” mountain setting winding its way along 500 feet of continuous track. There are 4 tunnels, 3 dry washes, 2 long trestles, 2 reversing wyes, 7 bridges, 4 sidings, a 30 ft. long river, a town, farm, cabins, a mine and lumber operations. A Golden Gate Bridge replica and Cable Car Run. The layout supports a half dozen mature Chinese Elms, a forest of “*Chamaecyparis thyoides*” Top Point, and an orchard of Dwarf Flowering Pomegranate Trees.

See this railroad on YouTube: [Deer Island Railroad - 2023 NGRC Preview](#)

Photo by Jeff Namba

OPEN RAILROAD—Sunday, June 23, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

# BS Ventures' Black Canyon Railroad



## Spilsbury—35 Bradcliff Court, San Rafael, CA

The Black Canyon RR, centerpiece of the mythical Baron Spilsbury's BS Ventures Empire in 1899, has some new features. The most obvious is a five stage 'New Victoria Waterfall' that falls a scale 150 feet. A third track on the 100-foot main line straightaway and a new passing track near the waterfall add operating flexibility. A new charging station ensures the fleet of battery-powered locos are ready to run. A surprise (to Liz) 50th Wedding Anniversary Train is scheduled for its first public appearance and may be pulled by a new Accucraft Consolidation if it arrives on time. For more details of the RR and the BS backstory visit the Baron's new website at [www.BSRR.net](http://www.BSRR.net).

See this railroad on YouTube: [Black Canyon Railroad - 2023 NGRC Preview](#)

OPEN RAILROAD—Sunday, June 23, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

# Comstock Pacific Railroad

## Laine—1737 Comstock Way, San Jose, CA

The **Comstock Pacific Railroad** is a garden railway designed for live steam operation. The railway features an elevated double track main line, a custom built run-through depot/storage shed, and a Bascule lift bridge. The garden includes a selection of California native plants and a wildlife friendly water feature. A branch line extending to the shores of the mighty Pacific Ocean is currently under construction.

OPEN RAILROAD—Sunday, June 23, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## Mystic Mountain Railroad

### Turner—10251 Kenny Lane, San Jose, CA

The **Mystic Mountain Railroad** has about 1200 feet of track with two yards, 27 spurs, two wyes for turning trains, several passing sidings, a helix inside a mountain, and many tunnels and bridges. The Mountain Division runs over rugged mountains and deep canyons, necessitating several steel bridges. Trains are battery-powered, radio controlled with sound. A unique feature is the use of concrete rock castings painted with acrylics. A panoramic view of Silicon Valley serves as a natural "backdrop" to the railroad. I run the railroad primarily for realistic operations now.

Photo by Jeff Namba

# THE 3-D PRINTING DEPARTMENT

## Building the OpenRailway EMD SW 1500—Part 2

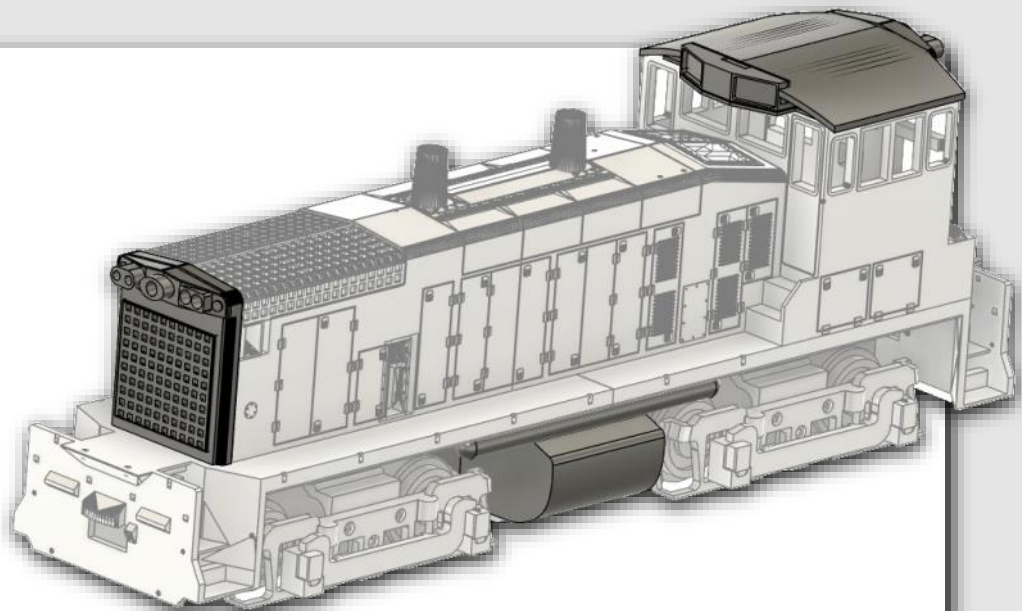
By Roger Nicholson



At this point in my construction process for the 1:32 scale OpenRailway EMD SW 1500 locomotive, I fabricated a functional motorized platform using a pair of USA Trains R22-12 motor blocks and 3-D printed AAR Switcher Type A side frames. It ran great, but it didn't really resemble a locomotive yet. It was time to create some body parts.



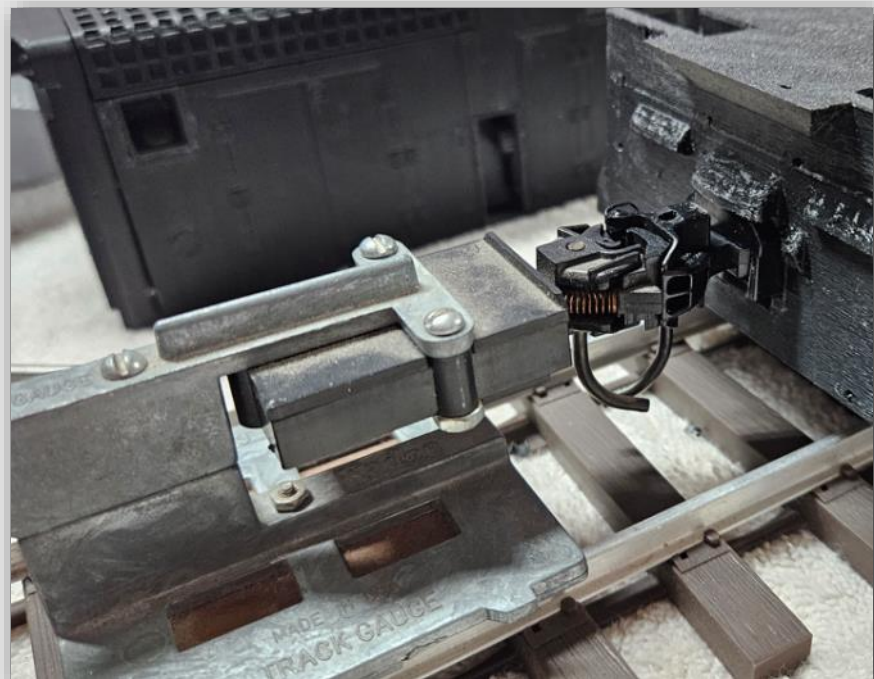
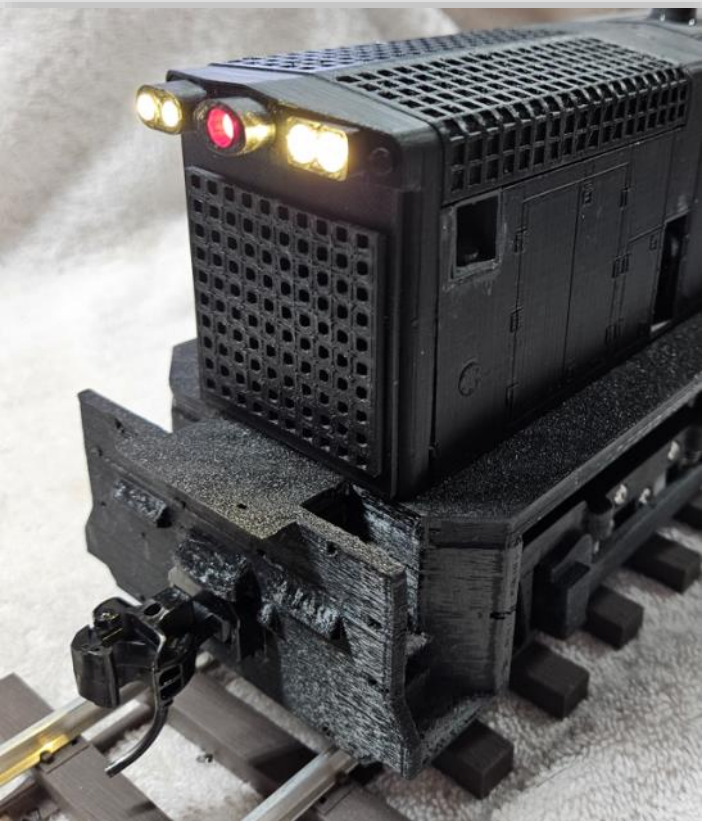
The original locomotive design did not have any lights—only plastic representations of them. In addition, I needed a Southern Pacific light configuration. I designed a new light bar for both the front and the back. While I was at it, I redesigned the roof to be a bit thicker and integrated the number boards/light bar into the printed roof design.



Since I had modified the frame rails, I needed to design a new fuel tank that would fit them. I added holes to the top and front grilles in order to add ventilation to the interior of the locomotive, since it would contain electronics.

I adapted the coupler openings to accommodate Kadee couplers, and made sure that they were at the correct height.

The primary body parts (front and rear body, and the cab) I left mostly unaltered.



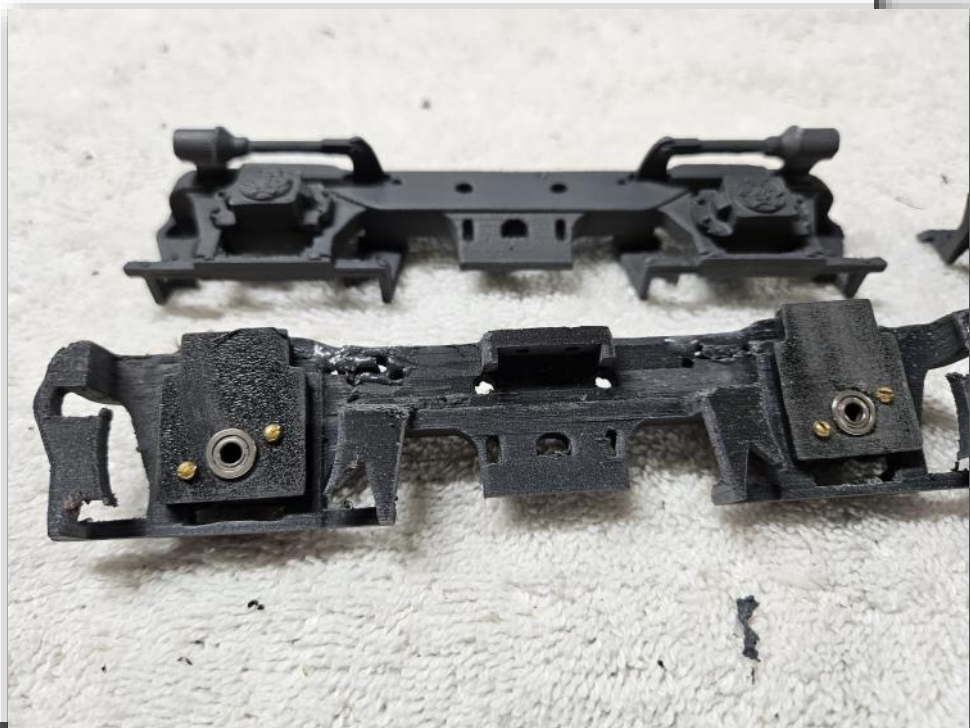
It had always been my plan to build a 1:29 version of this same locomotive. I scaled the entire design up to 1:29, and began printing the parts for a second locomotive.

As it turned out, even that slight increase in scale caused me to have to modify the design even further in order to print it properly in ABS. I separated the steps from the base frame and printed them separately. When I

finally succeeded in printing a complete set of 1:29 parts, I found that I had a number of failed partial prints—enough, in fact, that if I cut them apart and recombined them, I could build most of a second 1:29 locomotive. I printed the missing pieces for the second locomotive, and then I had three: the original 1:32 unit that I built, and a pair of “twin” 1:29 units.

For the power trucks, I felt that the USA Trains R22-12 motor blocks that I used on the 1:32 unit would be too small, so I purchased four new USA Trains R22-115 motor blocks, which are slightly longer than the -12 blocks. I then adapted my AAR switcher side frame design to fit the -115 blocks.

I ultimately came to realize, however, that although the AAR side frames were used on the EMD SW 1500, the SP version used Flexicoil side frames. A helpful individual in the Facebook G Scale Trains group pointed me to an [existing Flexicoil side frame design](#) on the Printables website that had been made available for the -12 motor block. I adapted it to fit the USA Trains -115 motor blocks. The design was finely detailed (which is great if you are resin printing), but I had to remove some of the finer details to make it work for me in ABS on a filament printer. I was satisfied with the result.





I also modified the existing Flexicoil design to remove the simulated plastic springs, and added real springs between the journal boxes and the side frame. The journal boxes are free to slide up and down within the side frame.

Meanwhile, I continued to work on finishing up my 1:32 prototype. I installed front and rear LEDs, an AirWire G3 board, an on/off switch, a charging port, and a 14.8V

lithium-ion battery pack. I then took the 1:32 unit up to Sacramento and was allowed to run it during a “show and tell” at the Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society General Meeting, which was held at the Janzen home in Roseville, CA. This turned out

to be timely, as there was an ongoing discussion about the merits and challenges of printing in ABS, and I just happened to show up with an ABS locomotive during that discussion!

So, at this point I had one functional, unfinished 1:32 locomotive, and two not-yet-functional unfinished 1:29 versions of the same locomotive. They are all three moving toward the same goal of course.

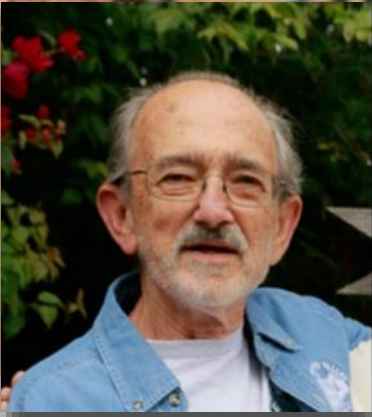
**Coming up in Part 3:** It is time for me to learn how to paint and create decals. We also need some handrails and other small details. ■



# Carnivale on the Green: A Railcar Based Traveling Carnival

## Railcar #9: HIGH WIRE ACT

By Jim Ralph

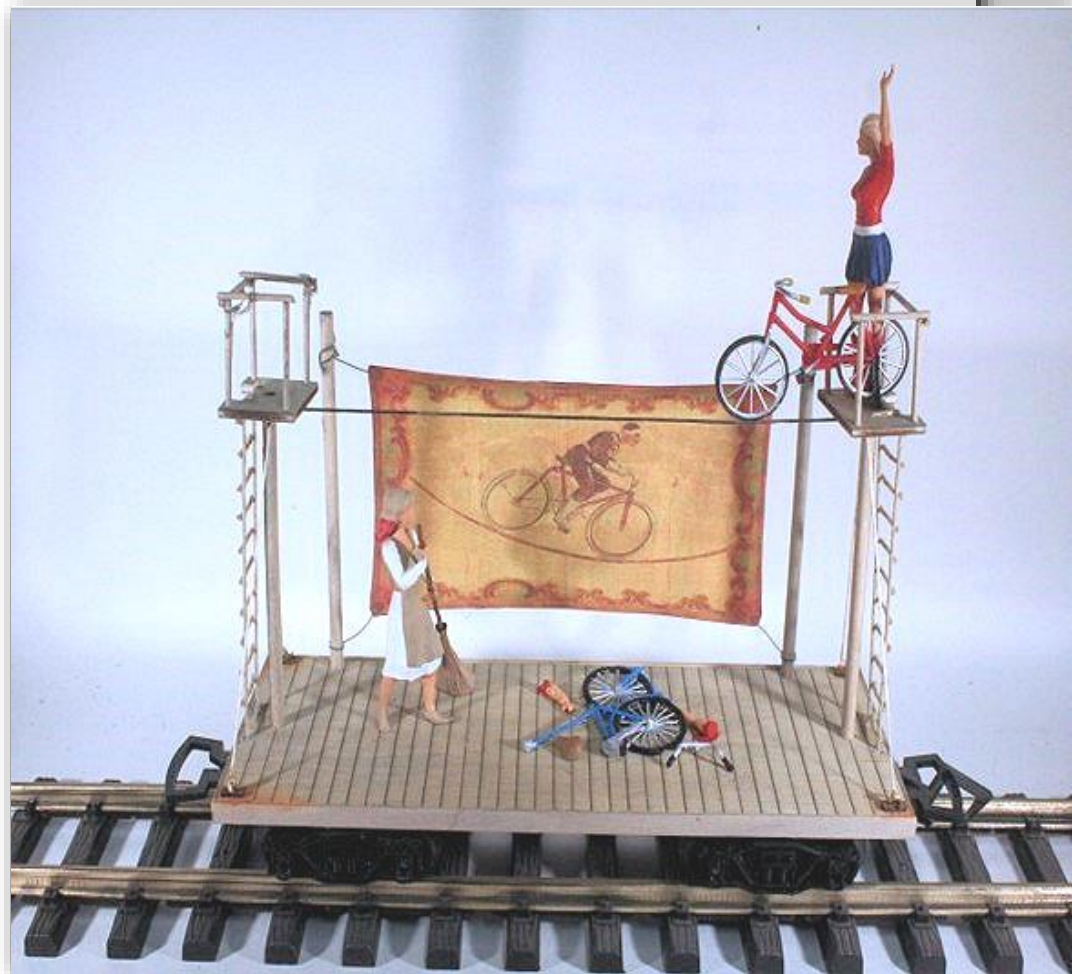


**Jim Ralph** is a member of BAGRS and the *Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society*, and is the brother of BAGRS member Bill Ralph.

**A standard attraction in most circuses and side shows is an aerial show.** But this standard high wire act has a dark (my) backstory. You will notice that while the performer is starting to begin her act, there is also a worker woman seeming to clean something up on the stage below. There are two sayings that dominate the entertainment world for fear of negative outcomes.

First is that 'the show must go on' and second is to always tell the performer for a safe and good performance to 'break a leg.' Thus the rub (my rub). It seems that no one told the now deceased performer 'to break a leg,' which she did.

And with the 'show must go on' policy, both the show and cleanup continues. Just another day on the CARNIVALE train. ■

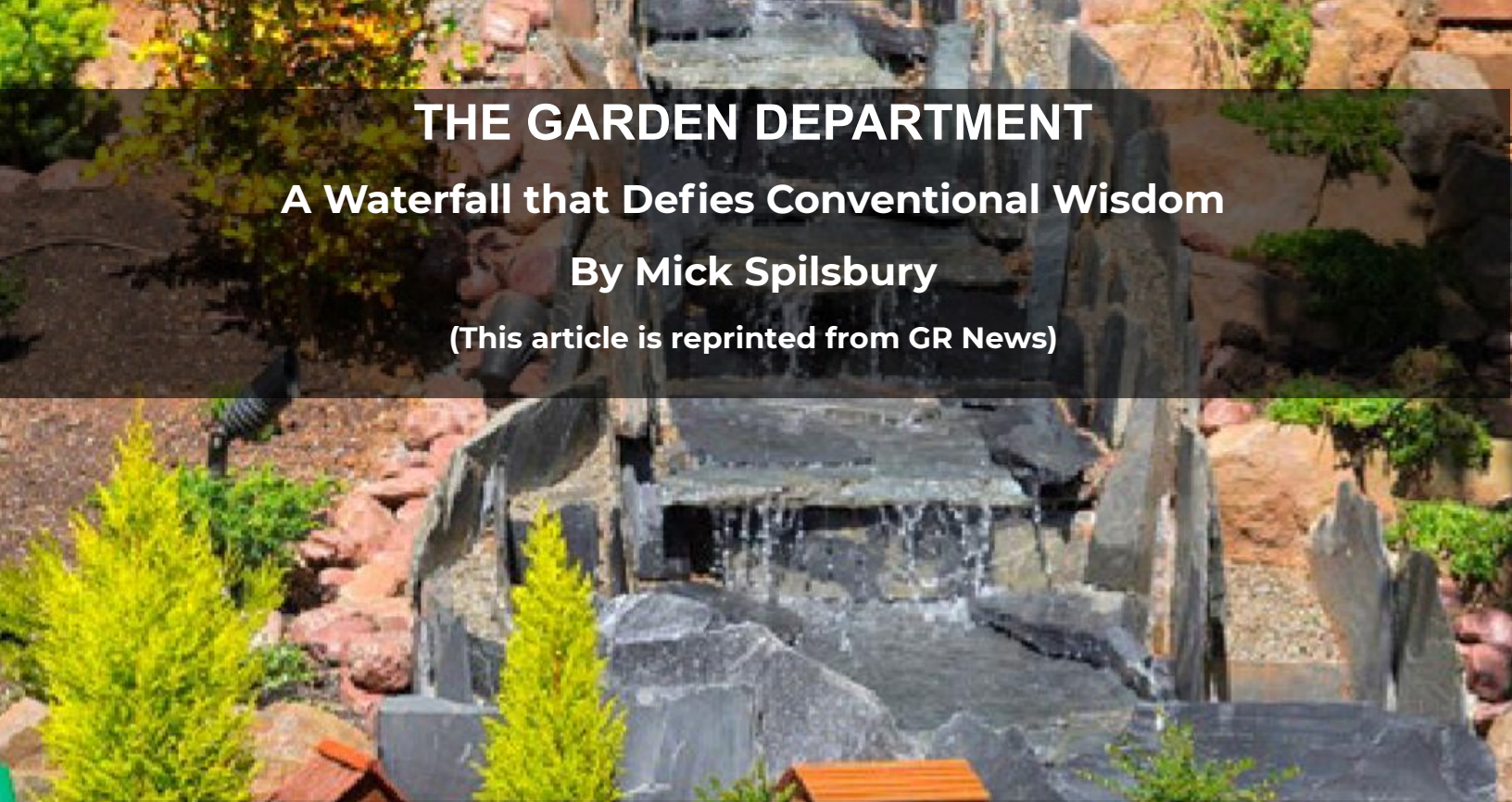


# THE GARDEN DEPARTMENT

## A Waterfall that Defies Conventional Wisdom

By Mick Spilsbury

(This article is reprinted from GR News)



**The first two waterfalls on my garden railroads were small and unimpressive and aptly named ‘Dribble Creek.’** It was time to build an impressive waterfall and there was only one location for it, the only area of the steep sloping bank above the railroad not occupied by treasured, mature landscaping. The slope was ideal. The waterfall would fall about 6 vertical feet in about 8 feet. However, the space was narrow, sandwiched between steps up to a viewing platform and established shrubs. Also, there was no room for a traditional pond at the bottom of the waterfall.

Although I have a habit of defying conventional wisdom, in this instance, I had no choice. Conventional wisdom says that a liner must be installed first, but the space would not accommodate a liner, so I had to devise other ways to make my waterfall leakproof. I also had to solve the ‘pond problem.’

I addressed the ‘pond problem’ first. There was space at the bottom of the waterfall for a 100 gallon tank of specific dimensions. After a lengthy internet search, I found the perfect industrial quality tank, 36 inches long, 24 inches wide, 24 inches deep, sold by US Plastic Corp. Naturally, it was back-ordered but when I contacted US Plastic, it was quickly not back-ordered. Challenge one was solved.



Making the waterfall leakproof without a liner was a more complicated challenge, addressed in a series of steps.

- While I have often cursed the solid clay underneath our front yard, the clay made laying out the waterfall steps straightforward. A total of six steps, varying in height between 12 and 17 inches, were excavated in the clay. Step widths were increased from the first to the sixth step. Each step floor was tilted slightly downhill. When that was done, we had a clay staircase.

- For the stonework, I selected black limestone, which comes in thicknesses of a quarter of an inch to 2 ½ inches, perfect for my narrow waterfall. Each step would have one piece of limestone for the back wall and one piece for the step landing. Finding pieces that we could cut to the sizes of the back wall and the landing steps took half a dozen trips to the local rock shop, in part because each slab was very heavy. Sidewalls would be comprised of two or three smaller pieces of black limestone.

- Meanwhile, the tank arrived from US Plastic. The hole for it had already been dug (1), but after reading notes from US Plastic, the hole was reinforced. A concrete base was installed. After that, a wooden pressure-treated encasement was installed (2). We made that a tad bigger than the tank and added sand

in the void between the tank and the encasement (3). The lowest black limestone slab could not be fixed in place until we had the tank installation completed!



Before the hole for the 'tank pond' had been engineered we had started cutting and arranging the black limestone.

- The largest and heaviest limestone slabs were then placed on the floor of each step, one slab per step, with a 1 to 2 inch overhang over the step below. They were so heavy that no bonding agent was required between slab and clay.
- Next, the steps' back walls were installed, one slab for each step. They were glued in place in a mini trench created for that purpose behind the step floor slabs. (We used various heavy duty construction adhesives during the project and concluded that Gorilla Ultimate Heavy Duty Construction Adhesive worked best, with its quick grab and strong bond.)
- Slabs for the back walls had to be cut to fit, and cutting continued as we set about laying out the side walls. We used a hand-held rotary stone cutter. (Investment in a more sophisticated option was rejected because I don't expect to make a habit of cutting this much stone!)
- For the side walls, pieces of black limestone were installed vertically given the narrow path available for the waterfall. They were set in concrete, also glued to the step base and back wall slabs (4).
- A waterproofing agent Pond Shield was applied to any exposed concrete.
- A plastic spillway was installed at the top of the waterfall. Although the plastic spillway was disguised, I decided that the appearance of water just popping out of the ground looked unnatural, so . . .
- Rocks were installed behind the spillway to create the impression that the source of the water was a rocky outcrop (5). The rocky outcrop was the first feature of the waterfall that had not been envisioned or planned in advance.



After the landing slabs, back walls and side walls were in place, the water feed line to the top of the waterfall was installed and connected to the spillway at the top of the waterfall.

The electrical supply for the pump was laid next to the water pipe run in conduit.

We also began to fix rocks around the tank 'pond' to hide the wooden encasement and disguise the tank as much as possible (6).

The pump, an Alpine 3100 GPH, was connected, also a flow valve to manage the volume of water spilling down the waterfall. (The flow valve turned out to be essential.)

A second 'skin' of side walls was installed and we filled the void between them and the first side walls with concrete, topped with small black basalt pebbles fixed in place with a TiteBond 3 water mix that has served me so well in so many ways, including ballast and trackside lava sand securement.

After four months of rain interrupted progress, it was time to run the waterfall for the first time. It was an exciting and anxious moment. Would the connections between the water supply line and the control valve hold? Would the connection between the water supply line and the spillway hold? Did we really get the spillway level? Would water disappear through some unintended fissure in the rock work?

The connections held! The spillway emitted an even sheen of water. The water did not disappear down a fissure! The control valve enabled a perfect flow rate. The sound of the falling water was delightful.

However, I decided that the appearance of the waterfall was too simplistic, especially the landing slabs. I was also unhappy that the waterfall was losing about a gallon of water an hour in spite of all the concrete, glue and waterproofing agents used.

And so, Phase 2 began.



Phase 2: Part One: We had many offcuts of the black limestone and deployed them to break up the overly simplistic flat rock surfaces (7). The offcuts were glued to the landing slabs, back walls and some side walls. They were affixed using the Gorilla adhesive. The overall look of the falls was much improved.

Phase 2: Part Two: To address the water loss, it was time to roll out the secret weapon, High Strength Isophthalic Polyester Resin from Tap Plastics. I had used this bonding agent on my first railroad 35 years previously to make foundations for structures, binding small pebbles with it. Those foundations were very difficult to remove when I relocated my railroad 30 years later, so I knew that the Tap Plastics resin was strong and durable.

It's also a product that requires very careful handling. Gloves and a mask are essential as you mix the resin with the precisely correct amount of its catalyst, and then as you apply it.

For the waterfall, we filled every crack and cranny with tiny pebbles (8). We then slowly poured the primed resin onto the tiny pebbles in the cracks and crannies, using a small metal spoon.

The resin application was worth the investment of time and money. Post-application water loss is negligible and the wet look of the added tiny pebbles fits the overall look of the waterfall.

Baron Spilsbury, the (fictional) owner in 1899 of BS Ventures, which runs the Black Canyon Drinking Mining & Railroad Company (and pretty much everything else in Black Canyon) [*Tale of the Track, March/April 2022 #2 Garden Railroading News*], named the waterfall, 'New Victoria Falls' in honor of his aging monarch back in the UK.

The Baron has also claimed credit for redirecting a troublesome underground river to form the falls. In other words, BS is alive and well around Black Canyon! The Baron decided that that the top of the waterfall was the perfect spot for another hunting lodge. Then he saw an even bigger opportunity to round out the New Victoria Falls.



Phase 3: Rocks had been cleared near the bottom of the waterfall, creating a new flat area adjacent to the Black Canyon main line, a space just begging to be put to good use. And what better use than a new passing siding!

Construction was soon underway, starting with a concrete base for the track (9). Track laying followed with switches to connect with the main line. Wiring was installed for trackside lighting before the concrete was laid.

The trackside hardscape is lava sand set in place with the mix of one part TiteBond 3 wood glue and three parts water, as mentioned earlier. This hardscape approach is used in many trackside locations on the Black Canyon RR and has been very successful.

Over time, the combination of winter rain and summer sun bakes it to a surface that is almost as hard as concrete. It is one element of my 'glue things down to make maintenance easier' strategy. [On Demand Garden Railroading Part Two, May/June 2021 #3 Garden Railroading News] Leaves and other debris are cleared on the many glued surfaces of the Black Canyon RR using a shop vac, including from the baked lava sand.

Small individual pots were embedded in the trackside hardscape (10), each with drip irrigation. This approach is designed to keep the plants healthy but relatively small. It is the first time I have planted this way and will be interested to see how it works out over time.

Buildings acquired at swap meets and looking for a home for many months now found one! And thus, the New Victoria Falls has 'New Victoria Station' to welcome visitors. ■





## Dave's Corner

by Dave Frediani



**Dave Frediani** lives in Sonora, California and, among his many talents, constructs 7/8 scale rolling stock.

### SAVE YOUR MONEY

I've been building 1:20.3 and 7/8 scale rolling stock for quite some time now. I got tired of wasting my money on all types of so called hobby paints, thinners and spray guns and even rattle cans of paint.

Why is it that paint manufacturers can sell you a 1 oz. bottle of acrylic "hobby paint" for \$4.00 or more, "that's outrageous." But wait, that's not all, if you use an air brush or spray gun on your models, you will need acrylic thinner, with a cost of \$9.00 to \$14.00 for only 6oz. If you're building 1:20.3 or 7/8 scale rolling stock that won't go very far. If you're going to paint a 7/8 scale car inside and out, you could spend up to \$25.00 on paint.

Some hobbyists use spray cans or rattle cans to paint their rolling stock. In most cases, that will take at least two colors for a cost of \$9.00 to \$12.00 per color, and with most colors from spray cans you may also need a clear coat over the colors to add a matte or a semi-gloss finish, for another \$9.00. So using spray cans with just two colors and a clear coat, your cost on the low side could be about \$27.00.

You might want to try this; go to your local Walmart, and go to their craft section and pick out a couple of colors of Apple Barrel acrylic craft paint. I always buy the matte finish, it comes in a 2 oz. bottle for 59 cents or an 8 oz. bottle for \$1.99. I always buy the 2 oz. bottles, I find it easier to mix or thin with 2 oz. bottles. I had mentioned Apple Barrel paint, but any brand of craft acrylic paint will work just as well.

Since you are already at Walmart, walk over to the automotive section and pick up a gallon of windshield washer fluid. It costs about \$2.39. The windshield washer fluid has enough alcohol in it to thin acrylic paint.

Now that you have the paint and the windshield washer fluid, all you need to do is mix the paint with the windshield fluid. I always mix two bottles of paint, 4 oz. , to 4 oz. of windshield washer fluid, so now you have 8 oz. of paint ready to use.

So let's see for about \$1.18 in paint and add another 4 cents for windshield washer fluid. I can paint at least three 7/8 scale, two axle cars, or that's about 41 cents per car.

If you're going to use a brush, there's no need to thin the paint. The craft paint comes out very thick and goes a long ways. Some times I'll apply the first coat by brush before spraying.

Here's 2 oz. of acrylic paint and 2 oz. of windshield washer fluid. Thinning paint is much easier if you have another bottle of the same size as your bottle of paint. With equal parts of paint and windshield fluid, just empty both parts in to an empty Pepsi or Coke bottle and shake.

Here's an air brush kit from Harbor Freight. I've been using this type of air brush from Harbor Freight, it's one of the easiest to use, as well as the easiest to clean. The only part of the air brush that needs cleaning is the bottle that holds the paint and the bottle top with its jet, other than that, nothing else needs cleaning.

With acrylic paint, it just takes a little warm water for clean up, but you shouldn't use water to thin out acrylic paint.

The air brush comes with everything you need, the gun, an air hose with an adapter fitting for your compressor and five paint bottles, and the best part is it's cost. I've been using mine for about ten years now.



Back to the painting. After you've mixed the paint, one to one, with windshield washer fluid, it's time to start painting.

It doesn't matter if you use a brush to paint or an air brush to spray, you should always use a hair dryer between each coat. Using a hair dryer, makes the paint lay down and hide any brush strokes, "it's really magical." You're always better off NOT letting the paint dry on its own, always use a hair dryer to dry each coat. The paint will dry within seconds. After the paint has dried for a day or so, I'll go over the paint with a clear lacquer.

I've painted hundreds of cars for my friends and their friends too with no problems. With all the cars that I've built, I always tell my friends, lifetime warranty on paint. As of this article no one has ever called for a repaint

Here's an example of two motorcars that I've built in the past. Both cars were painted with two colors each, and the total cost of paint was less then \$1.00 per car.



Oh, there's one other expense I forgot to mention, replacing my wife's hair dryer. I really don't know how she found out I was using it? ■





# All Steamed Up

by Rob Lenicheck

**Rob Lenicheck** has been involved in the live steam hobby for about 20 years, modeling in 1:20.3. He has scratchbuilt multiple engines and converted others to his passion: running coal-fired locomotives.



## Staver Spring Live Steam Gathering, April 25–28, 2024

A now-yearly gathering of live steamers from across the country come to Larry Staver's wonderful indoor railway in Portland every spring. This year there were about 50 steamers in attendance, including a few BAGRS members who drive up. It gives us all a chance to gather, catch up with old friends and raise some steam. Larry is a most gracious host who provides the wonderful venue and some equally wonderful meals. This picture provides a good view of the spacious layout. A very busy place on this day. The gent running the Garratt is Pete Comley, former owner of the Sunset Valley company.



And this is the man himself, Larry Staver, enjoying his U! prototype.



Although the track generally follows main line prototype design, the trains are not limited to any one scale. Here three Accucraft D&RGW K-28s pass each other.

And a few run coal there. Here is the author's Accucraft K-27 coal conversion. That is not a glow from LEDs in that firebox!



The Seattle Live Steam group owns a small track, which is stored at Stavers and is set up for this event. It gives small engines like this Regner Vincent and chance to run without a high-speed threat.

BAGRS member Duc Nguyen runs one of his fabulous Aster editions.



Former BAGRS member and orchestrator of the first National Summer Steamup, Richard Finlayson, flew in from his home in Utah to enjoy running other folks' engines.



Marc Horovitz and the author get a Pennsy E6 Atlantic ready to run. This engine sold at the steamup and was the last of deceased BAGRS member Steve Shyvers collection to sell. Of course it ran beautifully.



And here's the spread which Larry provided on the final evening. We were not left hungry. Already looking forward to next spring!

BAGRS Live Steam Gathering, May 11, 2024

We guessed the weather correctly once more for a steamup at the Lenicheck layout this month. Richard wanted to sponsor one on the same day but since he was in the midst of enjoying his garage being torn up for a pipe replacement he chose not to.



Colton Snell, Bill Mansell and Tim Boles discuss Colton's newly acquired Accucraft 13 ton Shay.



The early steamers get the track! Forget the birds! From left Jim Hague, Phillip Boles, Chris Garthard and Richard Murray take over the steamup bay.



Jim Hague fires up his Forney.

Sanjaya Kumar gets his 7/8s scale Hunslet ready to run. This is a very unique engine he acquired from the builder in Australia.



A closer shot of Sanjaya's Hunslet. The live steam hobby is full of unique engines such as this one.

Bob Trabucco preps his own version of a Hunslet, this one built by Accucraft.



Richard Murray readies his Cricket. This small engine is named for its unique sound as it runs.

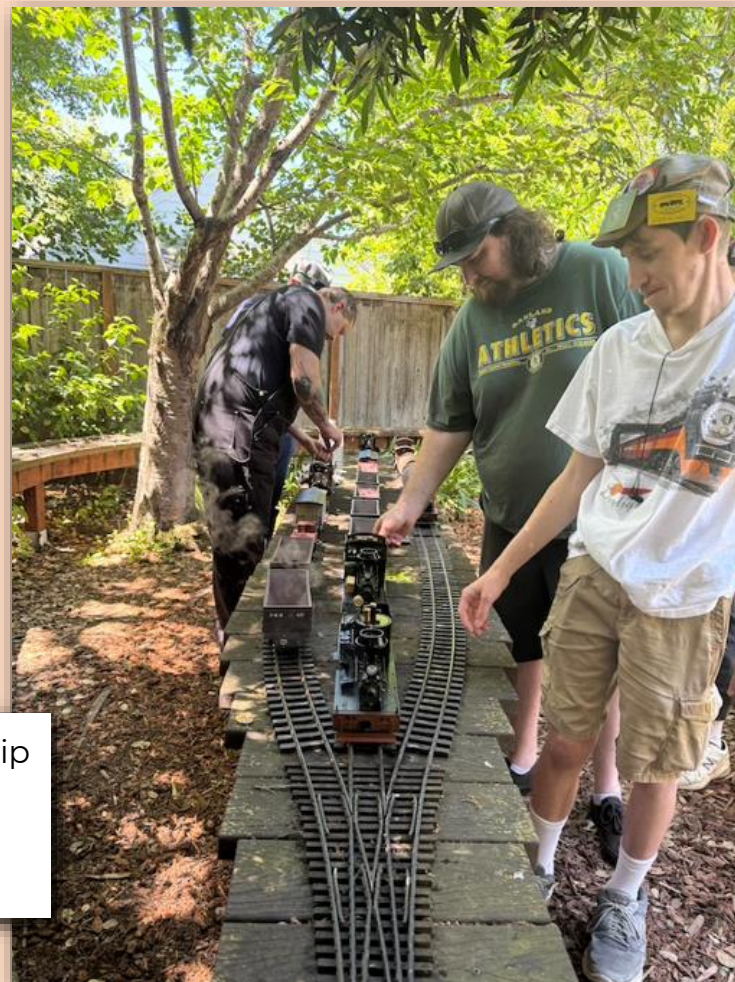


A newcomer to BAGRS is Clint Baker. He has fit in with the crowd very well and has some unique engines not seen before, such as this model of a German tank engine.

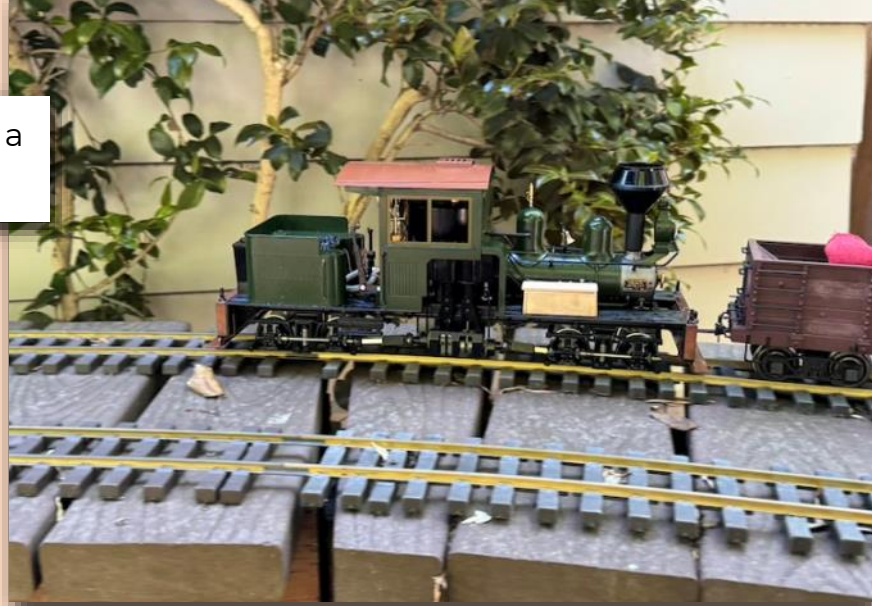


Mr. Helpful, Dennis Mead, prepares to run his Mamod. Dennis fabricates difficult-to-make parts for us live steamers. He is very giving of his time and talents.

Back at the steamup bay, Colton and Phillip prepare to run their Accucraft shays together. We call this a “shay up.”



The new Accucraft 13 ton shay is a pretty little engine.



Phillip Boles, Sean Mahan and his Dad, Kevin, join in the fun. Kevin was seen running one on Sean's engines later. Perhaps the hook got set?



Bill Mansell continues to build or convert very interesting engines such as this Mamod. Many Mamods were built over the earlier years of the live steam hobby and almost all were pot boilers which burned alcohol. This one as converted by Bill to burn butane.



Such was the scene that day. A good time was had by all! ■

# East Devil Hills Modeling Group

by Henner Meinhold



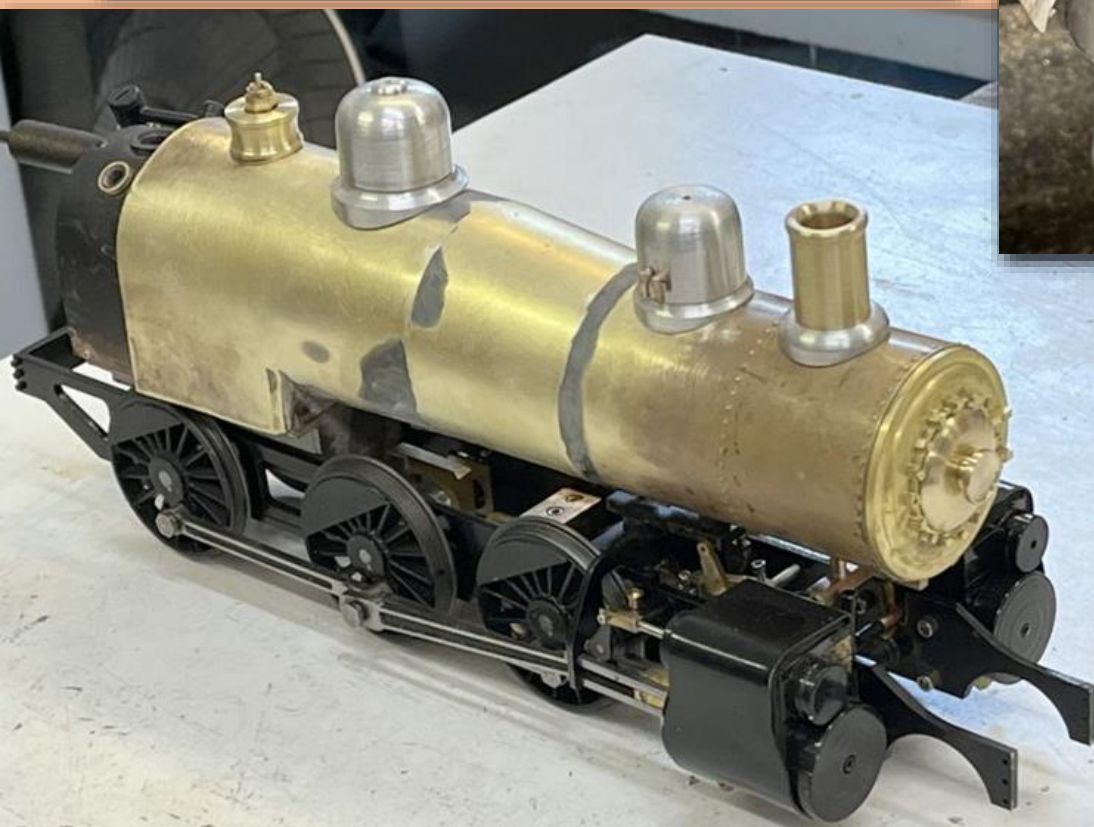
**Henner Meinhold** resides in Berlin, Germany. The *East Devil Hills Modeling Group* meets regularly to create, collaborate, and share incredibly machined models.

This month we have 2 magnificent builds nearing completion. The first one is Rob Lenicheck's beautiful Darjeeling. In the last picture of the boiler back-head you can see the fire door of this coal fired engine. Also notice the beautiful lining and the polished dome! Rob tried to stay as close as possible to the prototype, and so e.g. the saddle tank is fully operational.





Bill Allen's NWP is also at a very advanced stage. The loco proper is almost finished. It has a wagon top type boiler, which is hard to build in our scale. Bill uses wooden strips to form the shape and then covers it with a wrapper made of sheet metal. The dome needs a concave base to match the boiler surface. Bill uses a fly cutter in his milling machine to carve out this area. Here the steam and sand dome attached to the boiler.





The bell is suspended in a yoke. Bill could not find a suitable casting, so he machined it. Currently he is working on the cab, which is a major step in defining the appearance of a loco. Now he has to tackle the "dreaded" tender!



Ron Malouf finished the boiler of his Shay. Such a so-called T-boiler is a fairly complicated design. In the next picture the boiler is already lagged.

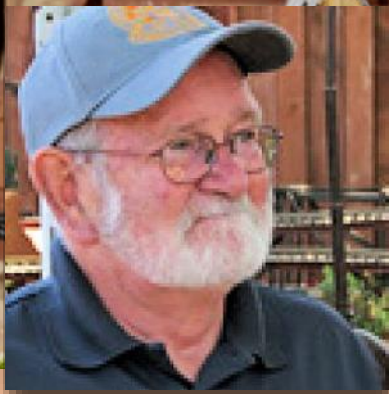


Though Bill is still working on his NWP loco, he already plans for the next build. Dennis machined a set of pony wheels. Can you guess which loco Bill has in mind ;-)? Henner ■



# Postcards from the Past

By Bill Ralph



**Bill Ralph** operates the [Porcupine Gulch Railroad](#), and knows a thing or two about amusement parks and postcards.

## MAID OF THE MIST INCLINE RAILWAY

Millions of people are drawn each year to the Niagara River that forms the border between the United States and Canada to witness the beauty and power of the three falls, American, Horseshoe and Bridal Veil, that form the majestic Niagara Falls. When the first suspension bridge built at the Falls in 1848 cut deeply into the border crossing business of the Maid of the Mist ferry service, the enterprising owners decided to recover some of the lost revenue by launching sightseeing trips to the base of the Horseshoe Falls. At first the access to the attractions steam boats at the bottom of the steep gorge was by stairway and beginning in 1894 was provided by the Maid of the Mist Incline Railway. The Incline's machinery, electric motors, ticket office and souvenir store located at street level, and the companies new dock and boats at the foot of the steep bank were connected by the enclosed funicular incline railway. Twelve passengers on each trip had the option to pay for bench seating on the slow indoor incline or take the free stairs. The railway operated until 1910 when it when it was replaced by a pair of faster and larger underground electric elevators able to handle the increasing crowds of the popular attraction. An incline railroad returned to the Falls in 1977 with a system designed and constructed by Von Roll of Switzerland able to traverse the three-hundred-foot incline with twenty four passengers in forty five seconds. ■



Vintage 1906 postcard "General View of Niagara Falls; Niagara Falls, N.Y." from the collection of Bill Ralph. Maid of the Mist Incline Railway and boat dock at the bottom left

# MEMBER UPDATES

## The Promontory Party

On May 11, Joyce Hennessy and Bill Lavender hosted a Promontory Party. There were roughly 50 or so people in attendance, about one-third were BAGRS members. There was a ceremonial meeting of the Jupiter and the Number 119 locomotives, and the guests reenacted the golden spike ceremony. A lot of costumes, music, food, role playing, and fun for all who attended.

There will be a video eventually, so stay tuned.





# MEMBER UPDATES



# MEMBER UPDATES

## From Robert Burrill

Attached is a quality photo of my grandfather entitled, "Charles Burrill (Track Inspector) Velocipede 1928— Maine Central R.R. at Emery Hill Fairfield, Shawnee Maine, (along the Kennebec River.) This is the cover of my June 1st Opening Program Card.

The detailed photo has also inspired a new working model for my Rural Burrill Garden RR.

Perhaps 7/8" scale . . . How tall would that be ?



## From Nancy Schramm

I'd like to be able to tell the membership about a chance to see (and buy) trees from the Park/Child layout. I will be attending the Sei Boku Bonsai show in San Mateo on June 1 & 2. The event is free. I'll have a lot of really nice evergreen trees, perfect for garden railroads, with me for sale. I wanted to share this event because San Mateo is a lot closer to many members than Gilroy is.

ADAM TOTH has been studying bonsai seriously for about 7 years and spent a little over 3 years studying at Taisho-en with Taiga Uruahibata San, and received an official shohin certificate from the Japanese Shohin Bonsai Association.

Before that with Jonas Dupuich at Bonsai Tonight and currently spend a few days a week working at his nursery now. During his time in Japan he spent a lot of time studying and thinking about how we can grow and produce better shohin and small sized trees. Adam really enjoys working on yamadori junipers and hopes to continue learning and enjoying this truly unique art form.



He looks forward to meeting and working with you all!



SAN MATEO GARDEN CENTER  
605 PARKWAY WAY - SAN MATEO, CA  
(AT BERESFORD PARK)

Saturday and Sunday from 10am-4pm  
**JUNE 1-2, 2024**

— Come celebrate Sei Boku Bonsai Kai's 39th Anniversary —

## BONSAI SHOW

**Saturday: Demolition Derby - new format!**  
Moderated by Gordon Deeg. "Demolition Derby Trio" by Joshua Diaz, Steve Iwaki and Bill McDonald  
Time: 1:00pm – 3:00pm  
"Demo Trees" for Raffle!

**Sunday: Open public viewing workshop led by Adam Toth**  
Time: 1:00pm – 3:00pm  
"Workshop Tree" for Raffle!

Door Prizes • Raffle Prizes • Tree Clinic • Plant Sales  
Vendor Sales • FREE ADMISSION

# MEMBER UPDATES

## From Joe Barker

The San Leandro Historical Railway Society's G&O garden railroad was open for the NMRA Pacific Coast Region convention on April 27, 2024. We ran some O gauge trains. Here are a few photos .

This is the Santa Fe fruit express. The train's two Menards SF passenger diesels are eastbound with a train of CA fruit and vegetables.



The SF fast freight was followed by Southern Pacific train #98—the Daylight traveling from San Francisco to Los Angeles. The train is pulled by two K-Line E units. Both are powered. The cars are MTH.

# MEMBER UPDATES

This is the Daylight passing San Leandro. The Depot Yard and the Golden Gate Bridge are in the background.



The Daylight is passing Norris Falls. This is one of the best places on the G&O to photograph trains.



The California Zephyr is waiting to depart Depot Yard to Chicago. The Western Pacific engines are a Lionel A-B-A set. The CZ cars are MTH.



## GARDEN RAILWAY CLUB NEWS

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. We provide links here to the most recent editions that have been made available to us. For other clubs wishing to obtain a copy of the latest BAGRS *Trellis & Trestle*, please contact **Roger Nicholson** at [communications@bagrs.org](mailto:communications@bagrs.org)

[Central California Coast Garden Railway Society—March 2024](#)

[Central Ontario Garden Railway Association—Winter 2024](#)

[Denver Garden Railway Society Newsletter—May 2024](#)

[Gold Coast Garden Railway Society—April 2024](#)

[Puget Sound Garden Railway Society—April 2024](#)

[Redwood Empire Garden Railway Society—May 2024](#)

[Rose City Garden Railway Society—March 2024](#)

[Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society—April 2024](#)

[The Garden Whistle New Zealand Large Scale Newsletter—May 2024](#)

[Garden Railroading News—May/June 2024](#)

The 2025 NGRC 2025 will be hosted by the Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society. Website coming soon at [ngrc2025.org](http://ngrc2025.org)



## BAGRS BOARD AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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## 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, bagrs.org. Log in is required.

### BAGRS ONLINE PHOTO AND VIDEO LIBRARY

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 BestClub4014

The upper-left corner has a pull-down menu to select ALBUMS. Then click on the album of interest.

## THE LAST PAGE



A few BAGRS folks have spotted one of the more unusual inhabitants of my garage. This old, rather homemade-looking Shay was actually manufacturing in the 1980s. It is called a “Hyde-Out Mountain Live Steam Shay.” It runs on alcohol in a pan below the boiler. Does it run? Actually, it does . . . I ran it one time. I had to help it along a little. But, just like Howard Hughes’ “Spruce Goose,” it proved that it could move under its own power. Want proof? Well, check out the YouTube video here:

[Vintage "Hyde Out Mountain" Live Steam Shay Locomotive on the Crystal Cove and Rose Garden Railroad](#)

## TRELLIS AND TRESTLE

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