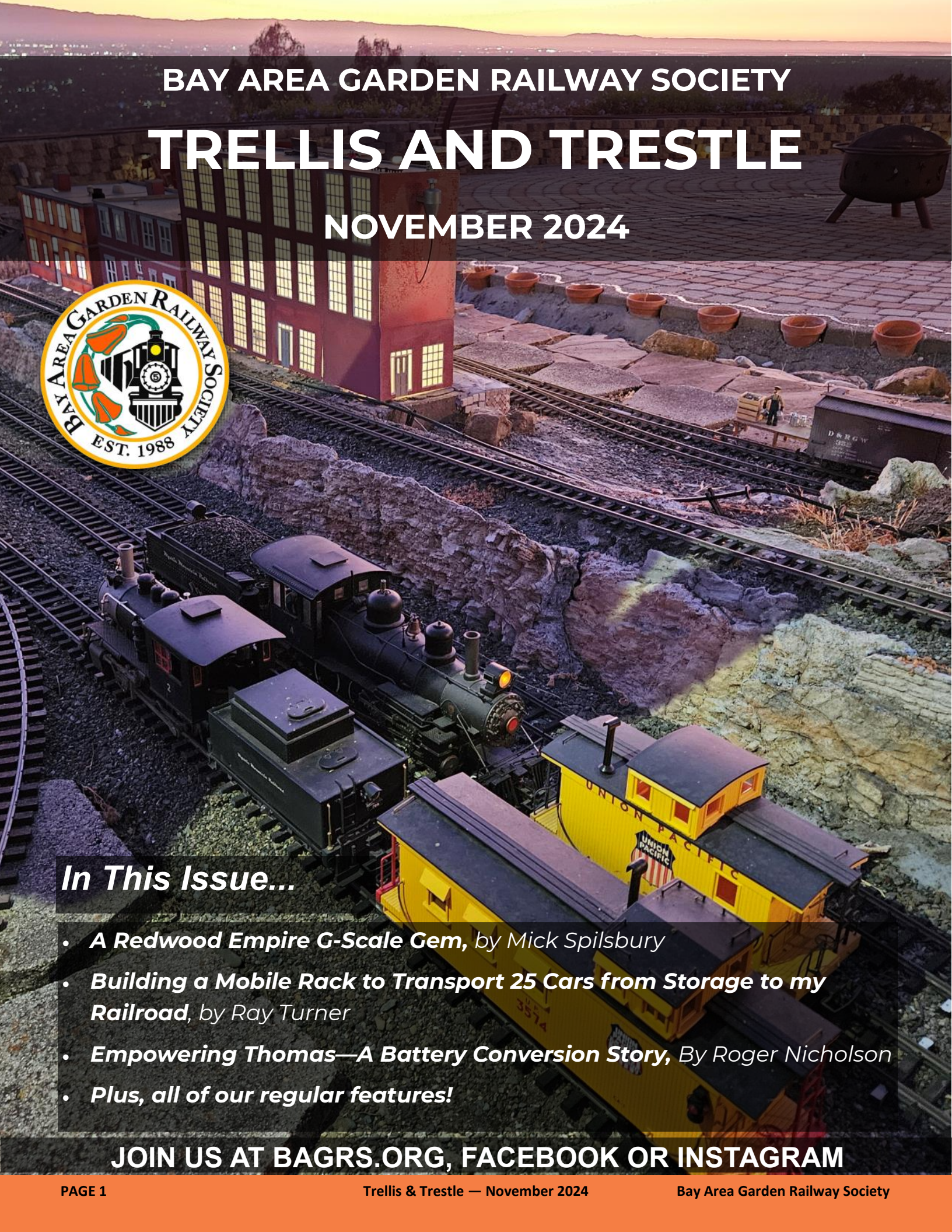
BAY AREA GARDEN RAILWAY SOCIETY

TRELLIS AND TRESTLE

NOVEMBER 2024



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- ***Building a Mobile Rack to Transport 25 Cars from Storage to my Railroad****, by Ray Turner*
- ***Empowering Thomas—A Battery Conversion Story,*** *By Roger Nicholson*
- ***Plus, all of our regular features!***

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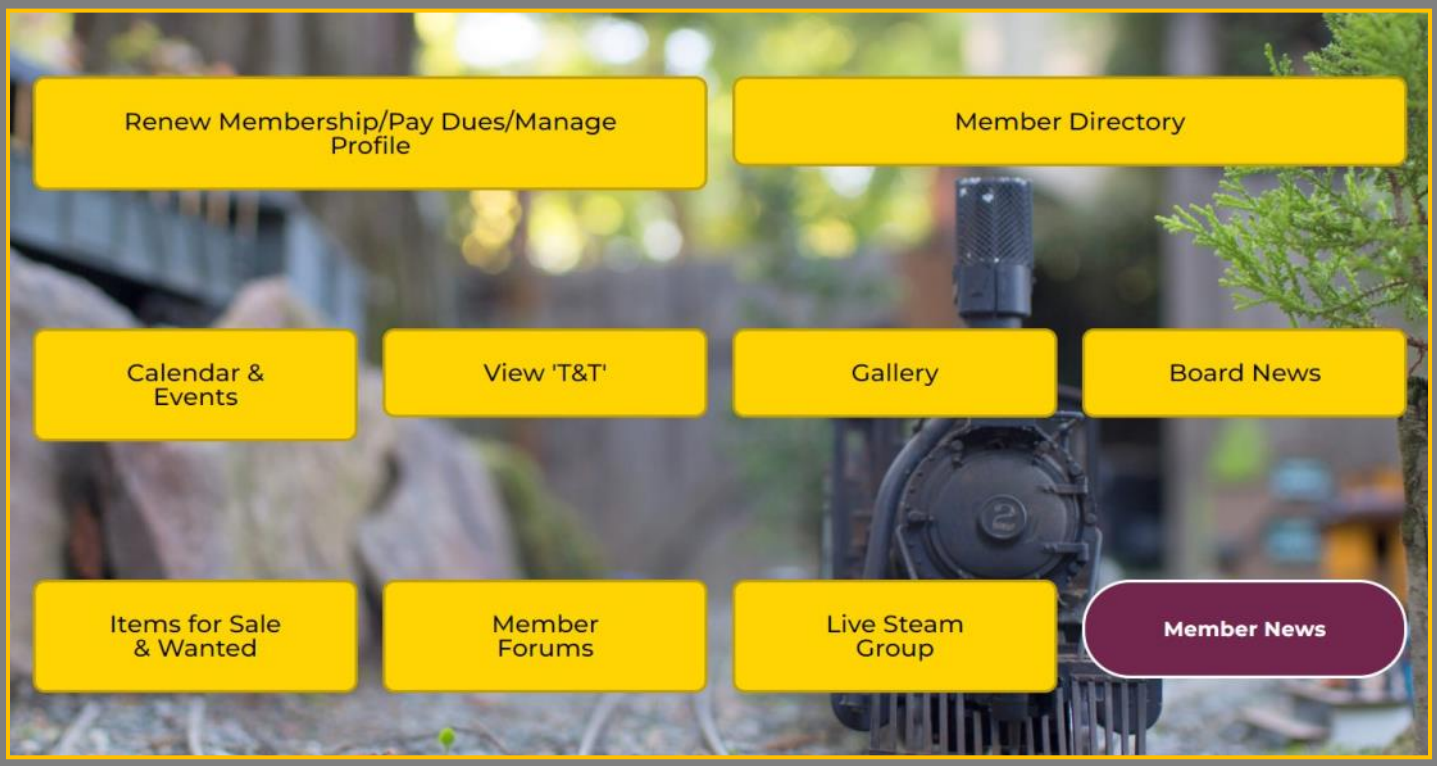
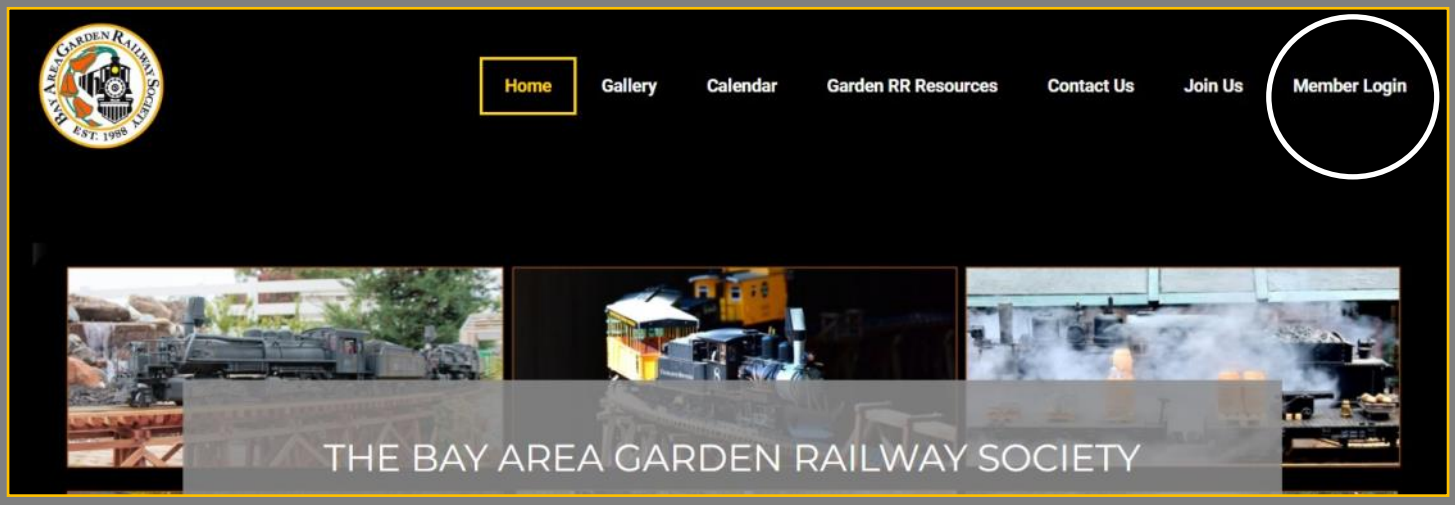
PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

OUR NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHES THIS MONTH WITH THIS SIMPLER MEMBER HOME PAGE



We will get to this new member home page after we log in



See the next page for more information about the transition

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

WEBSITE TRANSITION - MORE INFORMATION

KEY DATES

Monday November 11 - Current website disabled

Monday November 18 - New Website up

If we complete final testing before Nov.18, we will launch the new site sooner and we will let you know via email.

USER NAME & PASSWORD

No change! We use the same User Name & Password on the new site

By the way - on the subject of passwords

Our club software provider has upgraded their PW requirement (from 8 to 12 characters) and are implementing that change gradually . Many of us have already been required to upgrade our passwords. If you haven't been required to do this, you will be at some point in the future.

This is a vendor requirement. This was not triggered by the new website!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Will be available as soon as the new site is live

HELP

The new site has been tested by more than a dozen members

So, we expect a smooth transition

But if you need help, send a text to one of the numbers below

(415) 342-5795 - Mick Spilsbury

(408) 832-3025 Roger Nicholson

These are not 24/7 help lines but we will get back to you ASAP!

From the Editor's Desk

Roger Nicholson lives in Union City, California, and operates the *Crystal Cove & Rose Railroad*.

- **On the Cover.** The sun sets on Ray Turner's *Mystic Mountain Railroad* located in the hills above San Jose, California, during an evening operating session. How does Ray get 60 cars out to his railroad to *have* an operating session? Find out in this issue.
- **I visited Mike and Anne Paterson's BS Railroad for the first time last weekend.** More photos on that in the "Member Updates" section. Here I will point out that I saw something I didn't expect to see. Mike told me about an old Shay locomotive that he had won as a door prize in a past BAGRS raffle. When he brought it out, I was quite surprised to see a vintage **1988 Hyde-Out Mountain Live Steam Shay**! (Or what I like to call, "Looks like it was built as a homemade science project" Shay.) I've only seen one other in person, and *that* one happens to be in my garage. Mike's was different from mine . . . someone had converted it from alcohol burning live steam to chain-driven electric! I treat mine as a "museum piece" . . . Mine has only run under live steam one time. Mike has #9 and I have #3. There weren't actually many of these things built. What are the odds? If we find one more person who has one of these things we can form our own "Hyde-Out" club of semi-functional Shays.

Mike's Hyde-Out Mountain Shay

Roger's Hyde-Out Mountain Shay

- **I had an open house on Saturday 26 October, 2024.** I had roughly 22 people attend, with about 1/3 of them BAGRS members. A few from the neighborhood actually showed up on Sunday afternoon, when I wasn't open, but I was able to quickly bring out and run a train for them to see. I will never disappoint a group of kids. Saturday morning I had a SW 1500 running on my lower loop and I had just started a LGB Uintah Mallet running on the upper loop. As I sat and chatted with Mike and Anne Paterson, I noticed that the Uintah Mallet was ….MISSING! I went to search for it. It turned out that an incorrectly thrown switch had sent it to the lower loop, and I found the two locomotives locked in a battle for supremacy. They were evenly matched until I broke up the fight! ■

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.

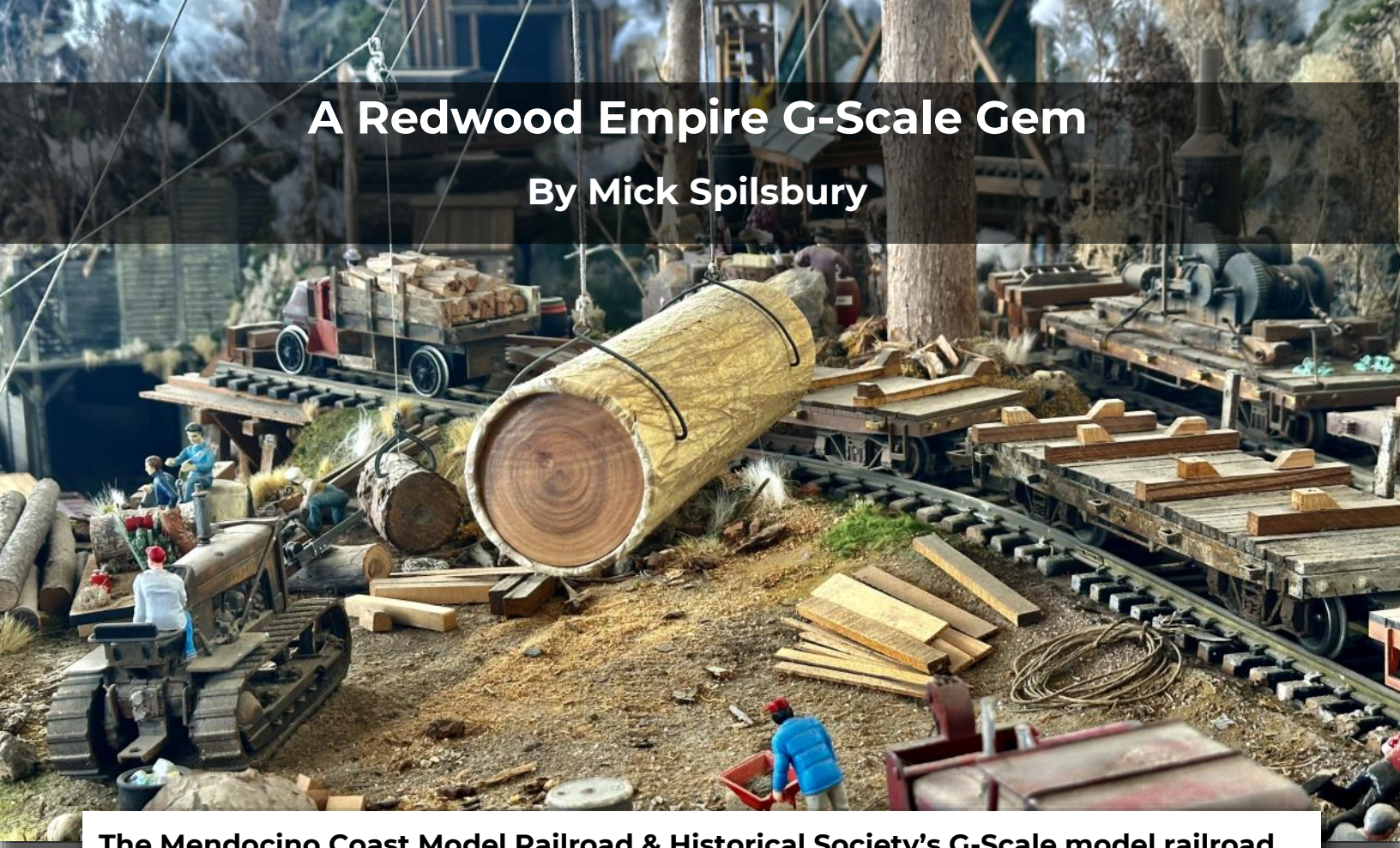
Remember, you do *not* have to have a garden railroad to participate in the club or have to contribute to BAGRS or the *Trellis & Trestle*—approximately half our members do not have their own railroad. Also, if I get some information wrong or misspell your name, please let me know and I'll take care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

- **David and Peggy Albert.** Campbell, CA. Joined October 13, 2024.
- **Marshall Stine**. Walnut Creek, CA. Joined October 14, 2024.

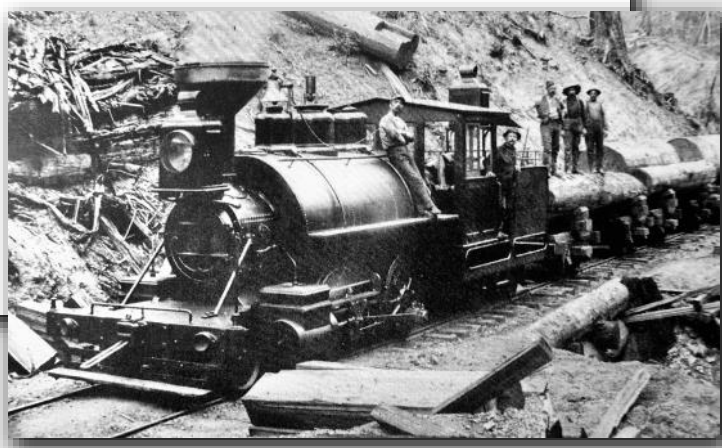
A Redwood Empire G-Scale Gem

By Mick Spilsbury



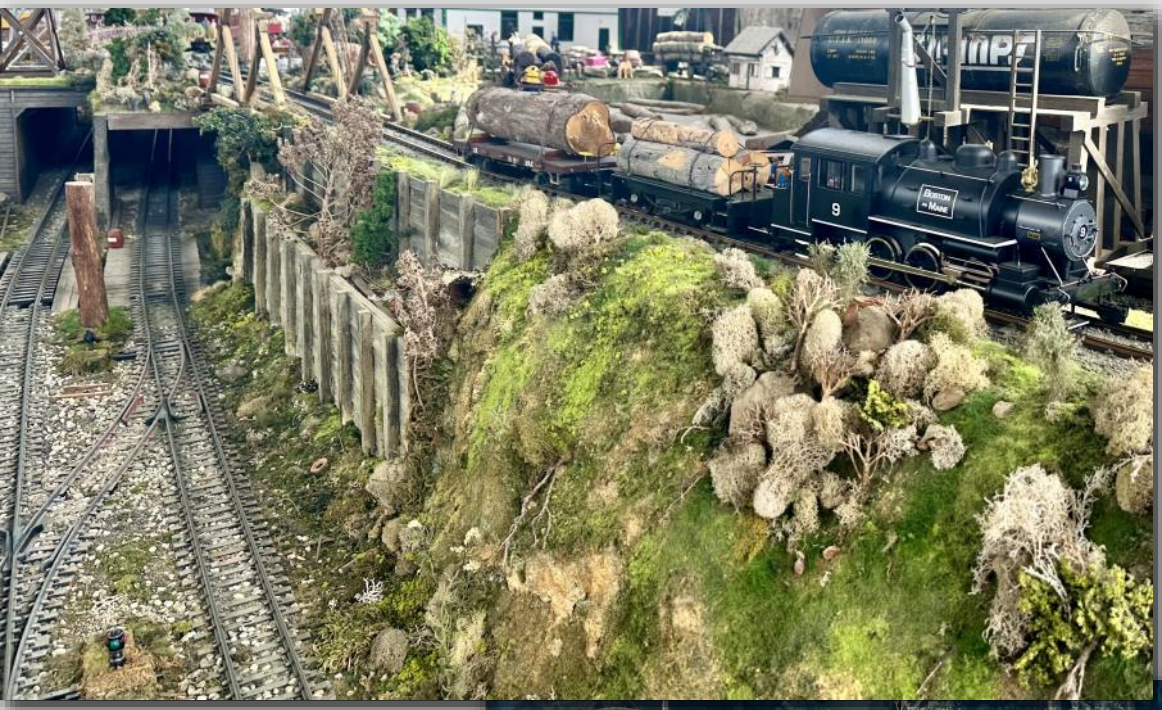
The Mendocino Coast Model Railroad & Historical Society's G-Scale model railroad, located at the Fort Bragg terminus of the Skunk RR, is a gem. A tribute to the railroads and people who harvested the 'Big Trees' along the Mendocino Coast. It is lovingly maintained by volunteers and regularly open for visitors to enjoy and to learn about the men and women who built the small towns that still dot the Mendocino Coast.

In the heyday of the logging industry that built San Francisco, railroads ran into the woods and fed mills at every river mouth from Gualala to Westport, 75 miles of rugged coast. At the peak of logging, 40 railroads ran from the coast back into redwood groves to deliver massive sections of trunks to the mills. Schooners transported the mills' products to market from hazardous doghole harbors.

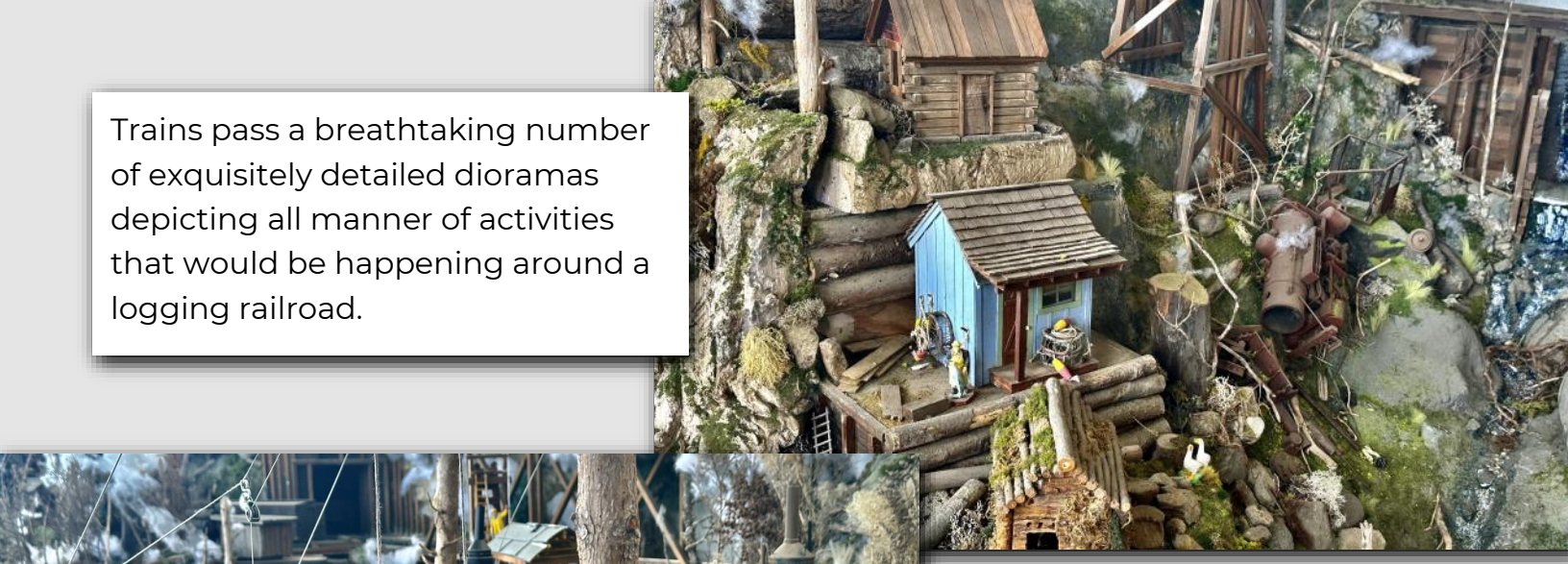


MCMR&HS's extensive indoor/outdoor model railroad honors logging in Mendocino county. It is set between WWI and WWII, is not based on a specific railroad but certainly captures the scenes, sights, and sounds that were seen at that time. Baldwin & Shay locos haul giant sections of redwood trunks. Steam donkeys are seen in the higher elevations of the railroad. Locos are being serviced. A derailed loco lies in a gully. Multiple workshops and storage sheds provide year-round maintenance space for volunteers.

On the indoor layout, multiple trains run at multiple levels disappearing frequently behind rock formations and through numerous tunnels. It is a challenge to work out where a disappearing train will reappear.

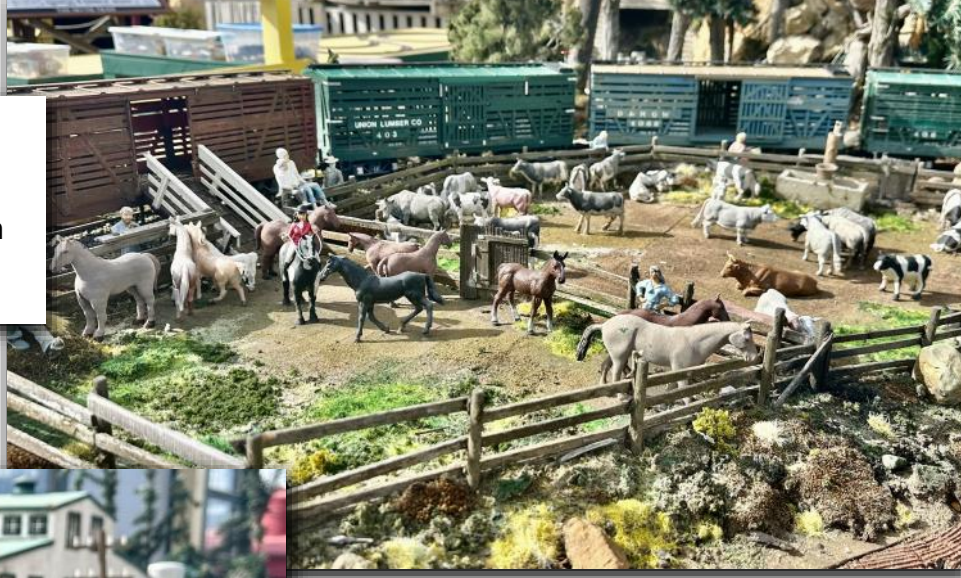


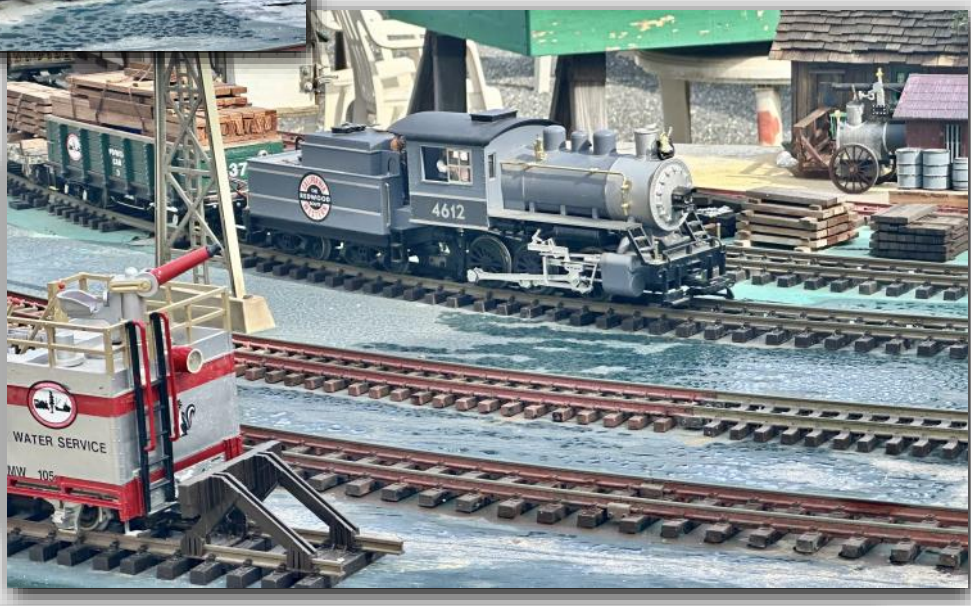
Trains pass a breathtaking number of exquisitely detailed dioramas depicting all manner of activities that would be happening around a logging railroad.



A massive log is being raised by a pulley system, fog overhangs a valley, milled planks are being loaded on cars, and equipment is being serviced all over the layout.

The dioramas extend outdoors. A marvelous circular train shed/ turntable scene is a highlight but a ranch field is equally captivating.





A large, level, raised, oval, outdoor, 4-track layout completes the railroad's facilities. It is a great area to watch multiple consists moving along at prototypical speeds.

I shot a dozen short videos of operations indoors and outdoors and have stitched together in a video posted on both the BAGRS and the GR News YouTube channels

2 minutes of action from the Mendocino County G-Scale Model RR

I chatted to the club's President, Chuck Whitlock. The club has 70 members. 20 of them do the majority of the work on the railroad and other members chip in. 3 members from the UK visit for a week most years to help out. The webmaster is based in NY.

PLANNING A VISIT

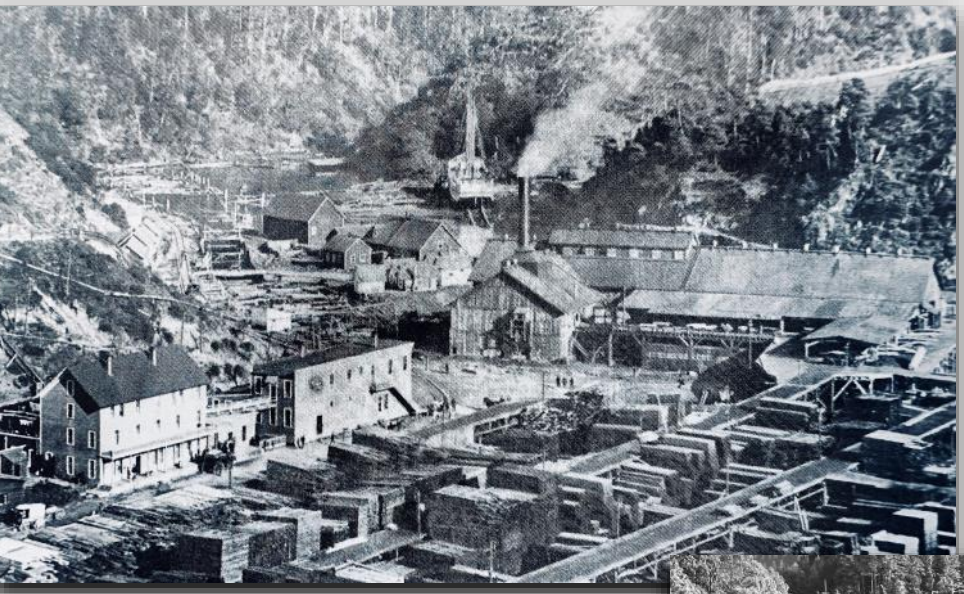
The railroad is often open for viewing but does not have a set schedule all year. Some seasons are ideal for opening others not, and openings rely entirely on volunteers. It is best to visit the railroad's website:

www.mendorailhistory.org

Better yet, you can contact the railroad by email at info.1@mendorailhistory.org to get specific information about the railroad's open schedule at the dates you are planning to visit.

AN EXTENDED VISIT

Today, the 75 miles from Gualala to Westport are traveled on the spectacular California Highway 1 in a little less than two hours. However, I am contemplating a longer trip, a 3 night, 4 day exploration visiting the sites of the mills where the many logging railroads terminated. Armed with images from the past, I will get to view what places looked like at the height of logging and what they look like today.

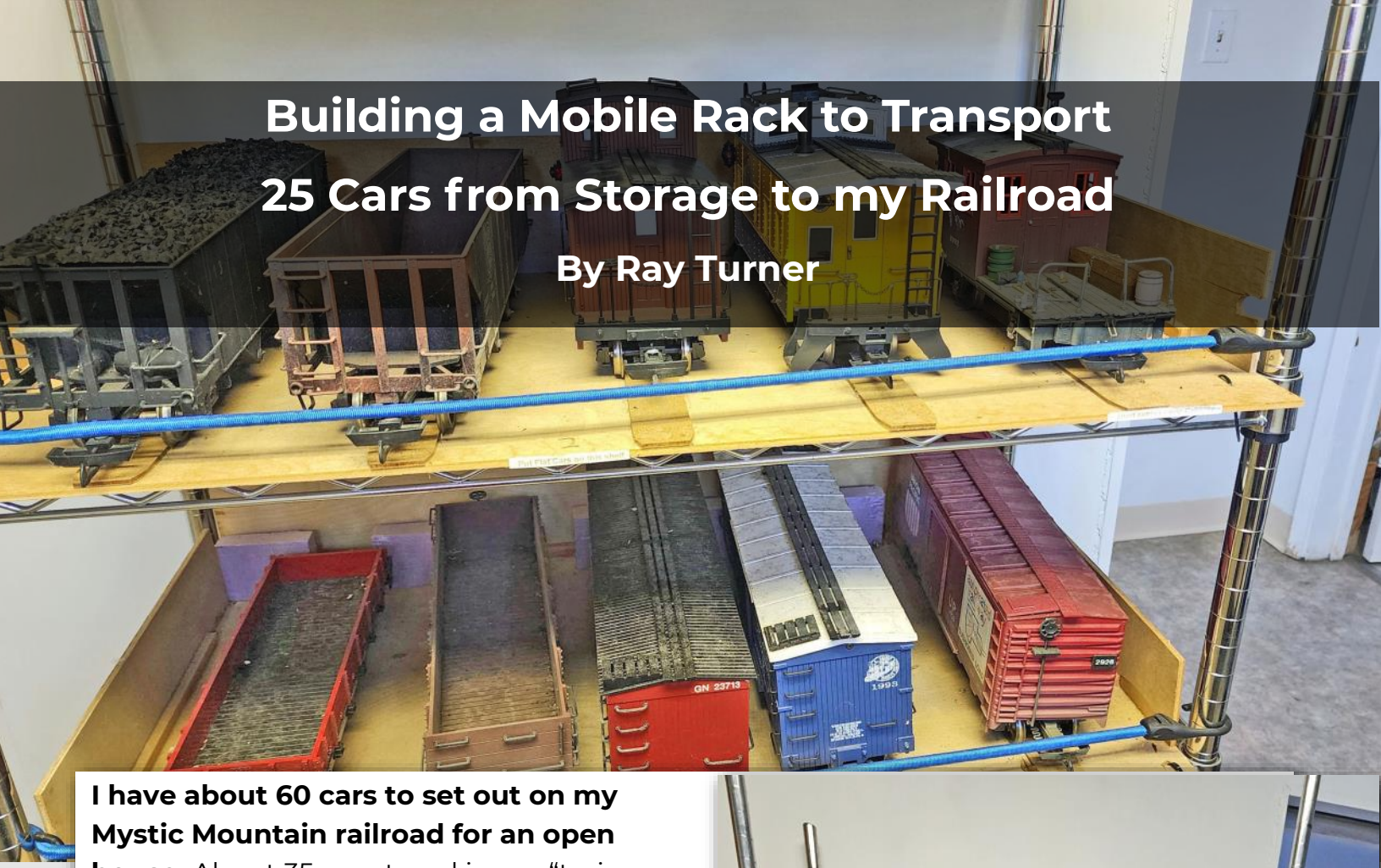


I may even organize that trip right before or right after NGRC 2025 in Sacramento, CA, because it could be of interest to others attending the National Convention in Sacramento. A visit to the Mendocino Coast G-scale RR would be a highlight of the trip.

If you would like to know how that idea develops, please send me an email at marketing@grnews.org. ■

Building a Mobile Rack to Transport 25 Cars from Storage to my Railroad

By Ray Turner



I have about 60 cars to set out on my Mystic Mountain railroad for an open house. About 35 are stored in my “train room” and can be set out on the tracks in it and then moved (by train, of course) to South Providence yard and nearby industrial areas. But North End yard—and nearby industrial sites—was quite a bit distant, and my train room was full, anyway.

I built a rolling transport for 25 cars to solve this problem.

These racks come in many sizes and have adjustable shelves. I had one that was 6’ high by 3’ wide, and 18” deep. This is the perfect depth for most G scale freight cars. Five cars fit comfortably across the width with room for hands to reach in and retrieve them. The height of 6’ is about as high as you can go and have it still roll through a standard 78” door. It is also about as high as one can reach to put cars on/off the rack.

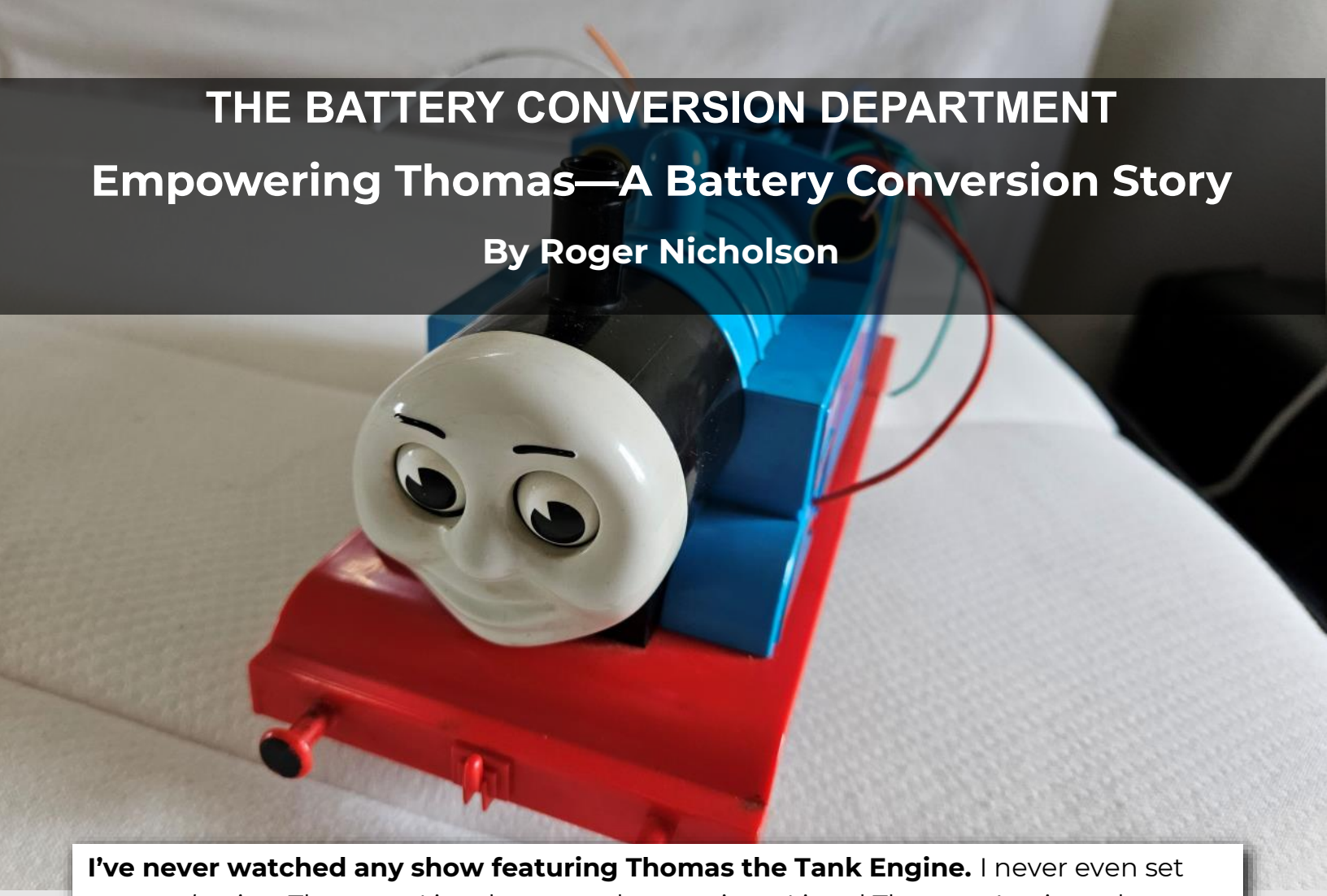
Each shelf has a thin wood base (on which the cars can roll), 2” wood sides and back to keep cars from rolling off the rack. Each car slot has a 1 3/4” wide (slightly under wheel gauge) wood strip which keeps the cars from moving side-to-side. To keep the couplers from banging into the back of the shelf, I glued blocks of pink foam for the cars (not the couplers) to bang up against. Finally, a bungee cord across the front of each shelf at coupler height keeps the cars in place.

Since I set up the railroad 6–8 times a year, this has saved me a lot of time. If you want to accommodate an engine, you could make a horizontal place for it and wheel out a whole train at once. ■

THE BATTERY CONVERSION DEPARTMENT

Empowering Thomas—A Battery Conversion Story

By Roger Nicholson



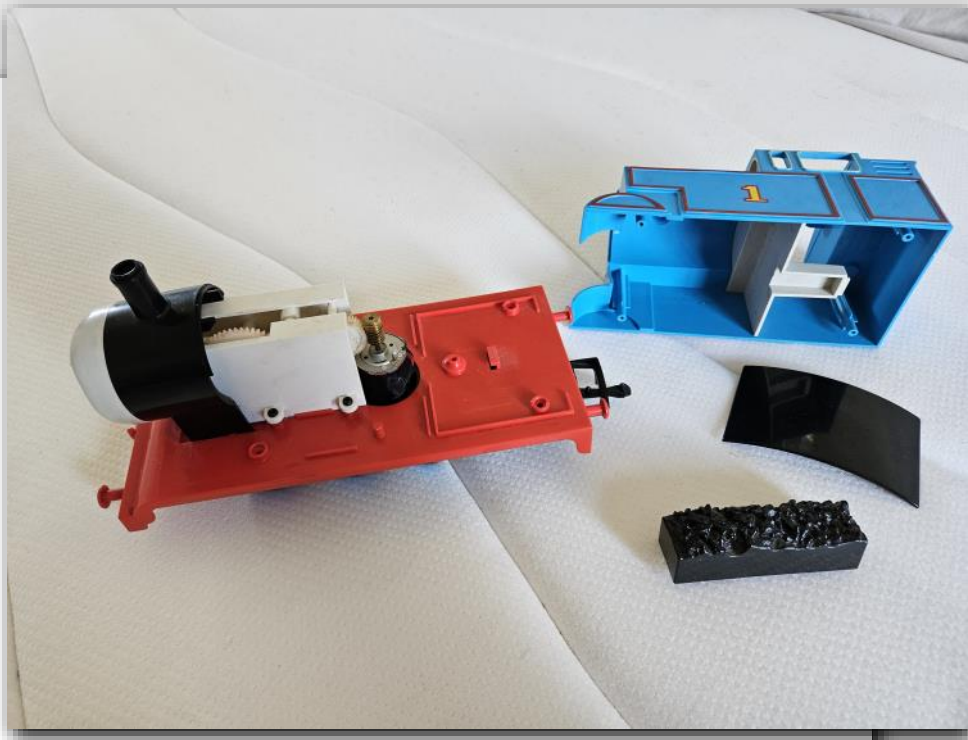
I've never watched any show featuring Thomas the Tank Engine. I never even set out to *obtain* a Thomas—I just happened to receive a Lionel Thomas, Annie and Clarabel as part of a larger collection that I had purchased. I put Thomas and his friends into a box on a shelf and planned to sell them at some future point in time. However, certain "forces of nature" (specifically my wife and neighbors' children) caused me to understand that selling Thomas would be a *very bad idea* indeed. One does not simply sell Thomas or his Friends!

Here's my dilemma: It costs several hundred dollars in parts for me to do a full battery conversion on one of my locomotives, and I felt that this type of investment was more than Thomas would be worth (at least to me . . .) I only run battery power now, so Thomas wasn't going to get very far on my layout unless I came up with a serious plan.

I decided to see if I could convert Thomas to battery power in the most cost-efficient way possible. The first thing I decided was that Thomas would not have sound. I honestly don't know what sound Thomas makes anyway. I mean, he has a face . . . does he talk or sing or something? Kids will know these answers, but I don't. So, that's decided—no sound.

Next , I had to determine how to attack my biggest challenge: Where was I going to fit a Lithium-ion battery pack inside Thomas's shell?

So . . . this is the part where you cover your grandkids' eyes, because we are about to "see how the sausage is made": I took Thomas apart.

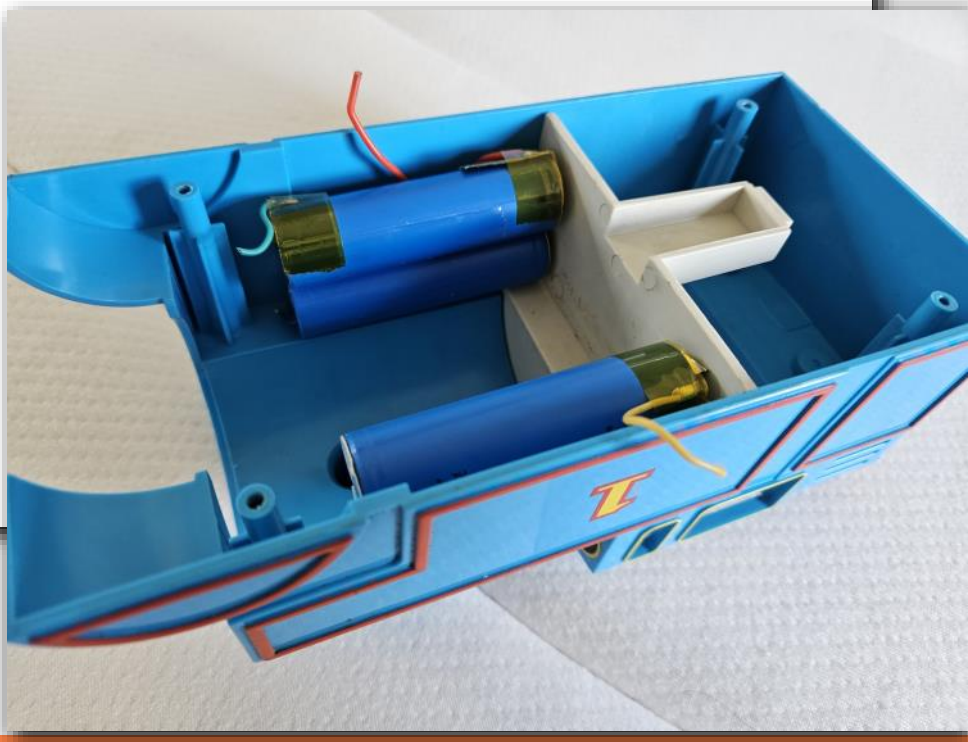


It quickly became evident that any standard Li-ion battery pack would never fit. Putting a battery in the boiler wasn't even a possibility, since the mechanism to make Thomas's eyes move took up all of the available space. There just isn't much space in there at all, and I needed at *least* three, preferably four, Li-ion cells to get between 11.1 and 14.8 volts.

I decided that I would have to build my own custom-built Li-ion battery pack to fit within the available space. Next I had to find a source of some cheap Li-ion cells and a Battery Management System (BMS) board.

I harvested four 18650 Li-ion cells from an old laptop battery pack for a computer which I retired long ago. The battery pack was actually brand new and had never been used. As far as cost went, this battery pack was fully depreciated. Disassembling the laptop battery pack produced five good 18650 Li-ion cells (3.7 volts per cell). Now, how many of these could I fit in Thomas?

The side tanks, as it turned out, offered the solution. I found that I could fit two 18650 cells in each one of the side tanks. By filling both side tanks each with a pair of 18650 cells, I could actually create a 4S1P (4 Series, 1 Parallel) battery pack. That's four cells in series which would give me approximately 15 volts. This was more than I needed to make Thomas go.

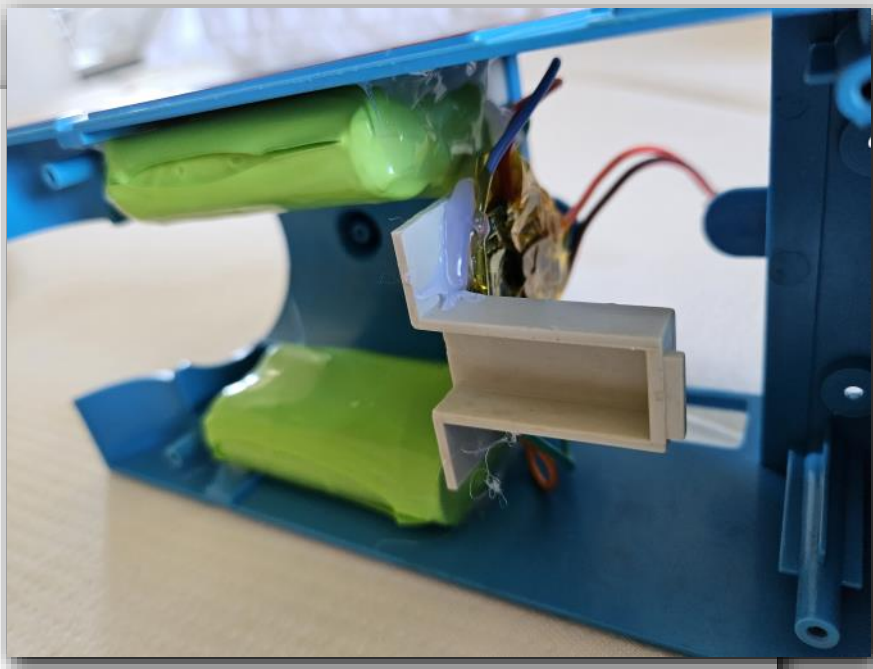


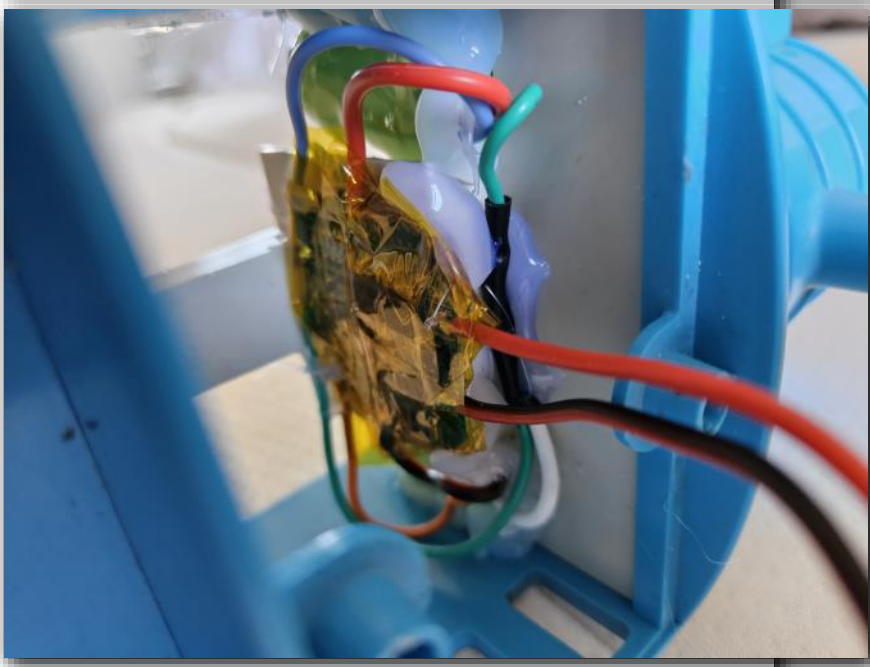
I spot welded nickel strips to connect one end of each pair of cells together, and attached wires to each node, then wired the two separate 2-cell packs together to form a 4-cell pack. I shrink-wrapped the cells in order to make sure that all electrical surfaces were fully insulated. This completed my work on the Li-Cells. The next step was to add the BMS.

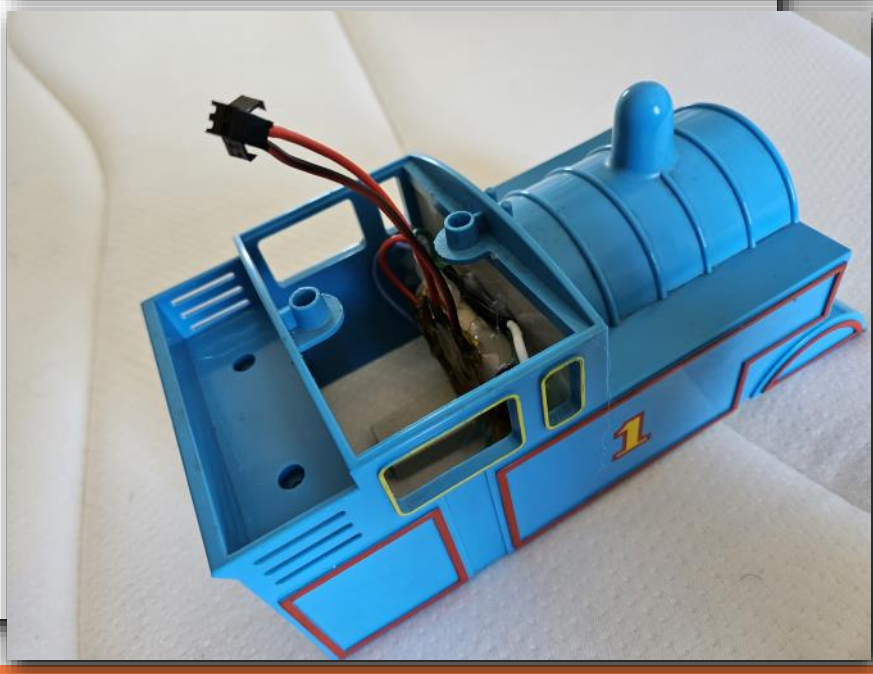
In order to create a rechargeable Li-ion battery pack that will work with a Tenergy Smart Charger, you need to incorporate a BMS board. This board is connected to each node between the individual cells. It manages the charging and discharging of the individual Li-ion cells so that the battery pack won't overcharge or over discharge. There was no room for a BMS in the side tanks, so I chose to install it on the back wall of the cab.

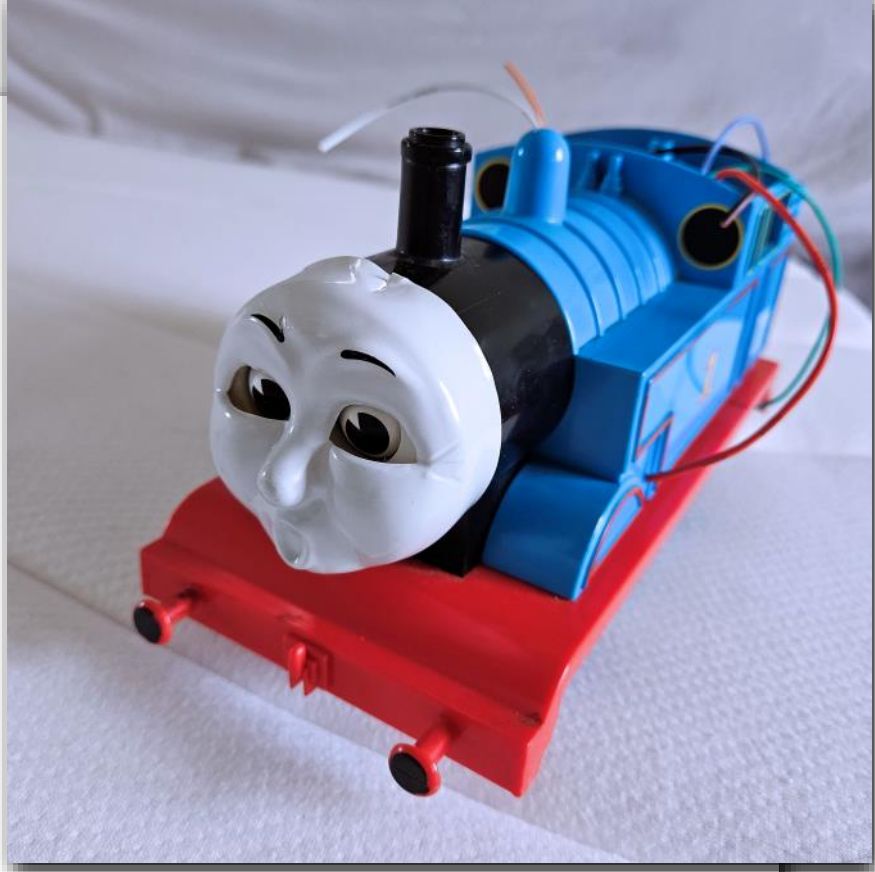
I then soldered the wires from each node on the battery pack to their corresponding pads on the BMS. A red and black wire from the BMS goes to a connector, which will provide power from the battery pack and also be used to charge it.

Connecting up the four cells and BMS after installing them within Thomas's shell produced a functional 4S1P Li-ion rechargeable battery pack. Thomas's shell had essentially *become* the battery pack.





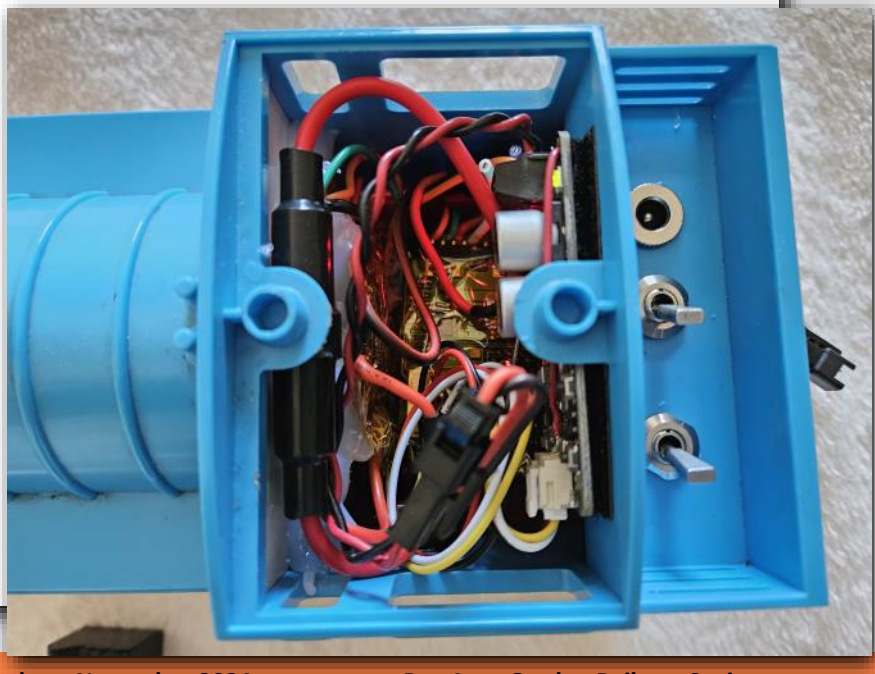




Thomas now had the power, but I needed a way to channel and control that power to the motor. I concluded that a standard modern AirWire receiver would not fit in Thomas's cab. Besides, I was looking to do this as cheaply as possible. I searched through what I had and found an extra Digitrax DCC motor decoder. I had originally bought it online to use for a club member's Aristocraft Mikado that I was converting to battery. I ended up not using it after all, so it was just sitting around waiting for a purpose. I decided to use it in Thomas.

I also added a charging port and a pair of DPDT center-off switches under Thomas's coal load. One switch turns the power on one way, and connects the charging port when flipped the other way, and the second switch connects to the internal battery, or to an external battery connector in case I decide to use a battery car. By this time, Thomas was beginning to "feel the power."

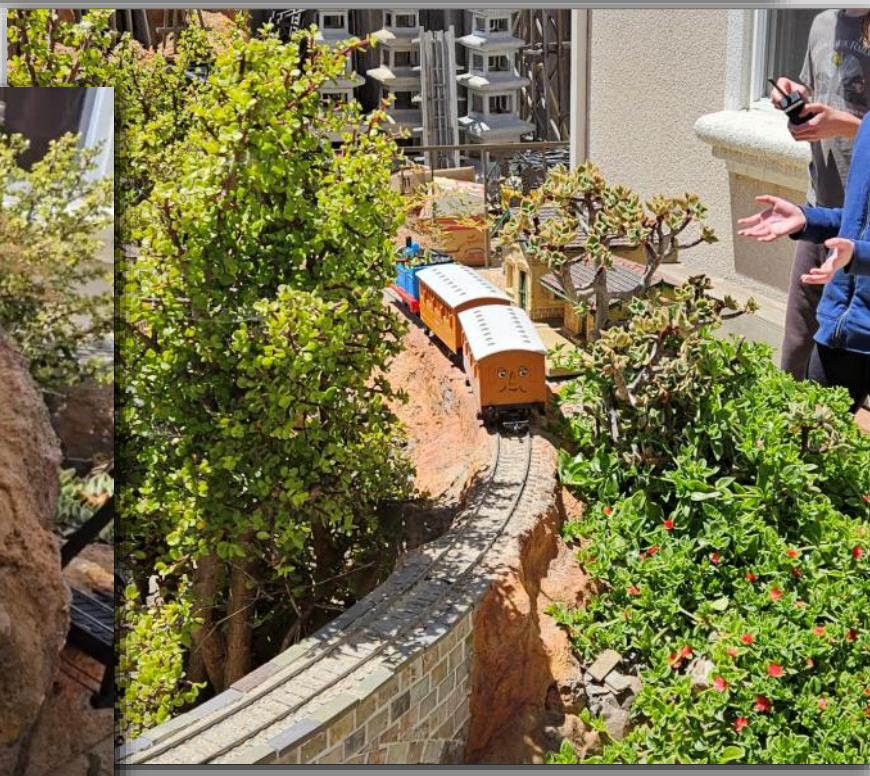
With a decoder connected up to drive the motor, all I needed now was a way to get my existing AirWire transmitter to talk to the DCC decoder. This can be done using a CVP Products AirWire CONVRTR. I didn't have any of these on hand, so I searched online and found a ProMiniAir receiver, which claimed to be compatible with AirWire, and which could communicate with a standard DCC decoder. I had never used one before, but since it was pretty inexpensive, I took a chance and ordered one. As it turned out, it worked just great, and I have since installed them in a number of other battery conversion projects.



After installing the decoder board and the new receiver board, Thomas was pretty "stuffed." I connected the charging port and switches. Thomas's cab had become a pretty busy place, with no place for an engineer. Besides, does anyone actually operate Thomas? Or does he operate himself?

Well . . . I flipped the switches, and everything worked! Finding a cost-effective solution using a leftover laptop battery and about $90 worth of parts meant that Thomas was now able to run on my railroad. In fact, Thomas was a big hit with the kids during the 2023 NGRC! For the kids that visited my layout, letting them actually run Thomas was the absolute highlight of their day. Thomas has now earned his place in the fleet as a "star" on the railroad rather than passing his existence in a box on a shelf. He looks happy to be there.

Of course, every locomotive that lives on my railroad has to pass the "helix test." Here is Thomas's test: Thomas "Makes the Grade" on the Crystal Cove and Rose Garden Railroad ■



THE GARDEN DEPARTMENT

Snow Rose

By Richard Murray

BOTANICAL NAME: Serissa japonica (new name), Serissa foetida (old name)

COMMON NAME: Snow Rose

USDA ZONE: 7–11

The correct name of this tree is *'Serissa japonica'*, but most people still use the old name *'Serissa foetida'*. The genus has only one species, 'S. japonica'. It is a subtropical small evergreen shrub with tiny white flowers. It has a very long flowering period from early spring through late autumn. Fertilizing is especially important during the long flowering period. In addition to its lovely flowers, 'Serissa' is valued for its dense branching and small leaves. The upright stems branch in all directions and form a wide bushy dome. The leaves are miniature, oval, and dark green. Foliage and roots have an unpleasant smell when cut. 'Foetida' refers to the unpleasant, vomit-like, odor that the trees give off if their tissue is cut or bruised. It is native to sub-tropical open woodlands and wet meadows in southeast Asia.

It can grow to 36" tall. I have one that is in good soil and is about 24", which is about normal. The one in the photo is confined between rocks and has only a few inches of soil underneath. It is about 15" tall and about 16 years old.

Location

Serissa likes a part sun, wind-protected place during the growing season as long as the night temperatures stay above 50° F. It remains evergreen only in frost-free winter climates (Zones 9b-11). It will not retain foliage in colder locations where it typically begins losing leaves in autumn as soon as the temperature drops to 40 degrees F. Branches usually die to the ground when temperatures dip into the low 20s F. 'Serrissa' is easy to care for when planted in the ground. When used for bonsai, it is less easy because the bonsai plant is notoriously fussy. The tree can drop all of its leaves if over-watered, under-watered, if it's too cold, too hot, or even if just moved to a new location.

Even in mild winter areas, a bonsai ‘Serissa’ must be placed in the house or in a heated conservatory at temperatures between 50° and 68° F. The warmer the location the more light is needed. Grow lights can help.

Watering

It is important to keep the rootball moist, but at the same time take care not to overwater. It must never dry out completely. If the tree drops its leaves due to some changes in the growing conditions, decrease watering to avoid root rot.

Feeding

Apply a small amount of solid organic fertilizer every four weeks or use a liquid fertilizer in a low concentration every week during the growing season. Use a fertilizer with a balanced N-P-K ratio. In winter fertilize once a month with a low dose of liquid fertilizer if the tree is kept in a warm place. 'Serissa' likes a neutral pH value (7).

Pruning

The following advice for pruning is from the literature: 'Serissa' tolerates hard pruning, which should be done in early spring. Young trees are trimmed back to 2 leaves when the shoots have produced 4–5 leaves. Older trees are trimmed less during flowering but are pruned thoroughly after flowering. Every two or three years the branches must be cut back to old wood in order to keep the tree shape compact. Personally, I don't bother to follow such extensive rules in pruning. I prune when many of the branches grow beyond the core of the plant. I usually need to prune several times a year. At the same time, freely growing suckers can be cut off.

Propagation

'Serissa' can be easily propagated from semihardwood cuttings.

Pests and diseases

Aphids, scale, mildew, or spider mites can attack 'Serissa'. Use a specific pesticide. Pests are less of a problem than sudden changes in temperature or lighting.

Bonsai

The tree has many favorable attributes itemized above that commend the plant to the art of bonsai. In addition, it can be shaped into some very visually stunning styles. 'Serissa' is one of the most frequently purchased bonsai plants and is especially loved in Japan.

Uses

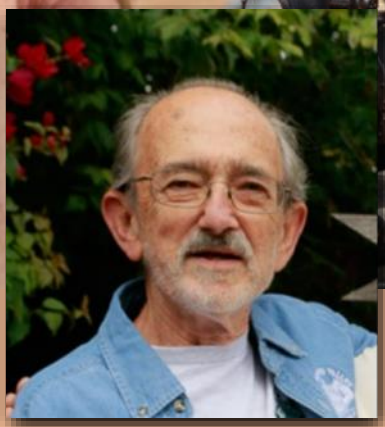
The plant can be used in small hedges, as individual plants, bonsai, and . . . anywhere in garden railroads! ■

Carnivale on the Green: A Railcar Based Traveling Carnival

CHINESE TERRACOTTA WARRIORS

RAIL CARS #70, 71 and 72

By Jim Ralph

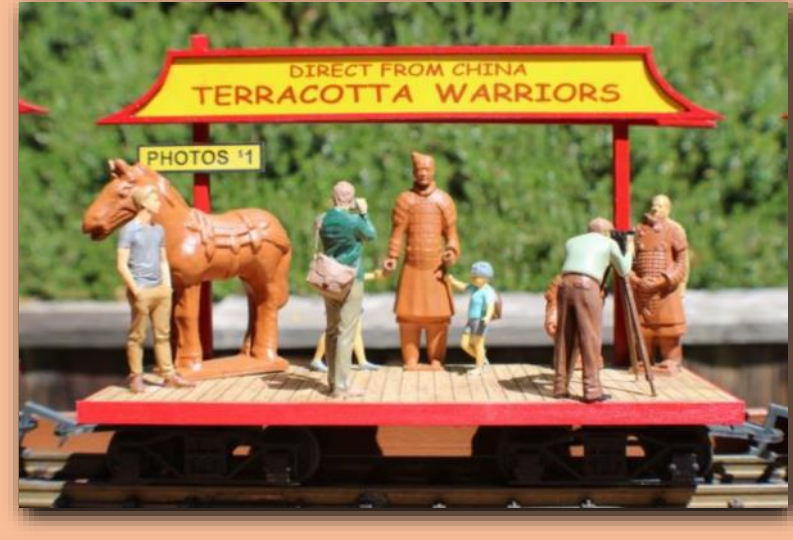


Jim Ralph is a member of the *Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society*, and is the brother of BAGRS member Bill Ralph.

1974, SHAANXI, CHINA

While digging a well, a small group of farmers unearthed a terracotta statue. The rest is history. Subsequent excavation unearthed the burial site of Win Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China (209 BCE). To protect and serve him in the afterlife, he conscripted over 700,000 workers to cast, carve, and paint over 8,000 terracotta soldiers, horses, chariots, servants, entertainers, along with other items to be buried with him. The discovery drew worldwide attention.

True to form, the CARNIVALE carnies immediately seized on the opportunity to profit from this world-famous discovery. Also, true to form, nothing was real with CARNIVALE, always a sham. With no artifacts allowed to be removed from the site to be exploited, which didn't matter to the carnies, they would produce their own 'authentic' terracotta warriors for display and sale. The statues were cast with the same plaster of paris that was used for making chalk ware*, which was easily tinted with iron oxide to make it appear to be terracotta. Bakelite was used for making game prizes and was now used to make the 'Jade' figurines. Empty commercial size tin cans from the kitchen were turned into the 'brass' lanterns.



Even the elderly Chinese gentleman working the souvenir railcar was a ruse. His name was Thor Gundersen, a Norwegian. Thor, along with his twin brother Gunther Gundersen, also a Norwegian, ran the mold shop . . . True.

FORTUNE COOKIE SAYS: Man who buys fake plaster of paris Chinese terracotta statue best not leave out in rain.

Chalkware was a common 'prize' offered at carnival games. Called chalkware because they were cast in plaster of paris.

Bakelite was the first hard 'plastic' moldable resin (patented 1909) that could be blended with different fillers to simulate various materials.

P.S. Did you notice who is getting his picture taken on the photo car? And, did you also notice the second photographer? It appears he was avoiding paying the operator and is sneaking a few shots of his own. And he looks familiar. ■

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.

BAGRS Live Steamers at Los Altos History Museum, Sept 21–22, 2024

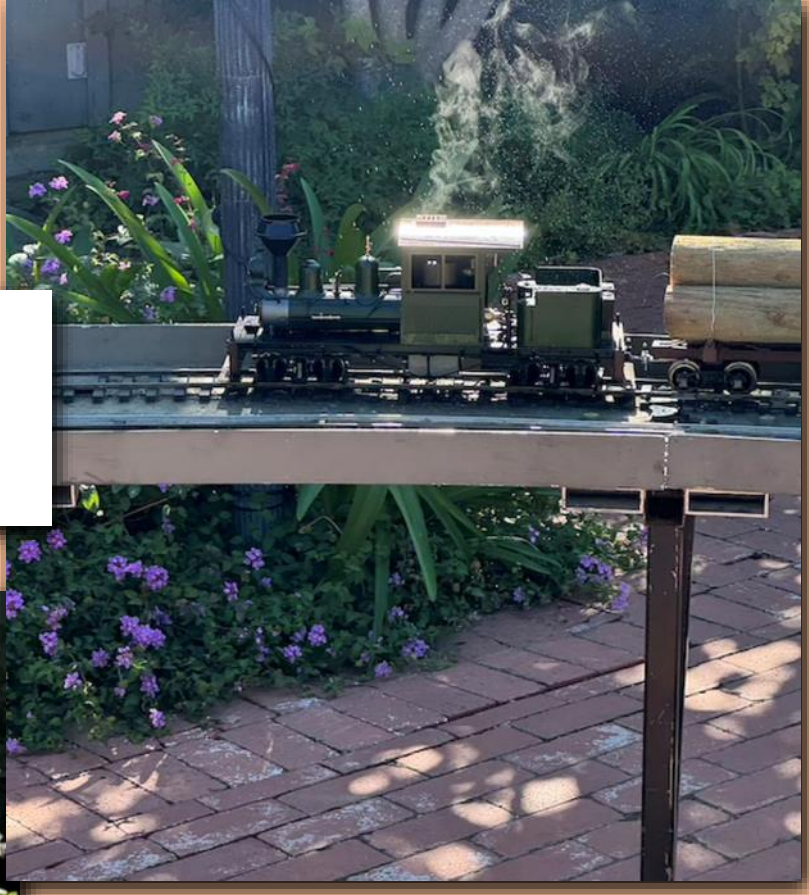
What's more fun than having a BAGRS steam-up at a local museum? Having a two-day steamup! The Live Steamers populated their track for two consecutive days at the Los Altos History Museum. This event is now back to happening yearly again and it's not to be missed. (Yes, you were notified and invited!)

The track is set in a sheltered courtyard so folks can get up close and personal:

Colton Snell, Jim Goss, and Bill Mansell catch up and discuss strategy (or is it just BS?) prior to running.

Since this event is outside, all types of fuel could be used: butane, alcohol or coal. Here is the author's coal-fired, Accucraft D&RGW K-27 which was converted from butane to coal.

And here is Scott McCollough, a friend of the author, who was in town for the weekend. He became an expert at coal firing during his time behind the K-27.



A great variety of engines are run at our events. Here are two. First is Tim Boles new Accucraft 16T Shay shining in the sunlight.

And probably the smallest locomotive to be run was Richard Murray's Cricket

Richard Murray was a busy boy this weekend. His big engine was a beautiful Flying Scotsman.

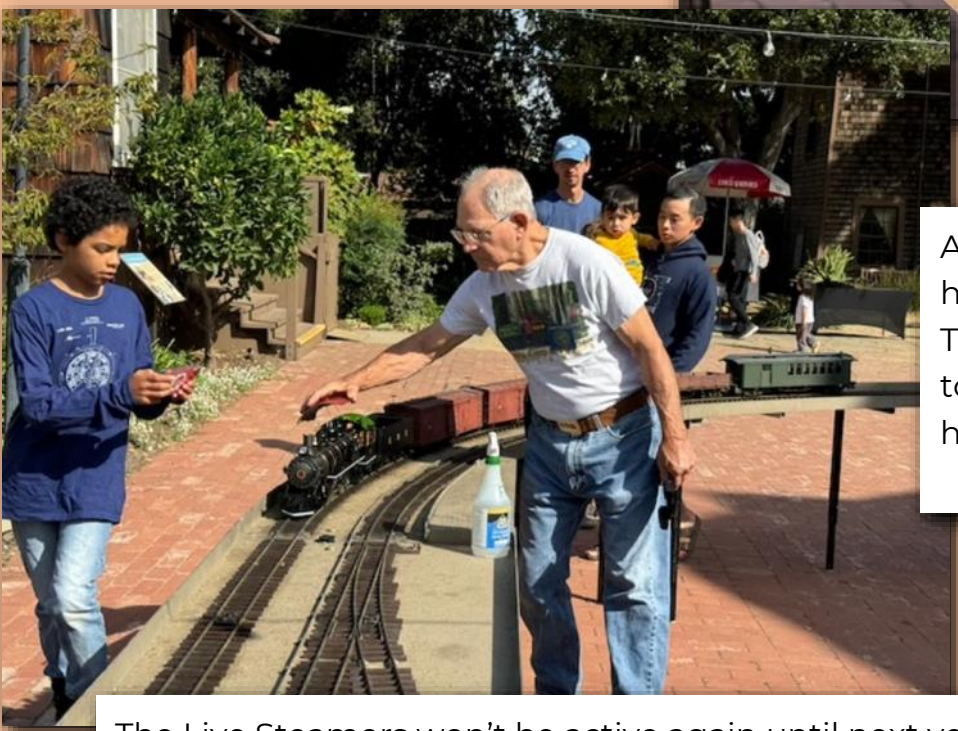
And here it is flying around the track.

Tim Boles favors Shays. He also ran an Accucraft open cab Shay to an appreciative audience.

Giacomo Verducci is becoming a regular participant at our steamups!

Jim Hague brought a beautiful Accucraft D&RGW C-19.

It's always fun to see well-tuned engines producing a good steam plume. Here is Bob Trabucco's Mogul strutting its stuff.



And here is Bob running another of his beasts: An Accucraft East Broad Top Mikado. It looks like he is about to use what all of us live steamers have—his asbestos fingers.

The Live Steamers won't be active again until next year when we will set up at the annual meeting. Hope some of you will come join us! ■

Dave's Corner

by Dave Frediani

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

BUILDING A 7/8 SCALE INTERURBAN STREETCAR

After looking through an older issue of the *Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette*, I saw an article on a 7/8 scale freelance streetcar. I kept thinking about this article over the last few months and then I decided, why not build one!

The streetcar in that article, was built using plywood, corrugated cardboard and Styrofoam. The author of the article used the streetcar on a small indoor layout.

If I was going to build a similar streetcar, it would need to be built strong enough to hold up to outdoor running, and be able to be handled a lot, as well as be transported to and from other railroads I might visit in the future. Cardboard and Styrofoam wouldn't hold up. As always, the material that I was going to use would be 1/8" and 1/16" styrene. Not having any real measurements on this project, it took a while to come up with the measurements that would work out and fit my needs. One thing I knew is that I was going to shorten the streetcar up a bit. That wasn't a big deal as many of the real streetcars were built in all sorts of different lengths. The outside measurements would end up being 25" long x 6" wide and 8-1/4" tall.

The first step was a drive to Tap Plastics in Stockton to purchase all the styrene that I would need. Keep in mind, that I had no idea of how this thing would go together. So, back in the shop, I started out by first cutting the main pieces out of cardboard, trying to see how it would all come together.

Next, I started cutting the main pieces out of 1/8" styrene and laying them out to see what I had to work with.

Now it was time to start to assemble the floor section and the two lower sidewalls of the streetcar. I also used Evergreen #189 strips between the floor and the lower sidewalls for extra strength. The floor was raised up from the lower sidewalls 5/8” to make room for the truck assemblies, which would be installed later on.

Now it was time to start to assemble the floor section and the two lower sidewalls of the streetcar. I also used Evergreen #189 strips between the floor and the lower sidewalls for extra strength. The floor was raised up from the lower sidewalls 5/8” to make room for the truck assemblies, which would be installed later on.

Next, I mounted the inner front and rear entrance ways, along with the upper sidewalls. The windows will be installed as a complete section with all the windows in place at a later time.

The lower photo shows the start of the roof, with all the main roof ribs in place. All the openings between the roof ribs were cut into the roof's base to allow for the roof covering to be glued to each rib. All the roof ribs are 1/8" styrene, as well as the base of the roof.

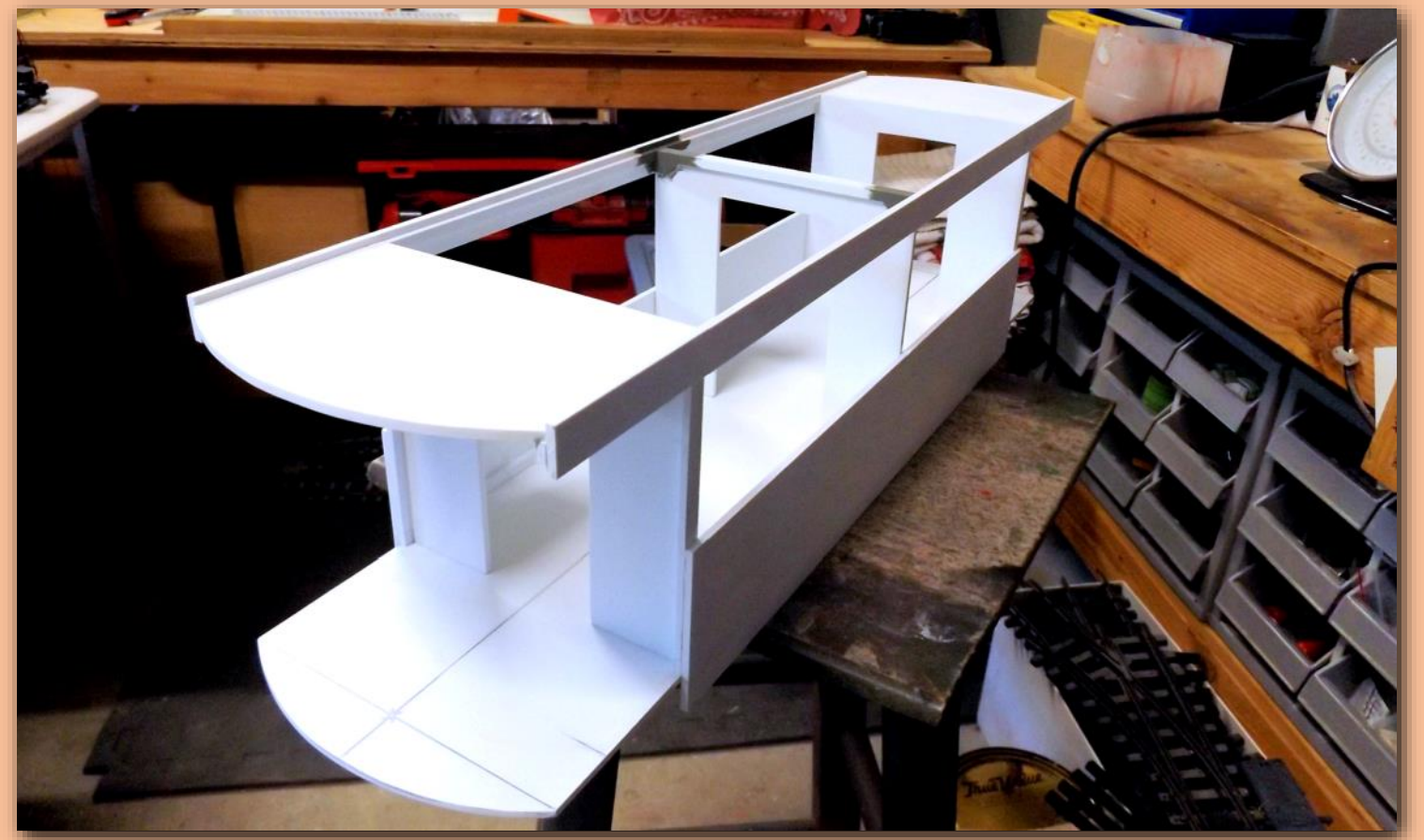
This next lower view shows the main part of the roof covering installed. For the roof covering I used 1/16” Styrene. The gray paint you see is just a primer. You can also see the two side rims of the roof made, using Evergreen #189 strips.

In this view, you can see the inside of the roof assembly. The roof will be completely removable once it’s completed.

Now that both sides, top and bottom are in place and the main part of the roof covering has been completed, it's time to add a sub section of the roof to both ends of the car.

The newly sub section ends of the roof were added so that I would be able to start working on the two rounded sections at each end of the car.

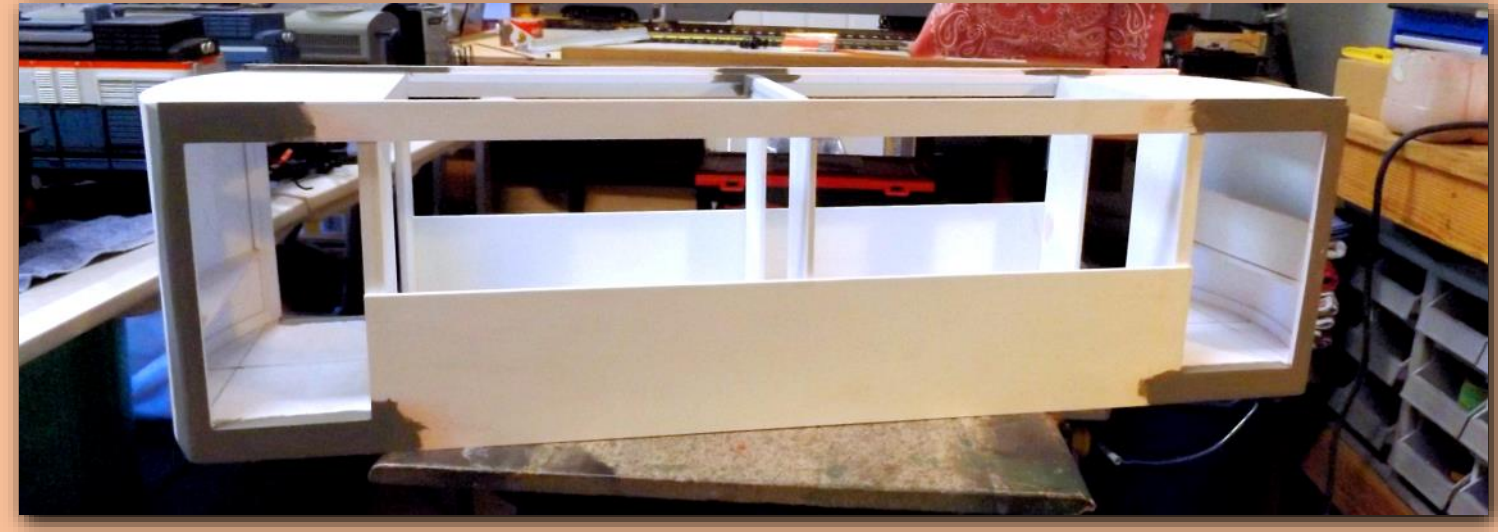
In this view you can see the newly added subsection, as well as a middle walk-through section.



Starting on the two rounded ends of the car, I couldn't bend 1/8" styrene to the radius I needed, so I formed the rounded ends with two layers 1/16" styrene, to form a 1/8" section, so it matches the same thickness as all the other siding.

After working on just one rounded end of the car, I was beat. It took forever to complete just one end. I decided to finish all the other work needed on that end, like framing out the two door openings.

The next day I completed the other rounded end and was able to finish the other two door openings. I had to use a little glazing putty on all four corners of the rounded ends to hide the seams.



With both rounded ends of the body and all four door openings finished, I've decided to hold off on cutting out the front windows.

I'm going to start on the rounded roof ends. With the compound bends needed to cover the end ribs of the roof, I will be using Evergreen #155 strips. The #155 strips measure 1/16" thick by 2.5 mm in width and can be easily bent to almost any shape. I found this to be the easiest way to form a covering on a compound bend. It will take about 12 short pieces to complete each roof end.

This view shows the newly installed 1/8” ribs on the rounded ends of the roof, ready to be covered with evergreen # 155 strips to be installed.

In this view you can see the same rounded roof end covered with the #155 Evergreen strips. After all the strips were installed, I sanded them with 220 sandpaper, and than used a light coat of glazing putty. Next I went over each end with gray primer, making sure there were no flaws.

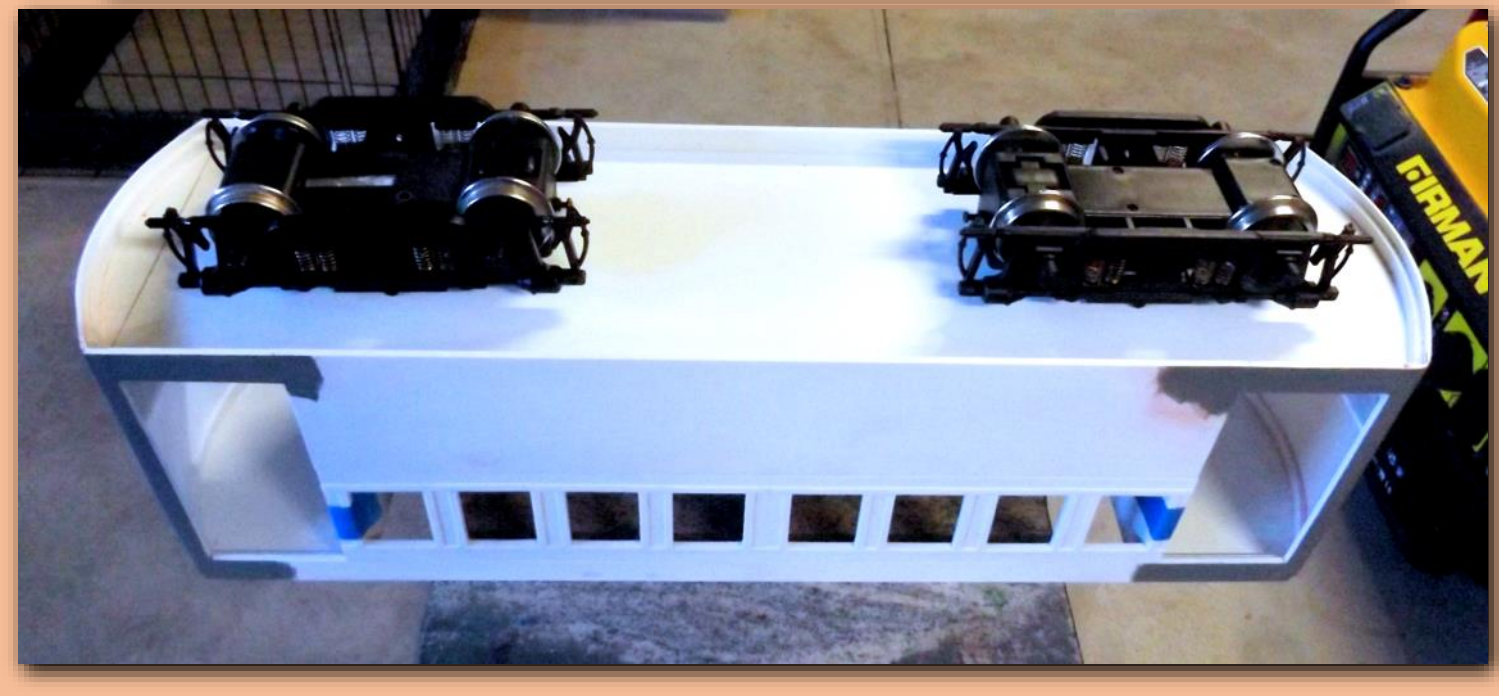
In this view, all that's left is windows and doors.

All the side windows and window trim were built separately as one complete unit, so much easier that way. I used 1/8" styrene and cut out all eight windows using a Dremel and than trimmed them out with Evergreen #295 angle strips.

This view shows the side windows installed as one unit.

Well I finally got the two power units installed. I'm using two truck assemblies from an F7 Diesel, A unit, Locomotive by U.S.A. Trains.

I will also be using an Airwire R/C controller, to control the streetcar.



Given the cost of the Air Wire system, I made my Air Wire system removable so that I can use the same system in my McKeen Motorcar and my Irish Motorcar as well as my new streetcar. All three cars are so different, I can't see myself running all three of them together.

All the windows are in and trimmed, along with the radio gear. All that's left is to install the two headlights, one at each end, and install the front and rear bumpers along with the couplers, doors, and add paint.

I have some other projects that need to be finished for the summer Steam Up this coming weekend.

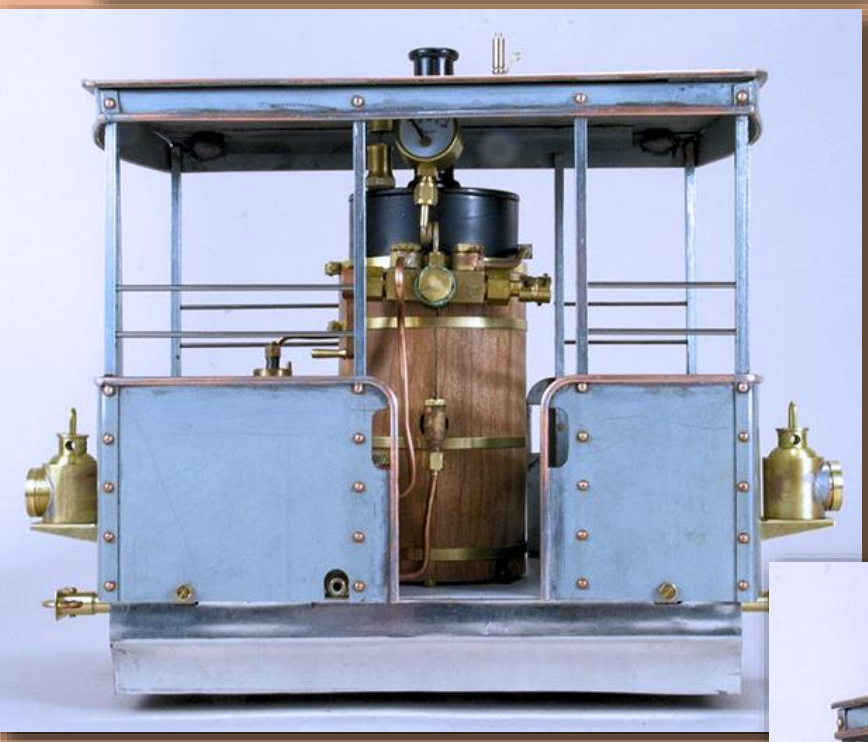
I'll show off the finished streetcar in my article next month. ■

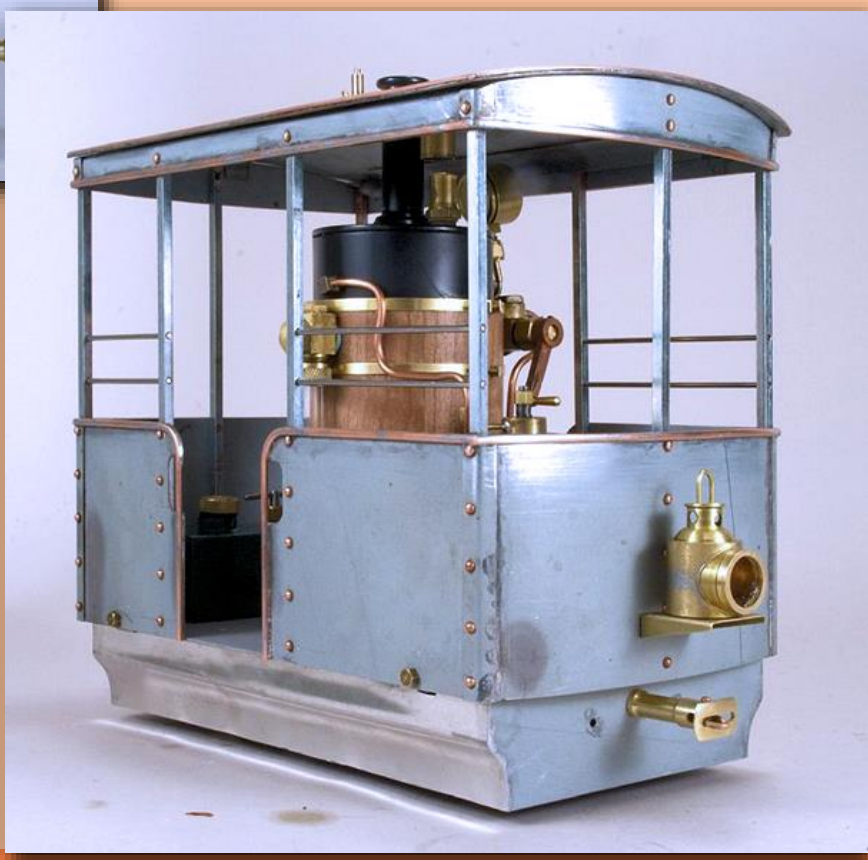
East Devil Hills Modeling Group

by Henner Meinhold

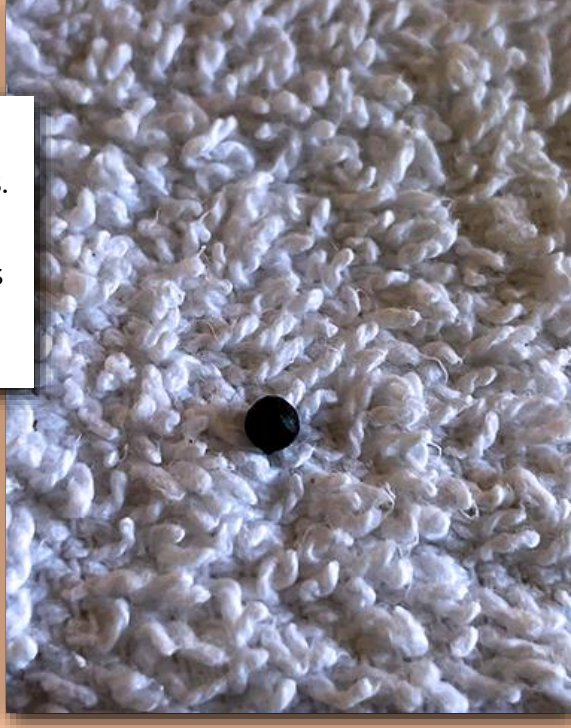
Henner Meinhold resides in Berlin, Germany. The *East Devil Hills Modeling Group* meets regularly to create, collaborate, and share incredibly machined models.

Marc Horovitz's tram loco is now finished and will soon be painted.

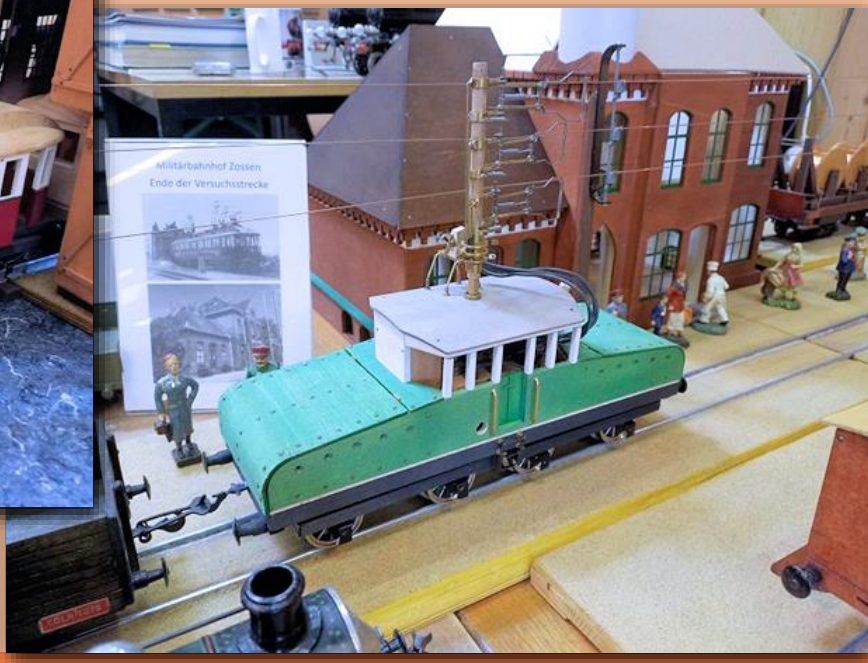




Sanjaya had some problems with the check valve of a loco. After disassembly he found completely corroded steel balls. He will replace them with either stainless steel or nitride balls. This is unfortunately all I got from my fellow modelers this month.



I was at an exhibition displaying some of my models. The most interesting display for me was a Gauge 1 model of a 3 phase test operation in Germany around 1900! (https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drehstromantrieb_(Eisenbahn)). They reached speeds of more than 130 mph! The tests were not done to be used for general railroading, they wanted to study the behavior of the components at high speed. The model uses real 3 phase motors (from Distler) and 3 phase catenary. The builder also created models of the 2 competing railcars (Siemens and AEG) and a special loco. One half of the loco survived and is now on display at the Technical Museum in Berlin. Here is one of the railcars and the loco. ■



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.

GENE AUTRY

In 1953, singing cowboy and western film producer Gene Autry selected the former one hundred and ten acre Monogram Studios Ranch near Newhall, California, for the home of his Flying A Productions. Monogram had been the site of more than seven hundred fifty "B" western movies since 1915 and the ranch's western and Mexican towns, hacienda, sound stage, and corrals were the ideal locations to film his weekly television shows that included The Range Rider, Death Valley Days, Annie Oakley, Buffalo Bill Jr., and The Adventures of Champion. Autry renamed the studio Melody Ranch for his popular 1940 motion picture and for his weekly CBS radio show.

Inspired by the popularity of Knott's Berry Farm Ghost Town and its authentic steam railroad, Autry contemplated developing Melody Ranch into a western museum and themed family attraction in addition to a working motion picture studio, and began a search for western memorabilia and vintage narrow gauge railroad equipment. He purchased the last remaining Rio Grande narrow gauge locomotive, No. 463, for $4000, and moved it to Melody Ranch from Colorado, but it was only used occasionally as a static prop on episodes of *Gunsmoke*, *Have Gun will Travel*, and *The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp*. Autry continued collecting narrow and standard gauge rolling stock and steam locomotives including vintage 1900 #604 from McBryde Sugar Company, Longbar Lumber Company's #4 2-6-2, and Southern Pacific 2-6-0 #1629.

Circa 1950s Postcard from the collection of Bill Ralph

After a wildfire threatened the complex and consumed the entire western street in 1962, Autry's interest in Melody Ranch diminished and he began selling off the property piecemeal and dismantling his railroad collection including a miniature ride-on Daylight train set that he donated to Travel Town in Griffith Park. The final twelve acres of Melody Ranch were maintained as a retirement home for several horses named Champion until the last horse died in 1990. Valuzat brothers, Renaud and Andre, purchased the remaining historic property, reconstructed western street, upgraded sound stages and production facilities, and began leasing the fully functional Melody Ranch Motion Picture Studio to Hollywood movie studios, television networks, and production companies.

Gene Autry was a highly successful business person in dozens of endeavors including the creation of the Western Heritage Museum, now known as The Autry Museum of the American West, but was unable to fulfill his dream of creating a western themed railroad amusement park. Historic Melody Ranch continues to flourish as the filming location of dozens of western films including *Deadwood*, *West World*, *Django* and *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*. ■

For more information, see YouTube: Traveltown in Griffith Park - Gene Autry's Melody Ranch Railroad

For details about some of the locomotives Autry purchased, including the Southern Pacific Daylight locomotive that Autry purchased from George A. Reddington of San Leandro for the Melody Ranch, see the following articles:

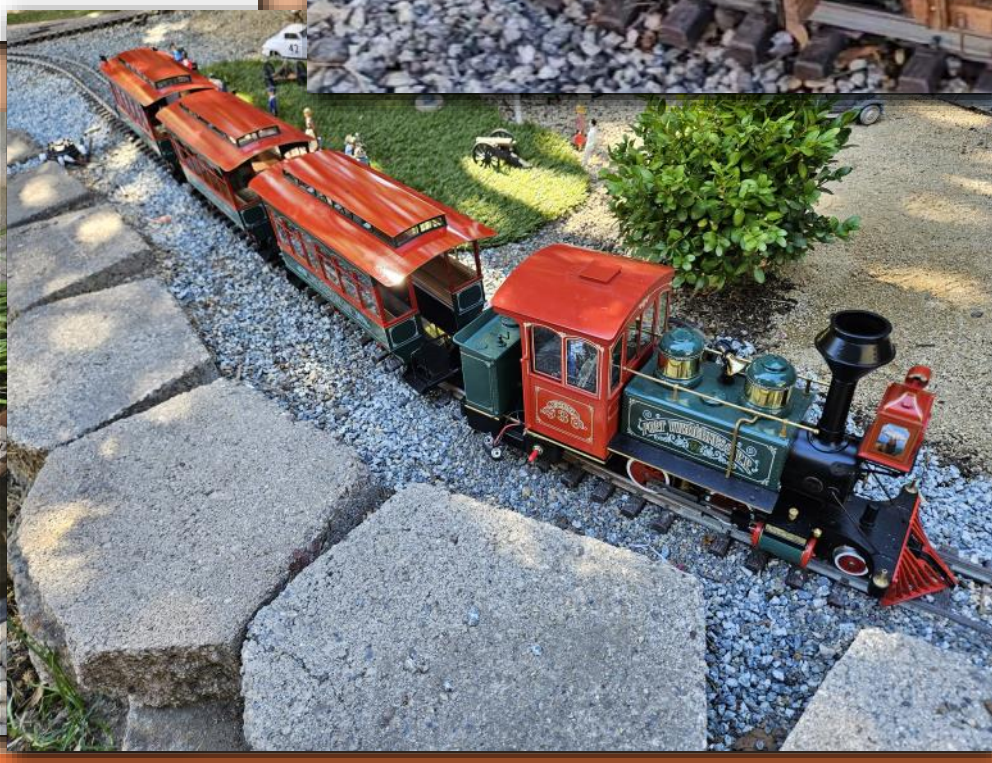
Autry Collects Locomotives, Plans Tourist Train Rides Around Ranch. (svchistory.com)

Photos of that locomotive can be viewed here:

Melody Ranch Special Daylight 1956 (Whiskey River Railway / Marshall, Wisconsin / (16"gauge)'s albums)

MEMBER UPDATES

A few photos from Mike and Anne Paterson's open house. The BS railroad featured the LUD hauling a holiday appropriate load of pumpkins around the track. Mike has informed me that "LUD" stands for "Little Ugly Diesel." The locomotive is so tiny that it apparently doesn't even get a full number…I'm reading "1/6"?



MEMBER UPDATES

From Ray Turner: Rocky Mountaineer trip from Vancouver to Banff, Sept, 12–19, 2024

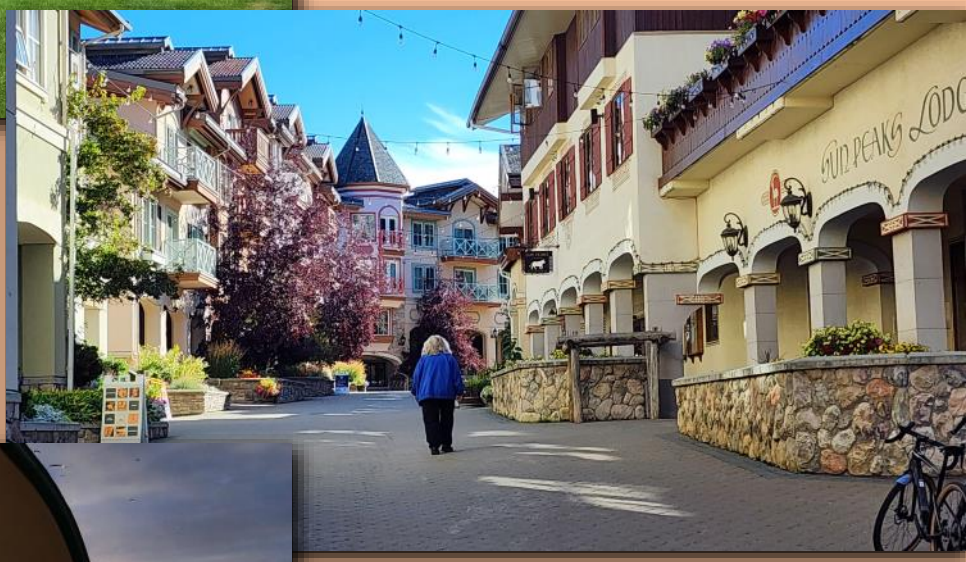
The scenery is spectacular! The food is good and plentiful. The hotels are top drawer. The villages are quaint and delightful for walking around. The crew was friendly, helpful, and a font of knowledge. We thoroughly enjoyed the trip. We left wanting more.

Much of the trip was along the Frasier and Thompson rivers. One minute we were hanging on the side of a cliff 1,000 ft. from the river below. Minutes later, we were traveling alongside the river with sheer canyon walls 1,000 ft. above our heads.

The trip includes breakfast each day on the train. Depending on the day's schedule, lunch is typically included. Since the scenery is what people come for, the train runs during the day; overnights are in first-class hotels, like the Fairmont. Our first day out was from Vancouver to Whistler arriving around noon. Whistler is a delightful village mainly used by winter skiers, with many shops, restaurants, and a museum. I had the best BLT for lunch at Carumba. It was the only day of our trip that it rained—only about an hour.

MEMBER UPDATES

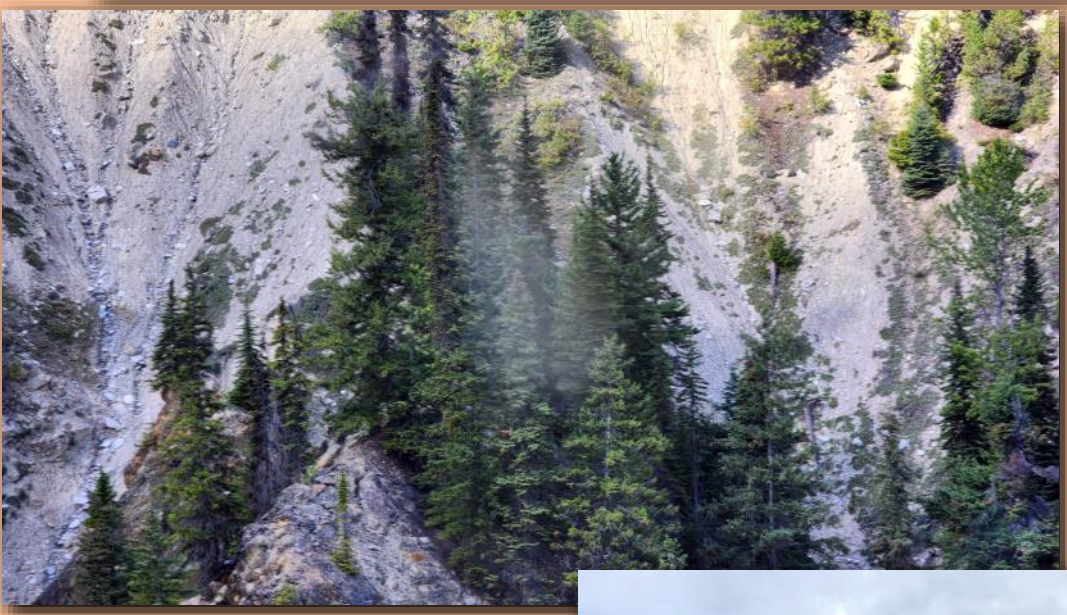
The second day the train took us to Quesnel arriving at sunset for our overnight. The third day was travel by coach to Sun Peaks, another ski resort, where we spent two nights. It was nice to have the extra day at Sun Peaks to enjoy the village—shops, restaurants, etc. Leaving Sun Peaks, the coach took us to Kamloops to meet our train for the last day. It was an all-day run from Kamloops to Banff over Kicking Horse Pass and through the spiral tunnels. We would have liked to spend an extra day in Banff, but we had a deadline for getting home. It was a fun trip!

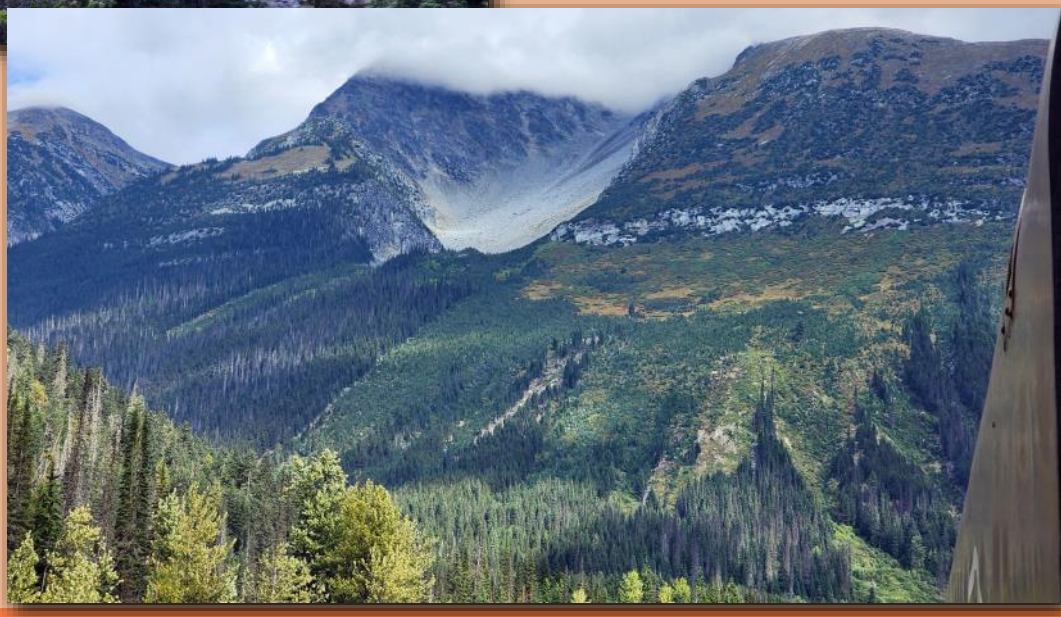


MEMBER UPDATES

Our train was originally scheduled to go from Quesnel to Jasper. About a month before our trip, we were alerted to the forest fires burning around Jasper. 1/3rd of Jasper town was destroyed. Realize that the rail lines Rocky Mountaineer uses are owned by Canadian National and Canadian Pacific railways and they had to re-route their freight trains on alternate routes. Rocky Mountaineer had to negotiate for more and different rail access to re-route their trains. Re-routing a train with perhaps 600 people on board also meant finding hotels for the nights in new cities, etc. You can imagine the long hours to make that happen! Other than re-routing our tour to end in Banff instead of Jasper (which meant us changing airline reservations), our trip came off without a hitch. Rocky Mountaineer offers several routes of varying lengths, including one in the U.S. ■

https://www.rockymountaineer.com/





MEMBER UPDATES

Richard and Melinda Murray received the *Ron Brown Memorial Steamup Enthusiasm Award* at the National Steam-up Symposium 2024 in Lodi, California. The award is named for Ron Brown, an East Coast Live Steamer who was instrumental in helping the live steam hobby grow in this country. It is a nice honor for them both. They have been so giving in so many ways to the hobby and especially for the benefit of BAGRS club members.

Some video of this event has been posted on YouTube by Northern Utah Live Steam: National Steam-up Symposium 2024.

MEMBER UPDATES

From David Perier:

Started our new layout on July 6, 2024, in Visalia California. Not our first layout but our first together. Thought some members starting a new layout might benefit from photos. Built it with 20' or bigger diameter to accommodate our Big Boy. Will have smaller diameter on the inside for the narrow gauge trains. Will have 2 levels and a water feature. Lots of room for future growth.





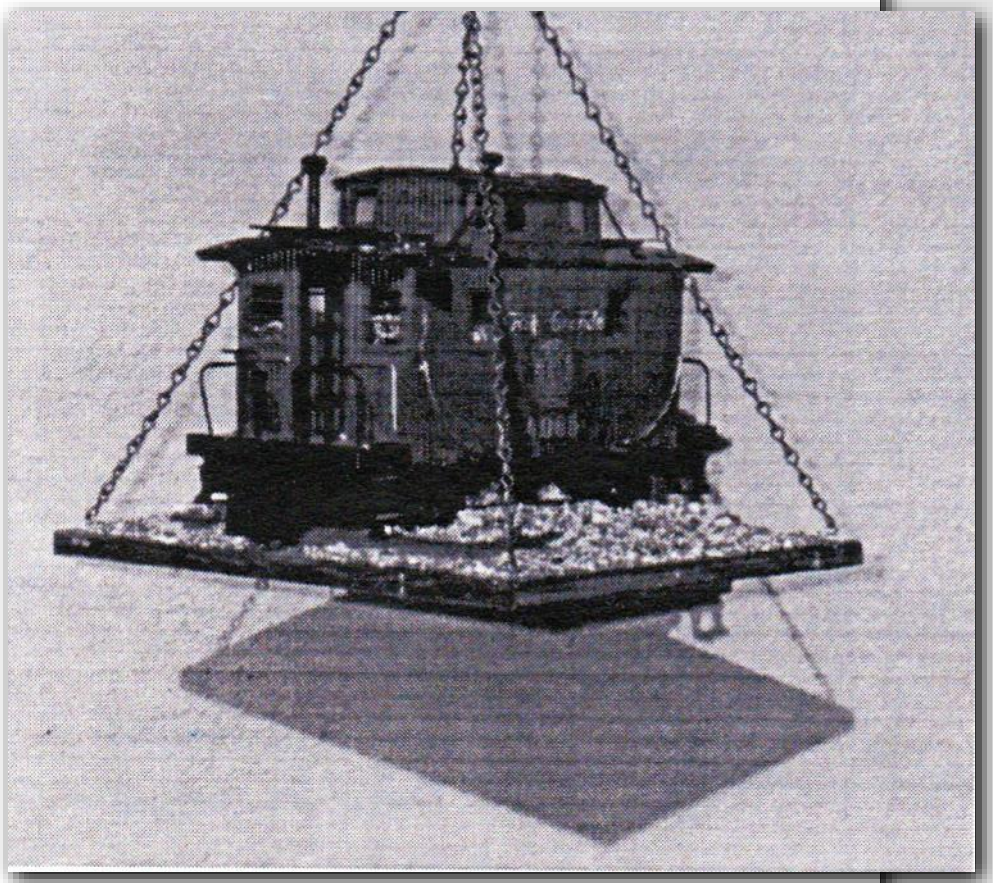

Trellis & Trestle

From the Archives

Volume X, Number 5 Editors: Joseph & Irene Zajac September/October 1997

Barbara's Birthday Bobber Bird Feeder

By Ron Green (Originally published in the September/ October 1997 *Trellis & Trestle*)



"A bird feeder," she said, when asked what she wanted for her birthday. After shopping around and not finding one to her liking, Barb asked me if I could build one. Of course, it had to be train-related. Looking at some of the train cars we had on hand, she decided on the LGB 4065 caboose.

I had some 1/16 inch clear plastic scraps and, with a bit of "by gosh and by golly," came up with this design.

Using 1/16" plastic, cut:

#1 2 pieces—2 1/4" x 1 1/2"

#2 2 pieces—2 1/2" x 1 3/8"

#3 2 pieces—3 1/8" x 1 1/8"

#4 4 pieces—3" x 1 1/4"

#5 2 pieces— 3 15/16" x 2 1/4"

Using 3/8” x 3/8” wood scraps, cut:

#6 2 pieces—2” long

#7 2 pieces—1 1/8” long

#8 2 pieces—8” long, 45 degree cut/both ends.

#9 2 pieces—7” long, 45 degree cut/both ends.

#10 Use a 12” square board for a base.

I suggest using solid wood instead of plywood. You can use a larger base, so larger birds will have room to feed, if you wish.

I used an LGB 4065 bobber caboose. If another brand or type of car or caboose is used, some modifications will have to be made for your project.

Center the caboose on the base and mark the position of the wheels. Cut grooves in the base where the wheels were marked. The grooves should be as deep as the wheel flanges.

Using the cut 3/8” scraps, pieces #8 and #9, build a rectangle seed trough in the center of the platform. This will keep the birdseed from falling to the ground.

Paint or shellac now. I used 6 coats of shellac.

I used superglue on the seed spreader. Glue pieces #1 and #2 together. See Figure A.

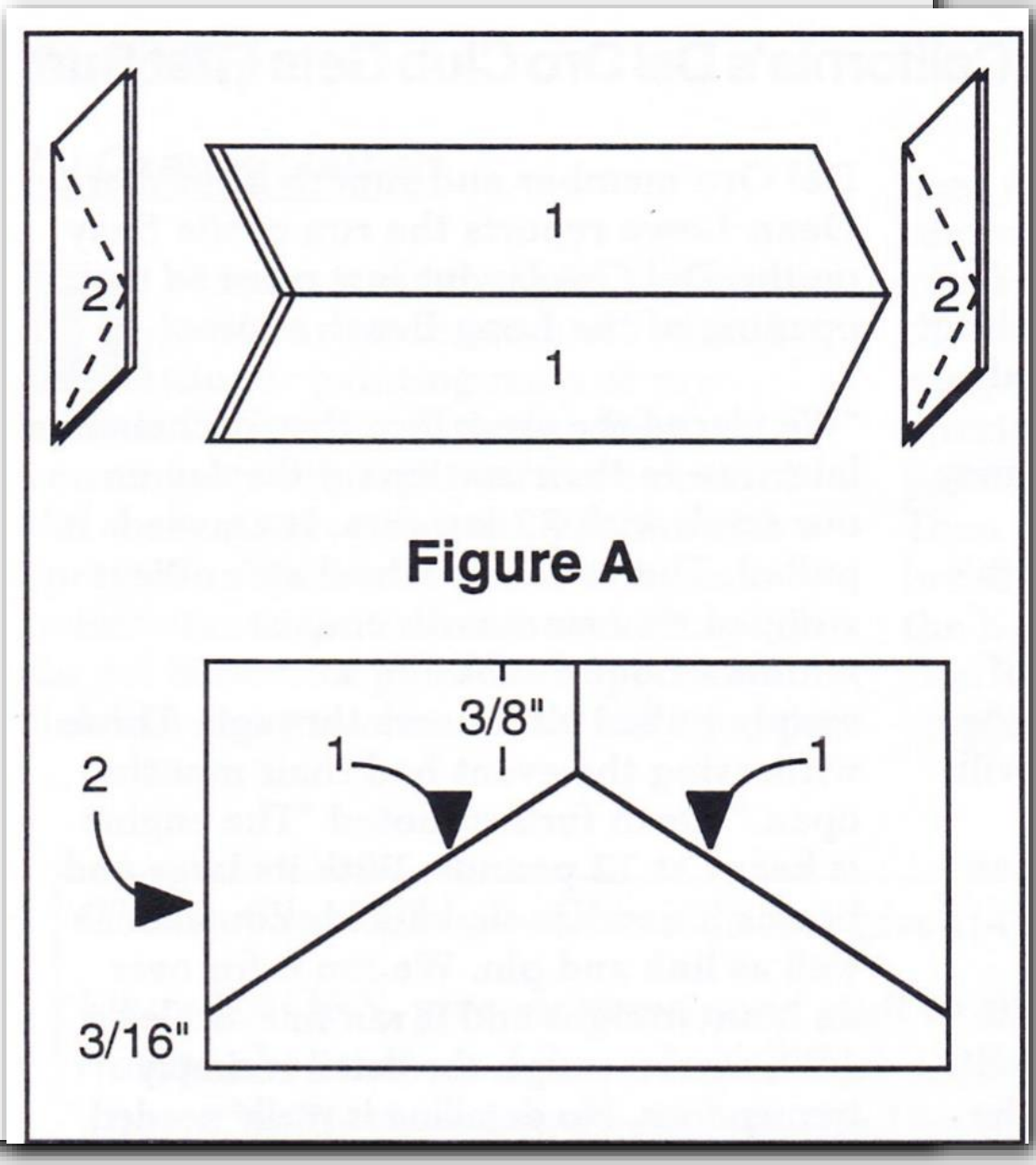
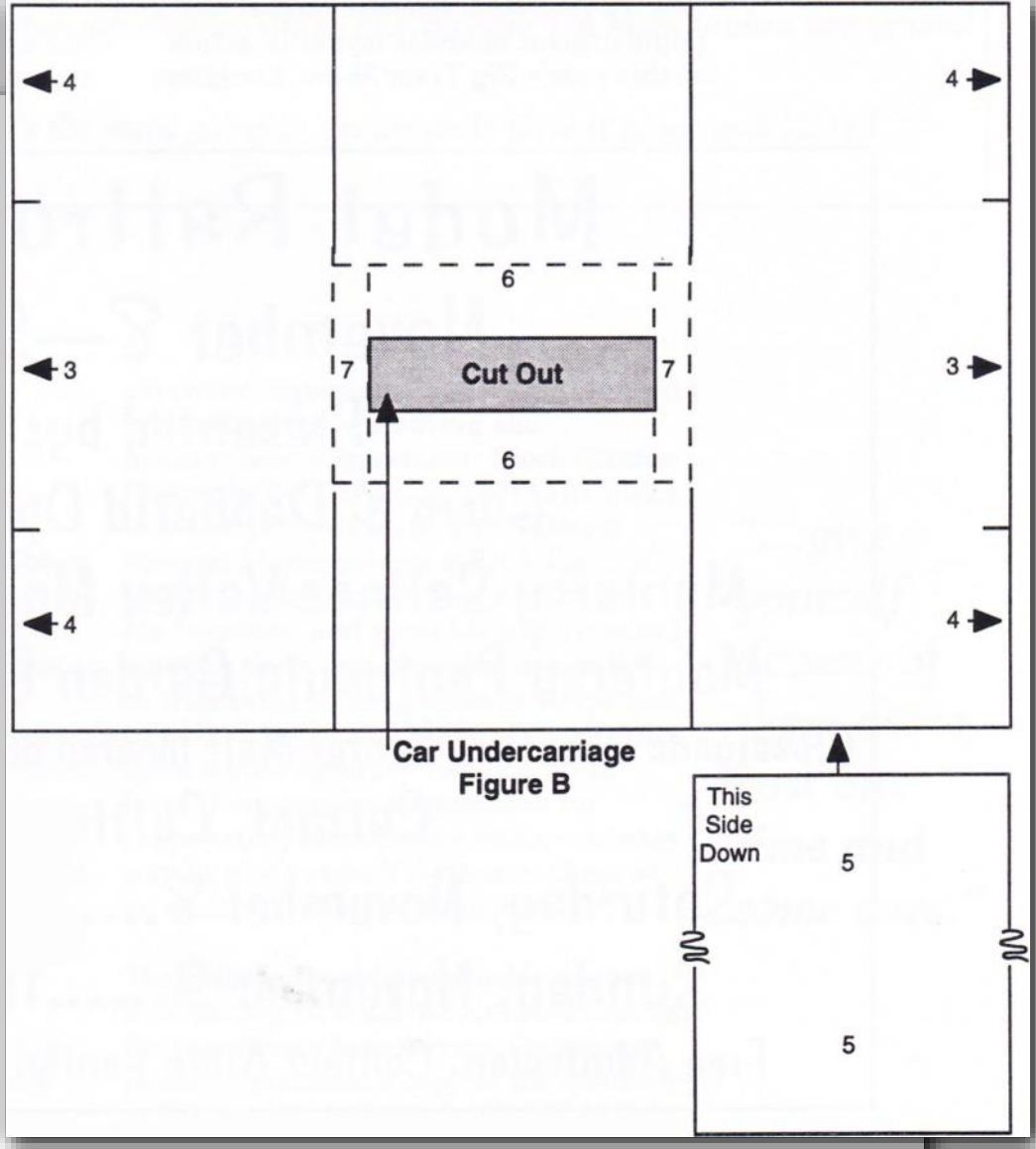


Figure A

Remove the car body from the undercarriage. See Figure B. Center pieces and #7 on the underside of the car body. Mark the inside of the rectangle and cut out the center. (The cut should be 7/16" x 2" long. Put the car body and the undercarriage together and mark the undercarriage where the cut should be. Then remove the car body and cut out the center.



Glue pieces #6 and #7 to the underside of the car body. Screw the car body and undercarriage together. (This will prevent seeds from going between the car body and the undercarriage.)

Place the seed spreader with "V" upside down into the undercarriage. ***Do not glue.*** Place the caboose onto the board and glue wheels into grooves.

Glue the side marker lights to the car body—prevents loss during cleaning.

Glue #3 pieces to the inside of the doors and #4 pieces to the inside of the windows, to keep the bird seed from spilling out.

To make the seed flow toward the center opening, place #5 pieces in both end sections inside of the caboose—outer side up and inner side down. Do not glue these pieces, since they will need to be removed occasionally for cleaning.

Remove the tabs on one side on the roof. Loading the birdseed is now an easy task.

For hanging purposes, I used five 15" lengths of #18 Jack-Steel chain—picture wire will work. Open four picture wire eyes and screw into the base of the bird feeder at each corner. Take one end of the chain and hook into the eye and close for each corner. Use an "S" hook to group the four ends and hang wherever you desire. ■

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

Central California Coast Garden Railway Society—September 2024

Central Ontario Garden Railway Association—Autumn 2024

Denver Garden Railway Society Newsletter—October 2024

Gold Coast Garden Railway Society—July 2024

Puget Sound Garden Railway Society—October 2024

Redwood Empire Garden Railway Society—October 2024

Rose City Garden Railway Society—October 2024

Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society—October 2024

The Garden Whistle New Zealand Large Scale Newsletter—September 2024

Garden Railroading News—July/August 2024

The 2025 NGRC 2025 will be hosted by the Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society.

Website coming soon at ngrc2025.org

BAGRS BOARD AND CONTACT INFORMATION

ROLE	NAME	EMAIL ADDRESS
President	Mick Spilsbury	president@bagrs.org
VP/Communications	Roger Nicholson	communications@bagrs.org
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Treasurer	Larry Silverman	treasurer@bagrs.org
Membership	Ray Turner	membership@bagrs.org
Live Steam	Rob Lenicheck	rlenicheck@yahoo.com
Director	Richard Murray	steamer060@sbcglobal.net

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

NEED A BAGRS NAME BADGE?

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THE LAST PAGE

This Southern Pacific Caboose can be found on the *El Dorado Western Railroad*, located in El Dorado California. This is very easy to get to if you want to get a good close look at a real SP caboose. A group of EDWRR cars and locomotives are parked at the Shingle Springs Station, located on Mother Lode Drive. Train rides are offered on Sundays. This caboose can also been seen on Google Street View here.

TRELLIS AND TRESTLE

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