

PGRS TRACKIN'



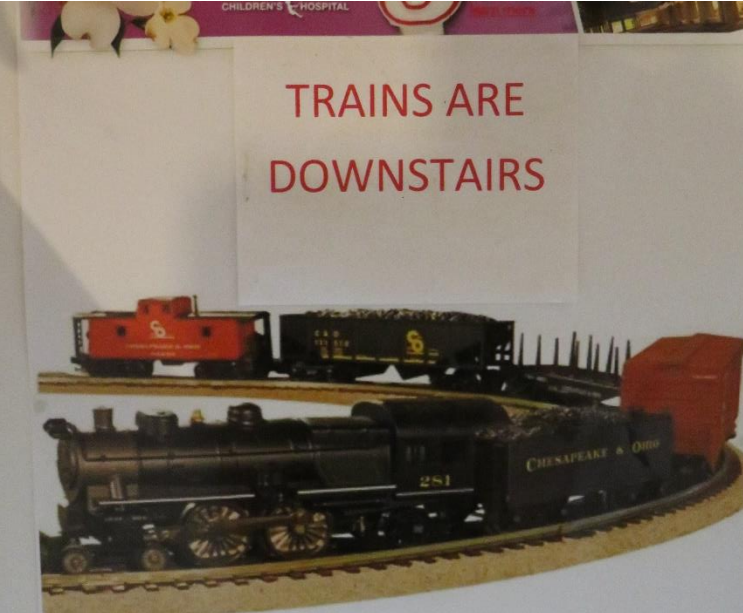
Newsletter of the Piedmont Garden Railway Society

December 2018

Editor: Scott Williams

Tim Wagner's Open House

November 3rd



Tim's TRAINS

Come see the large train set.

8:30AM - 10:30AM
1:30 - 3:30

My Toy Store
www.kennedystore.com



The Editor's Heisler pulls a load of lumber from the mill.



Les Knoll's freshly painted Shay steaming along with a logging train



The Editor's 7 ton Climax loco pulling two ore hoppers.



Larry Williams' Western Maryland RS-3 chugs out of the yard.



Part of Tim's basement LGB layout.

oo-000-oo

Retirements:

- I was surprised to read in this issue of [Garden Railways](#) that after 35 years as editor [Marc Horovitz](#) has decided to step down and will be replaced by Kent Johnson, a model railroader with 20+ years of experience Marc says.
- [Mallory Hope Ferrell](#) announced in the latest edition of Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette that after 50 years of contributing fine articles to the Gazette and its predecessor he has finally submitted his last article. His fabulous photos and excellent historical writing will be sorely missed.

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Apple Valley PVC Railroad update;

When asked by the Editor for photos Terry Ketcham reports in:

"We (Sky Mayo) have been tearing apart the PVC track roadbed and adding supports under it to stop the PVC from sagging as it has been doing from day one. Bad choice of material to use as track road bed since it has no structural support at all. So the railroad is a mess in a small section. Sky is doing one section at a time. So no photos of the layout of any sort to show."

Sorry
Terry

Sounds like a major renovation project going on in Hendersonville right now.

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Terry Ketcham also relates how he backed in to the large scale train hobby:

The other day I was thinking about how I first got involved in Large Scale Trains. I guess it goes back to sometime in the 1980s when my boss, Dan, decided it was time to retire. He was big into model trains, never got around to building a layout but had a nice collection of O scale and HO trains displayed on shelves in his finished basement.

The guys in his section took up a collection which totaled to about \$50.00 and then asked me to go to the local hobby shop and buy him something train related. We had a great Hobby shop in East Meadow Long Island called Lee's Hobby shop. They really specialized in HO scale and had a nice display of brass HO engines. I was always attracted to the brass 2 truck HO shays that were priced at \$49.95 and thought that would be a nice retirement gift for our boss. However, I spied a large yellow plastic passenger car on display behind the counter. I had never seen any train larger than O scale so I had to inquire about this strange looking passenger car. The shopkeeper told me he had just received a shipment of LGB electric engines and rolling stock, talked to me about this hobby called Garden Railroading and showed me the LGB catalog which was written in German. The passenger car was also \$49.95 and even though the shay was tempting, I ended up taking the LGB car home.

I took a Polaroid picture of the face of each of the 7 guys in our section and pasted each picture in the window of the car. However, the car had 8 windows so I took a picture of one of our Guy's butt and pasted it in the 8th window. I bought a section of LGB track, fastened it to a teak board, fastened the car to the track and presented it to Dan as his retirement gift. It was a very personal gift that I know he cherished. He always wanted to know who's butt that was in window number 8, but we never told him.

At that point I started to gain an interest in LGB trains and this strange hobby of building an electric outdoor railroad. I started to purchase LGB sectional track and laid it on pressure treated boards in my backyard. My railroad had many drawbacks such as carrying the engine and cars outside every time I wanted to run trains, only to find out they wouldn't run due to the oxidation on the brass track also the thin rail joiners would crack or split causing the interruption of the electrical flow,

Today I look back and remember the excitement I had running trains on that first loop of track and always wonder where Dan's retirement gift is now some 35 years later.

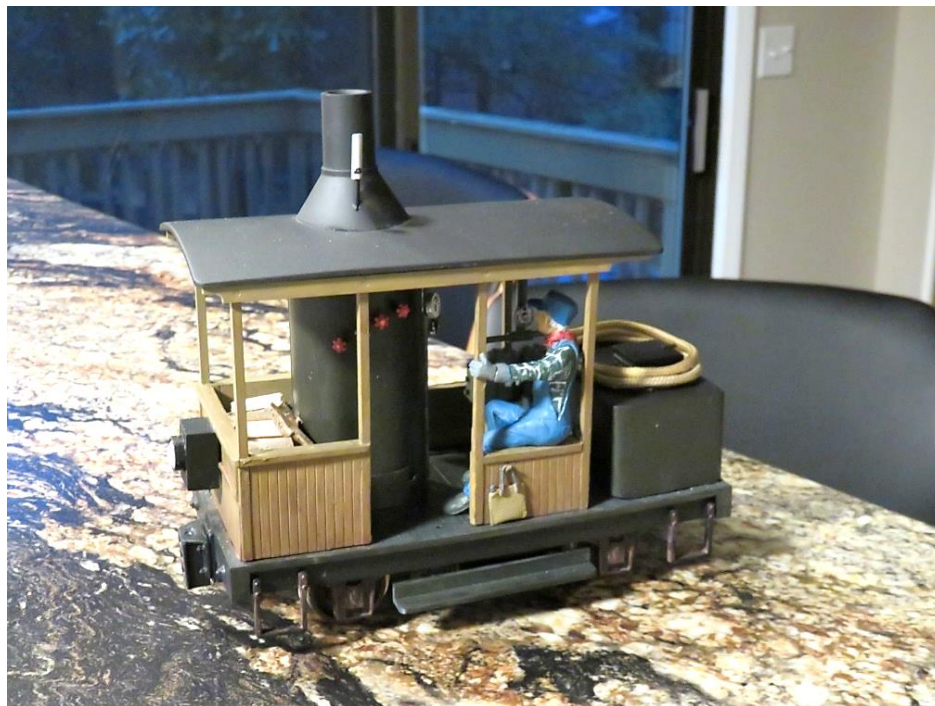
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HLW trains and “kitbashing”

Some club members were interested in my small 7 ton Climax kitbash I ran at Tim Wagner’s at his November open house. I’ve used HLW for several kitbashes.



HLW Woody Railtruck...



...becomes a 7 ton Climax loco.

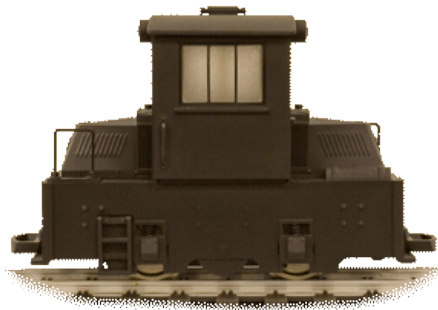
My first HLW project was just removing the stupid looking wood sides and garish paint on the Big John loco and adding Bachmann detail parts like a compressor and an air tank, additional piping and weathering it. I added an engineer and a sound card and speaker in the cab.



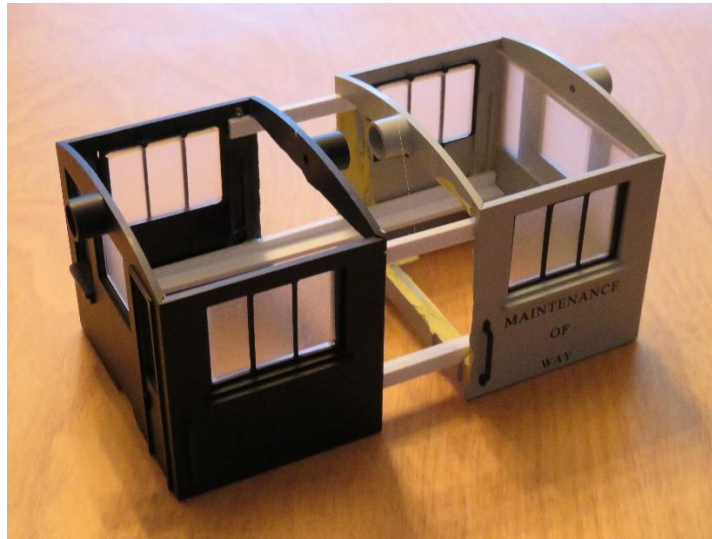
Next kitbash with HLW trains I purchased a Maintenance of Way Line car just for the truck and motorblock for the Doodlebug railcar I built last year. It cost me about 180 dollars at Reindeer pass which was about the cheapest way I could find the motorblock and trailing truck I needed to put under the Bachmann Combine car and I was able to mount them right on the Bachmann car body with very little modifications to the car or the trucks and it runs great.



I'm now using one of their Mack switchers to build a box cab with the cab that came with it and the left over one from the MOW Line Car which are identical cabs as HLW interchanges parts.



Before



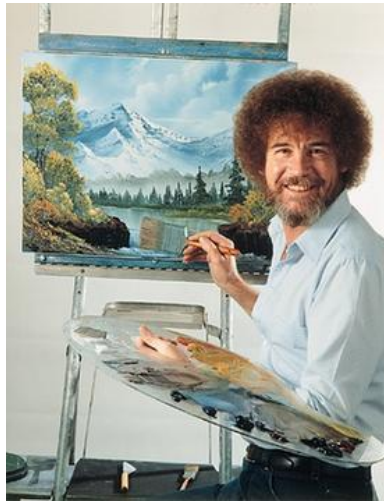
Modified cabs glued together ready for a center door section.



After paint and assembly. Next comes the detail bits.

HLW stuff is American made, still available brand new and reasonably affordable and runs forever with little or no maintenance. The locos are loosely prototypical and probably closer to 1:24 scale than any other scale but don't overlook them. They are great performers and excellent platforms for kitbashing and their little HLW mini car kits aren't even 20 bucks most places and are good platforms for little ideas. I built my logging disconnects out of four of the mini flat cars that I shortened and built upright supports for and they look and run very well.

When it comes to kitbashing I personally don't take too serious an approach to it. I don't sweat scale very much, 'if it looks right, it is right' to my eye' and there's also the "3 foot rule" to keep in mind [meaning most models are rarely viewed from closer than 3 feet away]. As to prototyping from real life I've come to realize that if you build a custom model that you dreamed up that more than likely someone in real life actually did make something very much like it at some time or another. When building something I usually start from something that did exist in reality but as the late Bruce Bates reminded us with his models and cartoons building fantasy trains can be whimsical, relaxing fun too. As I solve the kitbash project I also allow the model to steer me in different directions from maybe the original vision sometimes because it will be easier to finish it that way and sometimes because something more interesting presented itself during construction. As the public television painting show host Bob Ross would say....



"We don't make mistakes, just happy little accidents."

— Bob Ross

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Member Photos:

Please send any photos you have to srwavl@outlook.com



Terry Ketcham's working on a new model. I'm guessing this one will be for Apple Valley's RR.

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Trivia Question: One of the 'highest ranked' college sports rivalry pranks all the way back in 1896 involved a train. Does that hint ring a bell with any SEC fans?

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Building a layout the "old fashioned way".

I've finished renovating my home and now want to build some temporary layout in the backyard to enjoy before I sell the house maybe a year or two in the future. I've been looking for information building roadbed out of wood like Applied Imagination used at Biltmore for their temporary layouts. It appears they used $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood most likely and painted it to seal it and then supported it on wooden posts. I plan to try a variant of that method.

While researching how different people have approached building their layouts I came across an article on [FamilyGardenTrains](#) website called something like 'How did you build your layout.' It listed everything from trenching for gravel or concrete roadbed to different types of raised layouts. The final entry made me laugh however from **Mike Cote, of Holliston, Massachusetts:**

"I built mine the old-fashioned way...I hired a guy who builds them for a living and paid to get it done!

Hey, I like to run trains and I'm a software engineer and it was a hardware problem."

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Trivia Answer: Auburn University, first home game 1896, Nov. 7th, against Ramblin' Wreck, Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets. Georgia Tech was headed by train to Auburn in the early morning gameday hours for the matchup. The last time the two teams had met was in 1894 and Auburn dominated Tech 96-0.

An unknown number of Auburn cadets under a very dimly moonlit sky decided to give them a welcome at the station by greasing both rails for over 400 yards before and after the station with pig grease, lard and soap. The train apparently slid for over 5 miles and hiking back to town along the tracks, carrying their gear, in the dark, must have contributed to the 45-0 Auburn victory.

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Garden Railroad Design
Old Trains Wanted

Jim's Train Sales

O & G Gauge New & Used Trains

Jim Hendley

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Lionel, MTH, USA Trains, PIKO, LGB
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Fax: (828) 890-3346



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Owner / Chief Conductor

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