

PGRS TRACKIN'

Newsletter of the Piedmont Garden Railway Society

April 2019

Editor: Scott Williams

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SPRING TRAINFEST 2019



March 16th at Grace Lutheran Church's fellowship hall.

Well, fellowship is right as we certainly had a good day of that all around. We set up about 8 O'clock and folks trickled in on time and grabbed coffee and yummy doughnuts and we got started pretty promptly after 10 a.m..

Bill Huntman greeted everyone and started the club 'nuts and bolts' part of the meeting with a state of our union address. Summary: it's great. Took care of the 20 dollar dues part to Doc, nominations and motion to keep all the existing members in place with one change Jim Redmond will take over the vacancy in Directors-at-large left by Fran Monahan bowing out. Then we discussed upcoming open houses for the year [3 so far], discussed club members'

associations with other organizations in our community, our train show participation program to encourage new members to join and to increase interest in model trains in general. We also shared other ideas about things members would like to see the club address regarding large scale train modeling, possible 'field trips', encouraging participation in the Train Lover's Luncheons, possible future meeting locations to move the meetings around to different areas that might be closer to some members and encouraged more members to bring their trains to 'show n tell' at future Trainfests whatever scale they may be to show each other examples of what we've been working on. After that we took a brief break and set up for the presentations.

Our first presentation was by Larry Morton, the President of the Apple Valley Model Railroad Club. Larry had an existing fine presentation on the history of the Saluda Grade that he agreed to share with the PGRS and it was most interesting. It covered the history of attempts to cross the mountains and connect Cincinnati with Charlestown starting in the 1830's. A path was finally surveyed up a cut in the face of the mountains and after tremendous effort and loss of life a route was constructed on a steep 5% grade. Larry continued to explain how trains climbed and descended such a steep grade and the cost in lives of train crews as the heavy freights often had brake failure and crashed at the bottom on one of two steep curves. He also told of the idea to create runoff tracks and how they were managed which saved lives of train crews up until the grade was eventually bypassed with a complicated series of loops to climb the mountain at a different location. It was an excellent and thorough presentation and we are very grateful to Larry Morton for taking the time to come and share it with us.

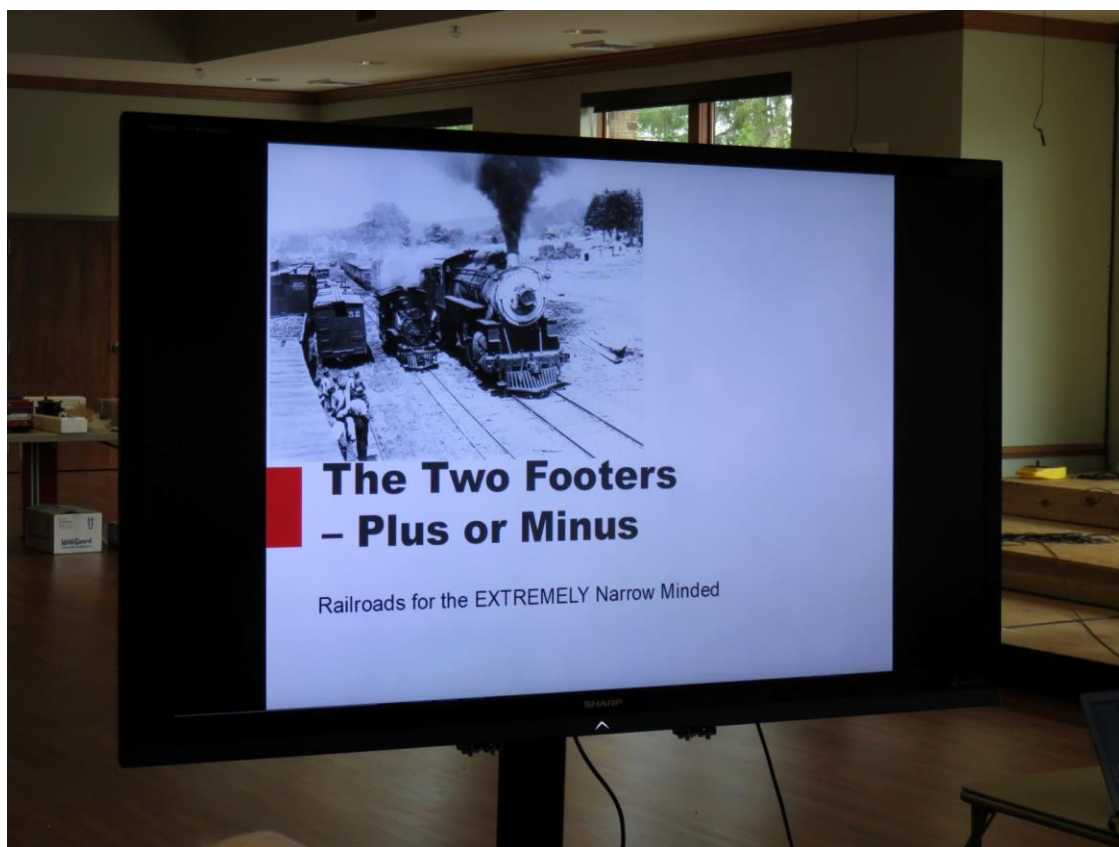


Jon Bole then demonstrated a quick and easy way to add a durable tunnel section to your garden layout. The basic construction uses easily obtainable materials like treated lumber and plywood and covering them with a waterproof membrane material which Jon personally guarantees will last for decades or he will come by your home and rebuild your tunnel for you. [Well, maybe not.] But he does swear he has used the method himself with many years of trouble-free service.



In the photo below Jon is sharing his ingenious high-tech method of tracing the curved path of his longest model train car using rubber bands, a block of wood and a Sharpie marker on to the material used for the floor of the tunnel to ensure proper clearance throughout the curved tunnel. The simplest method is quite often the best solution as he demonstrates.

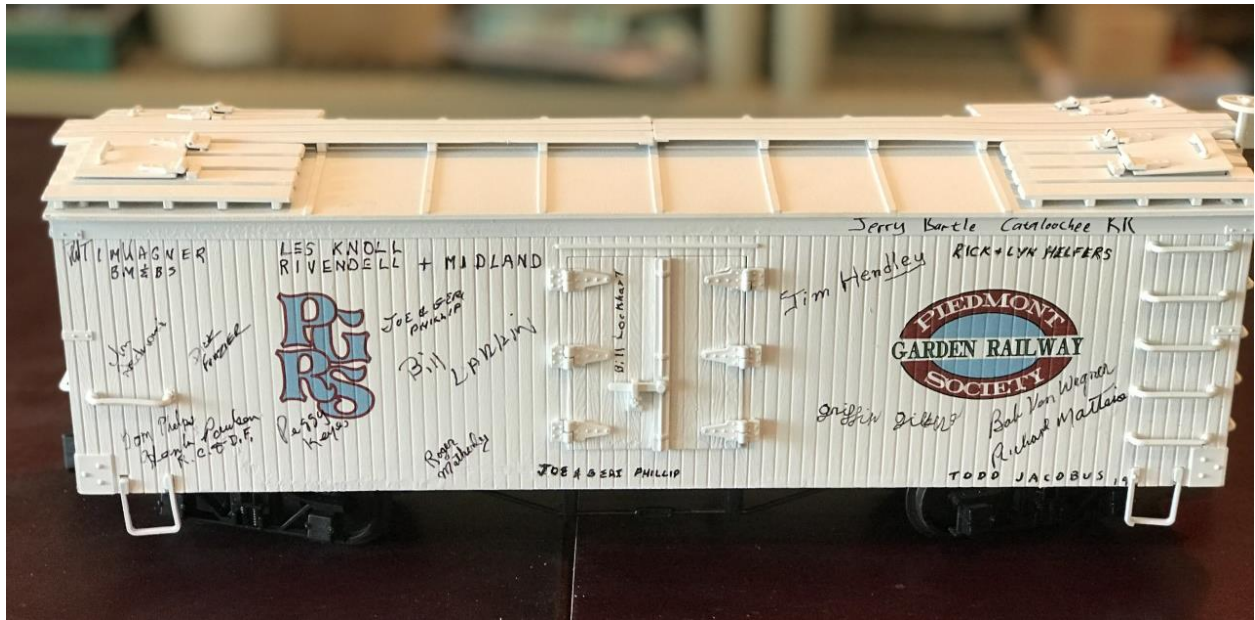




Club member Larry Williams, a devoted fan of narrow gauge railroads gave an enlightening history of the diminutive 2 foot variety. Larry had lots of photos which showed the comparison of narrow gauge to standard gauge trains [like in the photo above], told where these trains were used [all over the world], why they were used instead of standard gauge trains or the even more common 3 foot narrow gauge trains [less expensive trains and track, required less roadbed clearing and construction labor], why they fell out of favor and largely disappeared [paved roads and trucks in the 1930's allowed a cheap more flexible way to transport the same amount of goods]. It was quite interesting and gave us all a look in to a different and mostly lost way to run a railroad.

Somewhere in the middle of all that we stopped for sandwiches, salads, chips, cookies and beverages. During breaks a lot of model trains exchanged hands from the swap tables and some more folks signed the PGRS model reefer car which is still making the rounds.

After the presentations were complete we then drew all the door prizes donated by other PGRS members and a lot of folks went home with even more goodies. It appears we had about 38 people in attendance and the club has 56 members currently so not bad. We encourage more folks to attend future events though whenever possible. We're looking forward to all the open houses in 2019 and to the fall Trainfest. Send any and all ideas you have for the Fall Trainfest to Bill Huntteman or any of the board members. whuntteman@gmail.com



A side



B side

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Doc Watson's RPO railcar project:

He's at it again. He just can't stay away from passenger car conversions. This time he's decided to build an RPO (Railway Post Office) since none are available in 1:20.3 narrow gauge. He began with an Accucraft 1:20.3 coach and a laser cut styrene kit parts from GAL Line products. The kit included 2 sides, one car end and a few interior details.

He first added two more styrene layers to the sides and blank end. The interior layer was scribed to reflect horizontal wood sheathing. The additional two layers were necessary to bring the wall thickness up to the thickness of the original Accucraft walls. Here is an early-stage photo. The black piece is from the kit and the white parts are the newly added ones.



The roof had several things done to it. First the roof ceiling was stripped of all the original lighting wiring and fixtures and all the plastic protrusions were chiseled off so that the ceiling was completely smooth. Second, scribed styrene sheet material was glued to the ceiling to mimic wood strips. This is what it looked like:



Original lighting was replaced by adding 3 LEDs contained in a strip.



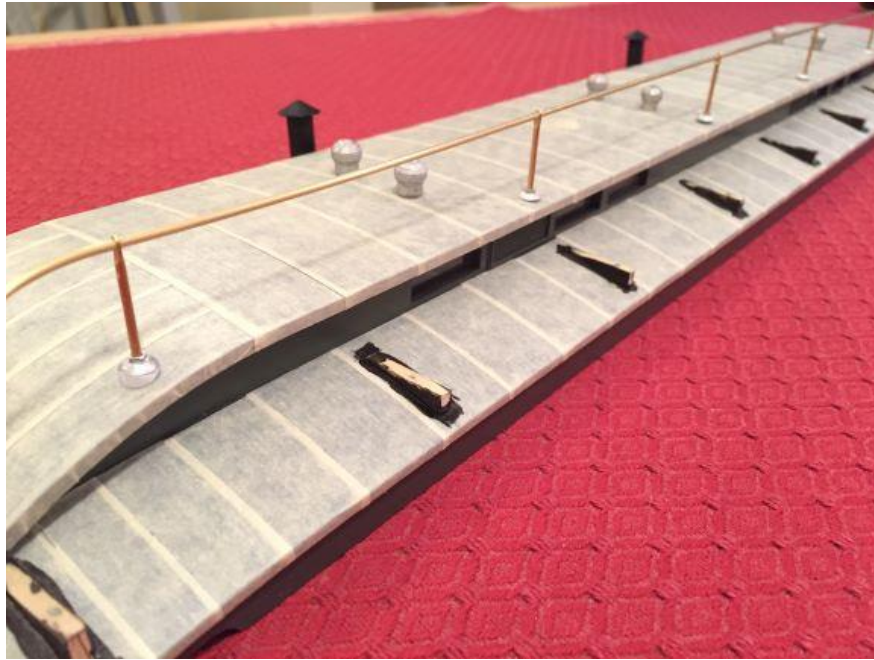
The LED strip was attached and the ceiling was painted.



The exterior of the roof was then covered with strips of masking tape to produce the effect of tarpaper. Wood pieces were added to support the roof walk.



The handrail was fabricated from brass rod and tubing with a few castings for detail.



Here's the completed roof with basswood roof walk.



While dealing with the exterior, a few additional details are worth pointing out. First is the mail bag hook. These were used to grab the mail bags hanging near a depot saving the need for stopping. It was made of brass rod and tubing. An actual hook is shown below this photo.



The second add on feature was two scratch built brass ladders used to access the roof walk.



Below are several photos of the interior details. There are still a number of details to be added later.





Doc's wife graciously sewed these mail bags. Doc made up an ink pad to label each bag.



Here is a photo of the nearly complete model. Decals and some interior details remain to be added.



GREAT WORK Doc. As always, there's fine attention to life-like detail.

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MEMBER PHOTOS



Applied Imagination train running in the Biltmore Conservatory. 6 new loops coming May 24th.



I marked out my backyard layout the first warm day in March. Construction begins soon and will be track, laid on treated deck board screwed together over treated wood blocks. A semi-permanent way to have garden trains.



High winds out West caused derailment March 13th.

Send any idea, project, photo, something you found surfing on the Internet, etc., no matter how great or small you may think them to be to your newsletter editor. We all love trains so...if it's about trains, and you've got it on your computer, chances are you won't be the only person who might enjoy reading about it.

Send your input to: srwavl@outlook.com

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Trivia Question: How did The East Tennessee & Western North Carolina RR get the nickname "Tweetsie"?

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Membership:

Please consider sharing this newsletter with friends who might be interested and if they wish to become members ask them to contact our PGRS Secretary/Treasurer for a membership form.

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Hendersonville, NC 28791

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Train Lovers Luncheons:

The current luncheons are:

Columbus Area: Meets every Third Thursday of every month at [Larkins Carolina Grill](#), 155 West Mills Street in Columbus, NC 28722. @ 1:00 PM. Contact Pete Gendron: 954-812-6270

Greater Greenville Area: Meeting the first Tuesday of every month - at 11:30. [Meeting at the A&P Restaurant on Rte 14 in Greer](#). Contact Ken Majchrzak at: kemajchrzak@gmail.com or call Ken at: 864-385-4951

****CHANGE OF VENUE Asheville Area:** Still meeting the 4th Thursday each month at 11:30 AM but the Gondolier Restaurant in east Asheville has closed permanently. We will meet this coming month at **POST 25 restaurant** on Rte. 25 in Skyland, south of Asheville along the Hendersonville Highway. There is a separate room in the rear of the dining area. Contact Tim Wagner at: 828-712-9671 for more info.

Charlotte luncheons are meeting at [Bubba's BBQ](#) 4400 Sunset Rd. (exit 16, rte. I-77). at 11:30am on the third Tuesday of each month.

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**** A reminder from Terry Ketcham that PGRS club members are invited to come by the Apple Valley Model Railroad Club in Hendersonville [the last Saturday of each month](#) to run their large scale trains on the club layout from 10 – 2 pm.**

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Trivia Answer: Most of the articles I've read on the ET&WNC attribute the nickname "Tweetsie" to visitors, like the summer camp children, remarking about the shrill sound of the little locomotives' whistles as they climbed up and down through the 'hollers' running between Johnson City TN up to the mines in Cranberry NC.

Locals joking around called it the "Eat Tators & Wear No Clothes" which to me may have been more of a commentary on the locals, not the train. The folks who worked for the railroad would respond that it stood for "Every Time and With No Complaint" or "Exquisite Trains and What Nice Conductors".

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Businesses associated with our club:

	<p>Peggy Keyes Owner / Chief Conductor RightTrackTrainMuseum@gmail.com 828/625-5551</p>
<p>The Right Track Toy Train Museum A non-profit museum to benefit Pancreatic Cancer research 2414 Memorial Hwy (Rte 64/74) Lake Lure, NC 28746 Find us on Facebook!</p>	



Garden Railroad Design
Old Trains Wanted

Jim's Train Sales
O & G Gauge New & Used Trains
Jim Hendley
Etowah, North Carolina 28729
Lionel, MTH, USA Trains, PIKO, LGB
Bridgwerks Power Supplies, Bachmann
Split-Jaw Rail Clamps, O & G Gauge Track

Email: jhh1218@att.net
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