

PGRS TRACKIN'



The Newsletter of the Piedmont Garden Railway Society

July 2023

Editor: Wayne Hamilton

Greetings

I'll end our monthly newsletter series on "So, You Want to Build a Garden Railroad?" with this issue. If there is another series we could present, please contact me. Please send any idea, project, tips, photos, or something you found surfing on the Internet, etc., no matter how great or small they may be, to your newsletter editor. Send your materials to: railman1959@aol.com

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Club Messages

The PGRS Board met on June 8th to discuss upcoming events. Our Train Fest will be held this fall either on Oct 28th or Nov. 4th @ Lutherridge in Arden from 9am to 3pm. The tentative topics are:

- How to power your railroad - Battery and track power
- How to build bench work for elevated layouts
- A Membership Show & Tell session.

More details will be shared as they are finalized.

Additionally, there will be a Run and Fun Meet for our members, which will also include a short "How-to session", at the Apple Valley Depot in Hendersonville on July 13th from 10:00am till 2pm. This will be a great opportunity to test run your trains and learn more about our hobby.

We plan to have another meeting either Sept. 9th or 16th at the Model Trains Station in Taylors, SC. Details are still being worked out.

The Board continues to ask the membership what topics or presentations they would like to see at these events. Ideas can be shared at the train lovers' luncheons, via email, or by telephone to President Huntman @ whunteman@gmail.com
Here are several Train Shows reminders for your calendar:

July 1-8: 38th National Garden Railroad Convention – Santa Clara, CA

Aug 30-Sept 2: 43rd National Narrow-Gauge Convention – Denver, CO

Sept 14-17: SER Convention - Cartersville, GA

As always, consider sharing this newsletter with friends who might be interested in our club and if they wish to become members ask them to contact our PGRS Secretary/Treasurer for a membership form or download a form from our website:

[Join Us – Piedmont Garden Railway Society](#)

Dues can be mailed to PGRS Secretary/Treasurer at:

Doc Watson
125 Mistletoe Trail
Hendersonville, NC 28791
docwatson@morrisbb.net

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Railfanning - Prototypes to inspire a garden railway layout.

By: Wayne Hamilton

The Southern Railway declined to join the start-up of Amtrak in May 1971, so some named train passenger service continued. In an ironic twist, the demise of their passenger service in the mid 1970's led to a short "named train" I could place on my layout, "The Asheville Special". The "Asheville Special" ran tri-weekly between Salisbury and Asheville. The train featured motive power of usually a single FP-7 or F-3A, with passenger cars of a Budd combine, coach, and Pullman-Standard dome. The coaches varied between a pullman green smooth-side and a fluted side stainless steel coach. The dome-coach was an ex-Wabash car, inherited by the

Southern Railway through their merger with the Central of Georgia, also along with a combine named Fort Mitchell.



Approaching Old Fort in 1975

While this train ran through spectacular mountain scenery, it operated at a financial loss, so the Asheville Special route was discontinued on August 8, 1975. It was reincarnated for a brief time as the “Skyland Special”, a weekend tourist train, which traveled just from Asheville to Old Fort, NC. Over the line between the towns of Old Fort and Ridgecrest, the railroad curves back and forth for 11 miles to gain elevation. The line crosses Mill Creek 11 times and goes through seven tunnels. It was a rail-fanning dream that ended in 1977.



Coming into Biltmore, NC



Combine Fort Mitchell



Dome 1613



Down the loops heading to Old Fort



Dome car 1613 interior

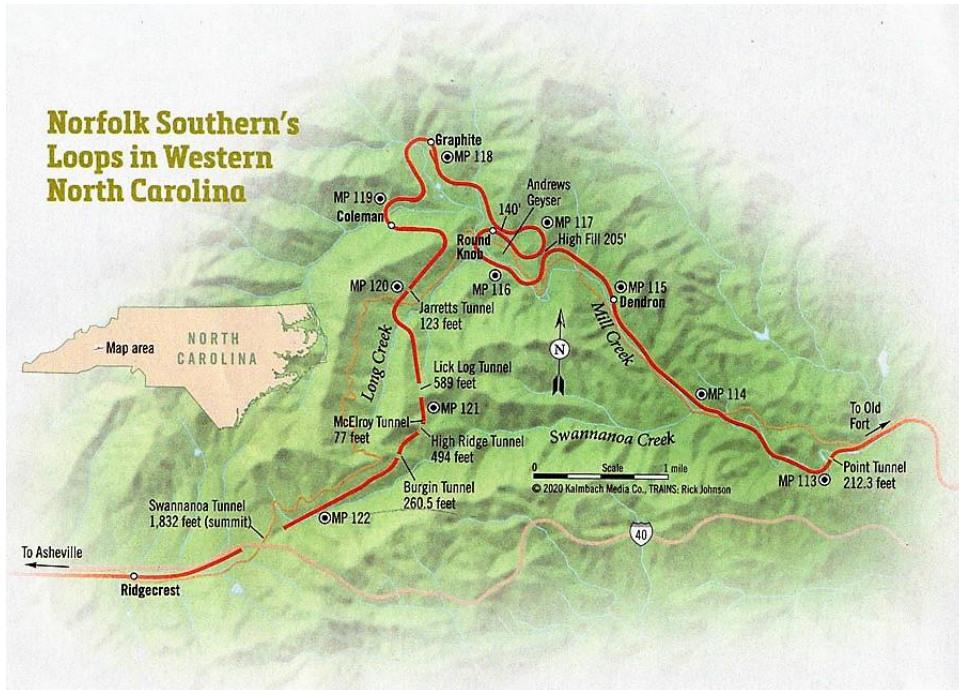
Except for the coach, no one manufactures any of these passenger car prototypes. USA Trains produces some cars that are great as a start for a decent, if not exact, kit-bash for the principal cars. I decided to model the train where I could run a consist in the fluted stainless combine and coach and the smooth-sided dome-coach. Any cars in the Southern Railway road name are now out of production. I am using the following models (Stock Number) from USA Trains for my replica of the Asheville Special.

Santa Fe Combine (R310003) to become SOU 727 - Fort Mitchell

Northern Pacific Dome-Coach (R310086) to become SOU 1613 (found on eBay)

Southern Railway Coach (R31121) SOU 804

Motive power is also from USA Trains, a passenger service equipped Southern Railway F-3A (R22359), as no FP-7 models are currently available in large scale. I can also use my Southern Railway ALCO PA-2.



Route of the Asheville Special through the Loops



Interior of the Dome car in the coach compartment



The Asheville Special near Glen Alpine, NC

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The Backshop – Modeling Tips and Projects

So, You Want to Build a Garden Railroad?

This month we are discussing outdoor structures. Structures and buildings: This is where I have seen the greatest variations with different Garden RR's. Choose your materials wisely. Cement, UV plastic, galvanized metal, stainless steel, treated or cedar wood, brass are all good. Cardboard, paper signs, plaster of Paris, unpainted iron, interior grade plywood, pine, Douglas fir, non-UV plastics and many glues will not stand up to the elements. You should have pride in your layout. Nothing detracts more than poorly constructed and poorly maintained structures. For the most part, it's better to put in landscaping, than a poorly constructed unsightly structure. Some hobbyists have over-the-top talent. They have the knowledge and time to scratch build buildings that are remarkable.

If you can't do this, then seriously consider some of the many outside rated plastic kits. Most are of fairly high quality, durable, and can be built within a reasonable time frame. They are also easy to modify to your taste. My choice is to have detailed

lightly weathered buildings. Others prefer the Wild-West more rustic look of an aged, very distressed structure. Rolling stock and buildings can also be very acceptable when given the weathered look. However, it is not the same when your buildings are obviously looking distressed and falling apart from your poor construction. Adding lights to buildings, structures, bridges, trestles, rolling stock, and plants can add a whole new dimension to your layout. This can make your layout pop at night. I 100% suggest using 12-volt LED lighting whenever possible (it lasts long, is brighter, and uses 90% less power). Understand that lighting your layout will almost double your building time.

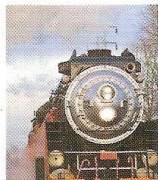
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Railroad Trivia

Steam powered logging skidders are popular modeling subjects for model railroads. What was the largest one ever built and who owned it? The answer is found later in this newsletter.

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Businesses associated with our Club

	<p>Jim's Train Sales O & G Gauge New & Used Trains Jim Hendley Etowah, North Carolina 28729 <i>Lionel, MTH, USA Trains, PIKO, LGB Bridgwerks Power Supplies, Bachmann Split-Jaw Rail Clamps, O & G Gauge Track</i></p>
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Garden Railroad Design, New and Used Track
You can now reach Jim at: hendleyjim4@gmail.com
Or....(828) 333-2523

	<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>	

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Right-Track-Toy-Train-Museum-141291999274246/>

I am planning to close the Right Track Toy Train Museum at the end of 2023. Also, I could use some help, particularly with running the trains with it being open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 1PM to 5PM and would love some help. Everything that is for sale is 50% off.

A reminder to all our members of the Train Lovers Luncheons:

The Asheville Train Lovers Luncheons are on every 2nd Thursday of the month at the Post 25 restaurant in Arden, NC at 11:30.

The Greater Greenville Train Lovers Luncheons. They are on the first Tuesday of every month at the A&P Restaurant in Greer starting at 11:30 AM.

The Columbus Luncheons at Rural Seed are held at 12:00 on the Third Thursday of each month.

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PGRS Member Stories

By Wayne Hamilton

A depot for my Murphy Branch Railroad – Part Two

Part Two is delayed as the weather is not cooperating with my outdoor painting methods. I need a few days of sunny weather to finish it up. Maybe next month!

Assembling Resin kits

So, while we wait, let's look at some tips on assembling resin kits. I'm working on a 3-D printed resin kit of a Willamette steam donkey in 1:20.3 scale. It will be the power for either a Decker or Surry-Parker scratch-built log loader. Both were used on forest railways to load logs, especially when logs had to be loaded at rapidly changing locations and stationary loading facilities would not have been as feasible. More precisely, these log loaders are so-called tunnel loaders. This means that the empty cars can pass in a tunnel below the crane and therefore no parallel track is required. Nevertheless, the crane itself is also on the track and can be driven to its place of use by rail. Many of these loaders were even self-propelled via a chain drive. I haven't really decided which type yet to build, so that's a story for a different day.



Surry-Parker Type



Decker log loader

Two of the most common materials used in 3-D printing are plastic filaments and liquid resin. Filament printing involves extruding melted plastic through a nozzle to build up the object level by level. Resin printing, on the other hand, uses light-sensitive liquid resin that's cured and solidified layer by layer using a beam of UV light, generally a laser or LED.

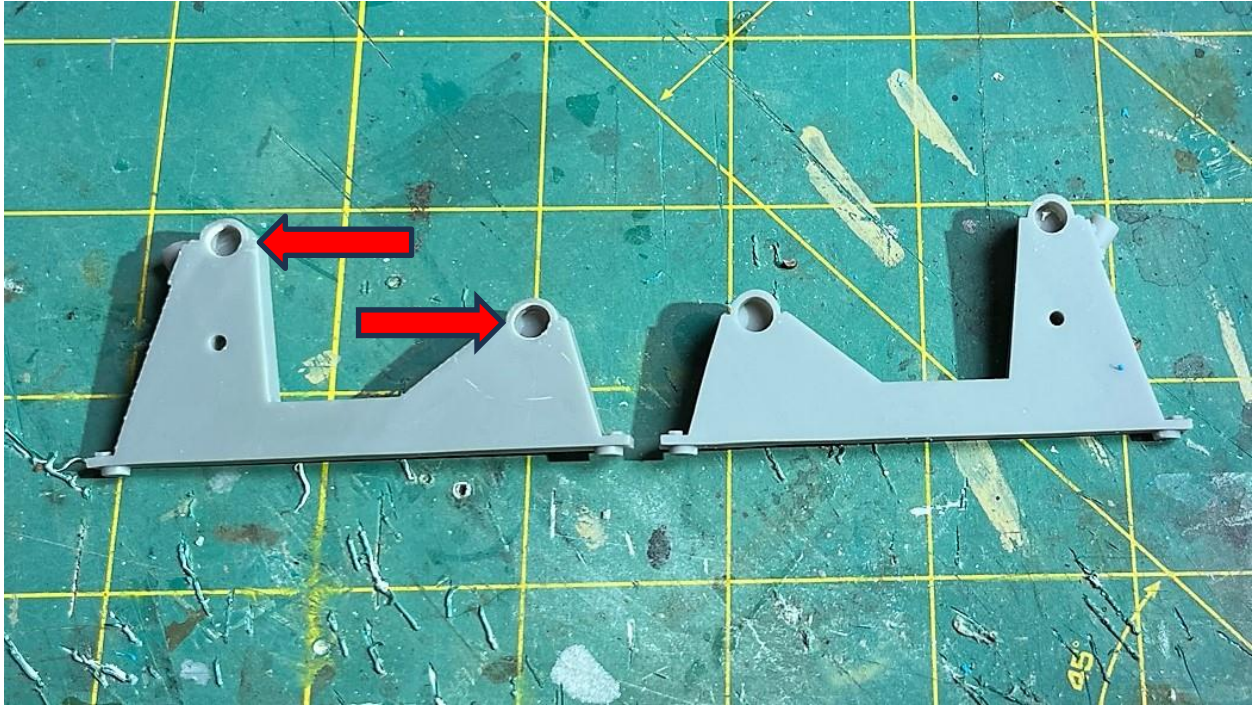


The resin kit I am starting on.

Here's my limited experience and a few tips I have picked up along the way.

1. The resin kits can arrive slightly uncured, so they are still a little soft. UV light from either a UV flashlight or the sun can complete the curing process.
2. Wash all your parts in a mild dishwashing soap like you would with any other plastic kit.
3. Be careful removing flash or sprue connections as resin parts are much more brittle than styrene or ABS plastic kits. Use the sharpest hobby knife you have.
4. Try to glue resin surface to resin surfaces, rather than painted surfaces whenever possible. Most resin kits can be assembled using CA (cyanoacrylate). Thinner CA's are useful for small parts and will flow easily with capillary action. A thicker CA can be helpful when you don't want the glue to run or when you need to fill a seam. Accelerants are also available to instantly harden the CA adhesive.
5. It is possible to get a warped part. Moderately warped pieces can be straightened without any damage. Clamp the part securely to a flat surface. Avoid over-tightening the clamps or insert a spacer to spread the pressure so you don't damage the part. Use a heat gun to gradually warm the piece. Too much heat will melt the part. Heat it slowly and evenly for a few minutes. Allow the part to cool before removing the clamps. If the part has not straightened, re-clamp and try again. Don't have a heat gun? Hot water also often works.
6. The tolerances for these kits are usually tighter than regular plastic kits. I have found the holes are a little tight and sometimes not completely round. This can be fixed using a drill bit, usually a 1/64" bigger, and a hand drill. The same is possible to true-up out of round parts with a drill and sandpaper

See the part on the left in the next photo.



These holes are not round.

7. Dust is your enemy. Wear a dust mask while sanding or sawing parts.

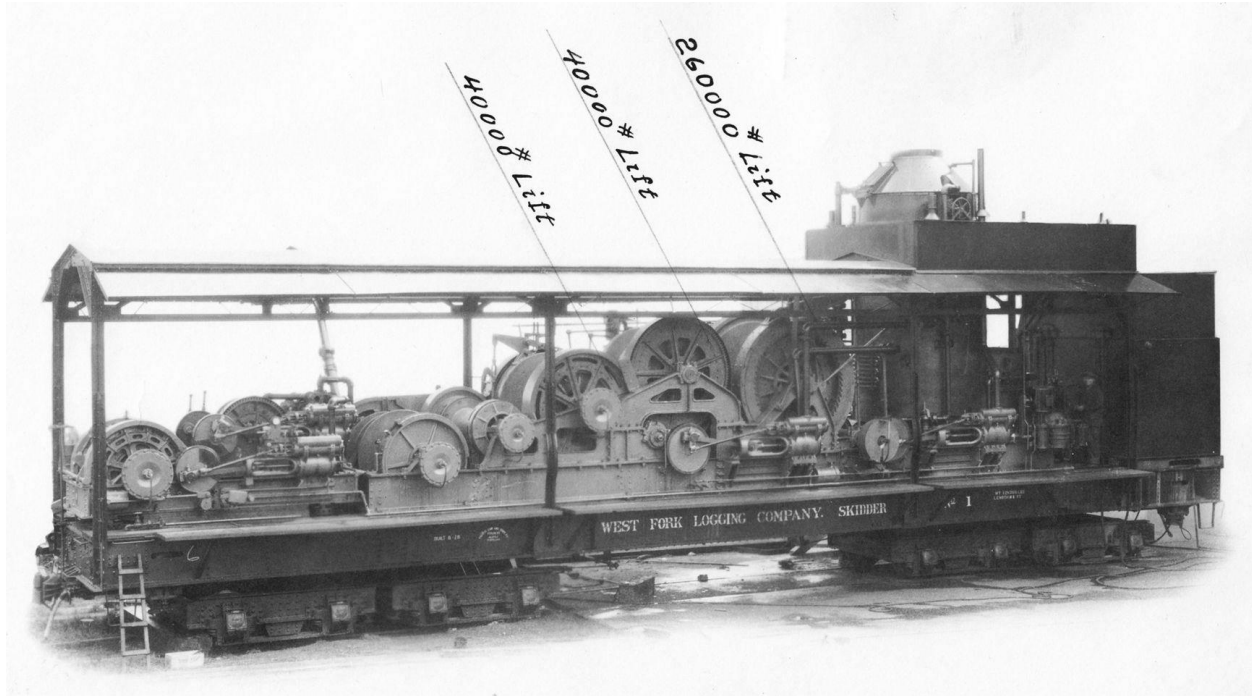
8. After sanding, rinse the parts again before painting. A primer coat is best before any finish coat. Krylon auto primer works well as does Tamiya fine surface primer.

9. Use of resin kits outdoors should be out of direct sunlight to prevent warping.

10. Lastly, this item only applies to certain kits which have a mix of parts! Some 3D plastic parts, like those from Shapeways.com, won't take paint until they are cured in Bestine. Soak them overnight and let them dry. Bestine is best known as a solvent for rubber cement. This really shows my age!!

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Railroad Trivia Answer



This was the largest tree rigged skidder ever built. The shipping weight was 342,000 lbs. It was a hybrid machine combining a slackline flyer and interlocking skidder. West Fork Logging Company used it until they couldn't make the payments, then sold it to another logging company. Notice it rides on four trucks.

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Web Bits

In this video, you can see some of the lesser-known rolling stock the world has to offer. This includes the Peacemaker Rail Garrison, Santa Fe's Super Hopper, Hogshead Tobacco Cars, and several more.

[10 Obscure Railcars Explained In 10 Minutes! - YouTube](#)

This video has strange trains and locomotives - mostly steam locomotives, but also a few others.

[Strange & Extreme TRAINS and Locomotives - PART 1 - Strange & Extreme Machines - YouTube](#)

Cartoon version and real-life version!



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