

PGRS TRACKIN'



The Newsletter of the Piedmont Garden Railway Society

June 2023

Editor: Wayne Hamilton

Greetings

We are continuing our monthly newsletter series on “So, You Want to Build a Garden Railroad?” with this issue. 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

Don't forget we're working to make the next TrainFest better. What are your thoughts about making the next TrainFest the best we ever had? Ideas can be shared at the train lovers luncheons, via email, or by telephone to President Huntman @ whuntman@gmail.com There will be a PGRS Board meeting to June 8th to discuss planning these events.

Our newest club member, Steve Berrier will be running trains with a neighborhood open house on June 17, 2023. The invitation is attached. I know this is a haul for a lot of you but with over 1100 feet of track, all battery operated, and usually running 3 trains independently, it's quite the site and sight. A couple of pictures follow, but they don't do it justice. If you can come, a RSVP would be appreciated at sdb2236@aol.com

We will be outside running trains on

Saturday, June 17, 2023

starting at 3:00 pm until dark

We will be having hotdogs with fixins

with chips and drinks for supper.

Please bring a lawn chair if you'd like.

***This train event is weather permitting.

Steven Berrier

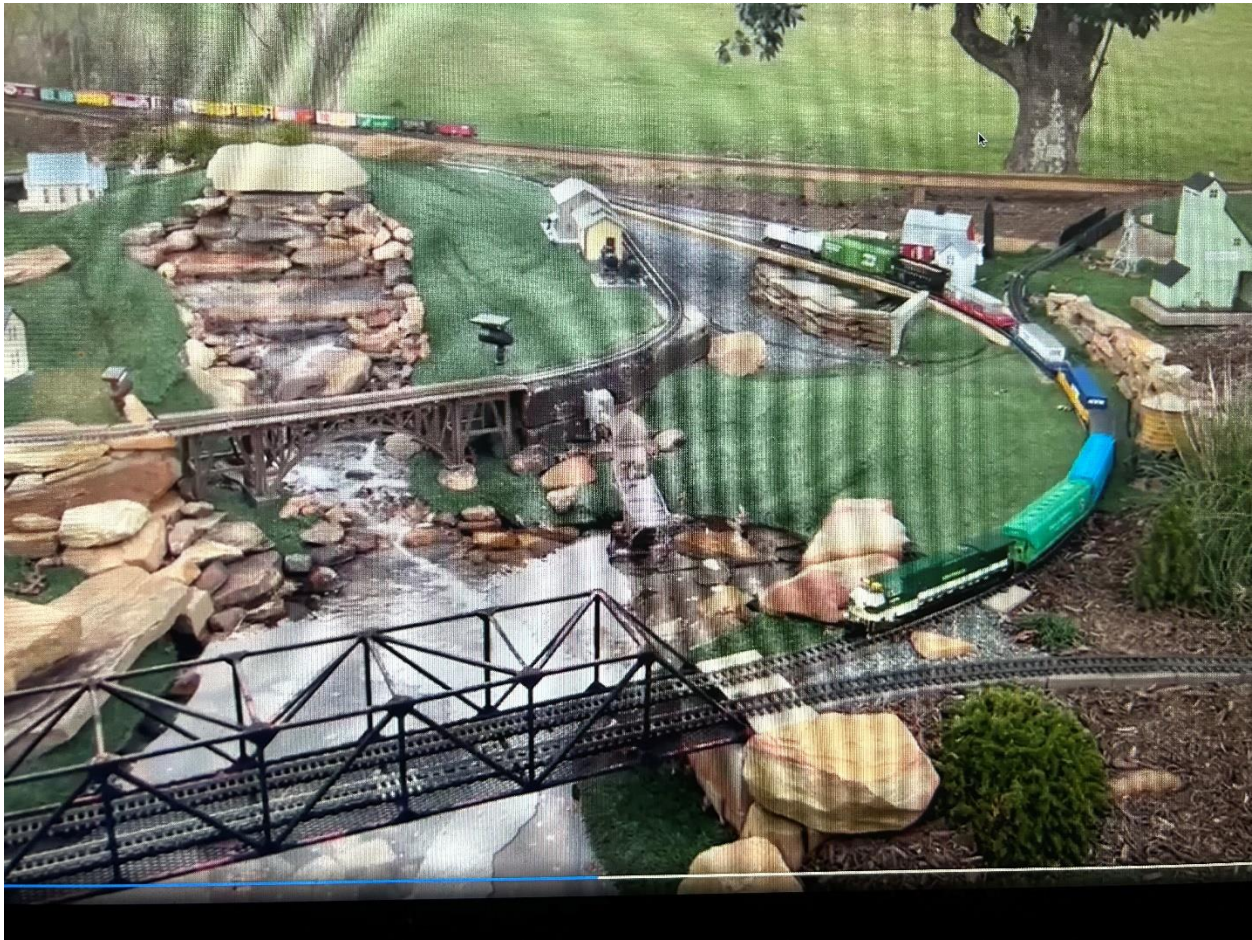
2119 Carroll Road

Germanton, NC 27019

336-813-3585

sdb2236@aol.com





Here are several Train Shows you can place on your calendar:

June 2-3: Johnson City Train Show – Johnson City Tennessee

Sept 14-17: SER Convention - Cartersville, GA

April 14-15: East Coast Large Scale Train Show – Annapolis, MD

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

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

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**

This month we visited the Little River Railroad Museum in Townsend, TN. The Townsend-in-the-Smokies Chamber of Commerce established a non-profit organization as the Little River Railroad & Lumber Company Museum in 1982. A Shay engine that had been used in the logging operation, No. 2147, was cosmetically restored for the project. The depot at Walland was moved to Townsend and memorabilia was collected from the days of the railroad and lumber operations. Today, the Little River Railroad & Lumber Company Museum still seeks to preserve the history of life on the Little River by preserving artifacts, papers, photographs and equipment of the Little River Railroad and Lumber company's operations based in Townsend. Admission is free and donations are appreciated.



Historical Marker near the entrance at 7747 E. Lamar Alexander Pkwy



“Dorothy”, Three Truck Shay 2147 is a survivor of the original railroad.



The Gift Shop (L) and the depot relocated from nearby Walland, TN (R)



Shay Marker



Railroad Car shop



Their garden railway, not operational when we visited.



Cab Access to Shay



American Hoist and Derrick Log loader

The museum staff is all volunteer and very knowledgeable of the area history. It was said that Shay 2147 was the prototype for the the Bachmann G scale model. There are couple of cars undergoing restoration work including a camp car and a caboose.

There several good books on the history of the railroad and lumber company including *Last Train to Elkmont: A Look Back at Life on Little River in the Great Smoky Mountains* by Vic Weals and *Whistle Over The Mountain: Timber, Track & Trails in the Tennessee Smokies* by Ronald G Schmidt and William S. Hooks.

I have these books in my library for loan if you're not inclined to purchase them for yourself.



Portable Frick Steam Engine display



Museum Site overview

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The Backshop – Modeling Tips and Projects

So, You Want to Build a Garden Railroad?

Let's talk this month about Track Ballast for on the ground trackwork. Everyone has their favorite method here. There is even a difference of opinion about whether it should be "frozen" glued in place or free. Glued ballast will stay in place and stay neater. However, your track should be able to expand and contract with the weather, so I recommend leaving it free floating. I have seen "crusher fines" used from gravel suppliers, but the smallest ballast rocks I could find was paver base stone. This is like laying patio pavers. You can use larger gravel for the needed drainage, lay your track, then ballast with the paver base. Some even use polymeric sand mixed in with the paver base to lock the track in place. Again, a patio method for locking the pavers. There are many other methods, which can be found on the web. I have included a few links to some of the videos:

[Garden Railway. Keeping Your Ballast in Place - YouTube](#)

[TRACK INSTALLATION for my LGB Garden Railway! - YouTube](#)

[How To Lay Track on a Garden Railroad - YouTube](#)

[GardenTrains: a secret and cheap way to get ballast for your garden railroad - YouTube](#)

Tools of the Train: I have found these tools very helpful:

1. Full set of garden tools: Wheelbarrow; several different shovels (trowels to large); picks; rakes; etc.
2. Cordless drill with regular drill bits & a micro drill bit set.
3. Screwdriver sets: Full sized Flathead & Phillips and a complete Miniature Set.
4. Cordless Angle Grinder: Many uses including cutting rails.
5. A Torpedo level and a 6' level.
6. Variable Wattage soldering iron with multiple tips for soldering track joints.
7. Pole Sander to clean track.
8. Some type of track bender.

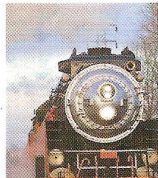
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Railroad Trivia

Prior to the opening of the transcontinental railroad, it took four to six months to travel 2000 miles from the Missouri River to California by wagon. When did construction begin and when was it completed? The answer is found later in this newsletter.

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Businesses associated with our Club

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|---|--|
|  | <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 One



Many of us have built a POLA/LGB 907 Silverton Station. As usual, I can't be satisfied with a straight out of the box build. I decided to repaint it in a more Southern Railway style depot paint scheme, add some details and lighting, and a "shadow box" interior at the baggage section of the building. Here's my progress so far.



First, the prototype paint scheme inspiration, the Old Fort Depot



Track side



Street side



The shadow box baggage area and mockup for lighting below.





So of course, I built a matching water tank too.

Both these need finishing touches, details, and weathering. I post the completed projects in next month's newsletter.

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Railroad Trivia Answer

January 1863 – Central Pacific Railroad breaks ground on its portion of the railroad at Sacramento, California; the first rail is laid in October 1863.

December 1863 – Union Pacific Railroad breaks ground on its portion of the railroad in Omaha, Nebraska; due to the Civil War, the first rail is not laid until July 1865.

April 1868 – the Union Pacific reaches its highest altitude 8,242 feet above sea level at Sherman Pass, Wyoming.

April 28, 1869 – a record of 10 miles of track were laid in a single day by the Central Pacific crews.

May 10, 1869 – the last rail is laid in the Golden Spike Ceremony at Promontory Point, Utah.

Total miles of track laid 1,776: 690 miles by the Central Pacific and 1086 by the Union Pacific. The Central Pacific Railroad blasted a total of 15 tunnels through the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

It took Chinese workers on the Central Pacific fifteen months to drill and blast through 1,659 ft of rock to complete the Summit Tunnel at Donner Pass in Sierra Nevada Mountains. Summit Tunnel is the highest point on the Central Pacific track. The Central Pacific built 40 miles of snow sheds to keep blizzards from blocking the tracks. To meet their manpower needs, both railroads employed immigrants to lay the track and blast the tunnels. The Central Pacific hired more than 13,000 Chinese laborers and Union Pacific employed 8,000 Irish, German, and Italian laborers.

In 1870 it took approximately seven days and cost as little as \$65 for a ticket on the transcontinental line from New York to San Francisco; \$136 for first class in a Pullman sleeping car; \$110 for second class; and \$65 for a space on a third- or "emigrant"-class bench.

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Web Bits

You might think that all train cars converted into dwellings look the same, but there's a lot of variety even in this niche. Each train car brings a unique flavor, given by its original location, history, and build.

In this case, we're talking about an old American train car that circulated from 1909 to around 1955 on the Washington Idaho & Montana Railway. According to the ones who restored it and turned it into a tiny home, this is car number 306, and it was purchased from the American Car and Foundry Co.

It took half of a year, right when the pandemic was starting to spread in 2020, to move and restore the vintage train car. It's one of the most beautifully-restored train cars out there, with a classic interior, rich colors, and a cozy atmosphere that matches its past. The former train car now reveals a bedroom and a bathroom, a living room, a small kitchen, and a dining area.



Not just a tiny home but also an isolated retreat, this train car is located in Deary, Idaho, surrounded by trees and wheat fields. Adding to the vintage charm is a recreated depot roof, unusual for these types of restorations, as part of a covered porch that surrounds the train car.



Inside, there's no TV, but there's Wi-Fi and a coffee maker, which should be enough for "modern" guests who need a break from the busy city life. For those who feel drawn to it, this charming tiny house can be booked through Airbnb:

[Restored 1909 Train Carriage on 145 Acres - Trains for Rent in Deary, Idaho, United States - Airbnb](#)

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