

# PGRS TRACKIN'



## The Newsletter of the Piedmont Garden Railway Society

**May 2025**

### **EDITOR'S GREETING**

Greetings. This month's issue may be your last, if you have not mailed in your annual dues. Please do so as soon as possible. I would like to extend thanks to all the presenters at our Spring Train Fest and all our members who worked to make it a success. Always consider being a newsletter contributors as well.



### **OUR CLUB'S MISSION**

**Our mission is to promote and to further the enjoyment of large scale model railroading among its members, their families and their guests, as well as the public at large.**

### **Society Officers**

**Bill Massey – President**  
[coachbillmassey@aol.com](mailto:coachbillmassey@aol.com)  
**Vacant – Vice President**

**Jim Redmond– Secretary / Treasurer**  
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#### **SOCIETY WEB PAGE**

[WWW.PIEDMONTGARDENRAILWAY.ORG](http://WWW.PIEDMONTGARDENRAILWAY.ORG)



## CLUB NEWS

Our Spring Train Fest was a great success this year. Everyone attending Train Fest renewed their PGRS membership and special thanks to Jim Redmond's grandson, Griffin Gilbert, who verified and updated our 2025 directory information. Past club officers were honored with certificates of appreciation for their service to the club. New elections were held. Congratulations to our new President Bill Massey.



Past President Huntman



Past Sec/Tres. Doc Watson (R)  
with PGRS President Massey



Above left, Jeffery Meadowcroft, shared his expertise on European train travels including Switzerland. While above right, Larry Morton presented how the Southern Railway operated on the famous Saluda grade between Asheville and Old Fort, NC.



## CLUB NEWS - Continued



Scott Williams (above) gave an excellent presentation on why we should consider a Apple Valley MRR Club membership, as they already host a train lovers lunch for us and allow us to run trains on their G scale layout. The afternoon break sessions allowed to speak with members on their projects and improve our modeling skills. A member survey was conducted during the meeting to improve future newsletters and Train Fests. Those results will be summarized in next month's newsletter. Overall, a fantastic Train Fest.

We would especially like to emphasize that the first Thursday of each month is the Asheville Train Lovers Luncheon. This open house at Apple Valley Model RR is open to all PGRS members and you are welcome to bring your trains to the Hendersonville Depot from 10 to 2 pm.

This provides an opportunity for members of the PGRS that may have trains, either DC or Battery Power, but that maybe have no layout to run them on. Please avail yourselves in this opportunity to run your trains and interact more with like-minded train aficionados. Even if you don't



## **CLUB NEWS - Continued**

have any model trains, the AVMRR club has G scale equipment you can run to learn more about our hobby and just have fun. This is a pretty nice perk that is being encouraged by those who are members of both clubs. The Apple Valley Model RR club members have been 'on board' with allowing us, the PGRS members, to come and enjoy their facilities. Please consider joining both clubs.



**XXX**

Speaking of clubs, our PGRS dues of \$20.00 were collected at Train Fest for the 2025 year. If you forgot or were unable to attend, you can mail in your dues to Jim Redmond. Don't forget!

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](#) or contact:

Jim Redmond  
PGRS Secretary/Treasurer  
14 Fountainview Terrace #202  
Greenville, SC 29607

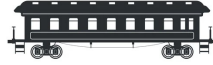


## **CLUB NEWS Continued**

### **2025 Train Show Calendar reminders:**

**RLD Hobbies Spring Open House** May 1-3, 2025 at RLD Hobbies 873 Bunkhouser Street  
Albion, IL 62806 Website: [www.rldhobbies.com](http://www.rldhobbies.com)

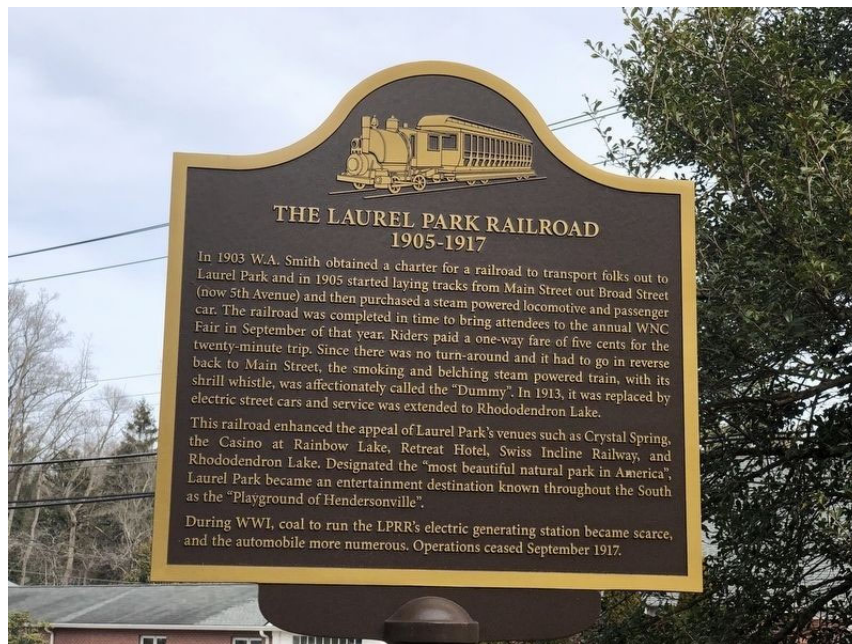
**Music City Summer Train Show** May 10, 2025 9am – 4pm (Central) at Made in Tennessee  
Building 945 Baddour Parkway Lebanon, TN 37087



### **RAILROAD TRIVIA QUESTION**

Older rolling stock, such as box cars or flat cars, were once provided with poling pockets. Their use is not allowed now. What is a poling pocket and what were they used for? The answer is found later in this newsletter.

### **RAIL-FANNING PROTOTYPES TO INSPIRE A GARDEN RAILWAY PROJECT**



#### **The Laurel Park Railroad.**

This historical marker is in Laurel Park, North Carolina, in Henderson County. It is at the intersection of Canal Drive and Laurel Park Highway, on the right when traveling north on Canal Drive.

## RAILFANNING— Continued

In 1903 W.A. Smith obtained a charter for a railroad to transport folks out to Laurel Park and in 1905 started laying tracks from Main Street out Broad Street (now 5th Avenue) and then purchased a steam powered locomotive and passenger car. The railroad was completed in time to bring attendees to the annual WNC Fair in September of that year. Riders paid a one-way fare of five cents for the twenty-minute trip. Since there was no turn-around and it had to go in reverse back to Main Street, the smoking and belching steam powered train, with its shrill whistle, was affectionately called the “Dummy”. In 1913, it was replaced by electric street cars and service was extended to Rhododendron Lake.



A dummy engine was a steam engine enclosed in a wooden box so that it would look like a coach. This was common then, when a train operated on city streets. They thought this would be less likely to frighten horses.

In 1903, the rail line followed Fifth Avenue in Hendersonville to Rainbow Lake, where day-trippers and summer visitors enjoyed swimming, boating, dancing, camping and casino gambling in Laurel Park. Later, another rail line and a canal connected Rainbow Lake with Laurel Lake (now Laurel Park Lake), and a counter-balanced railway took sightseers from Crystal Spring (near Rainbow Lake) to an observation tower.



## **RAILFANNING— Continued**

This train used to run from downtown Hendersonville, Main Street to Laurel Park. You could get on the train at the corner Main Street, in front of Hunter's Pharmacy, then ride up the north side of 5th Avenue at speeds up to 25 miles per hour.

W. A. Smith, the developer Laurel Park, got the franchise to put in train service in 1904, the tracks were laid and the train began operation by the spring of 1905. For 5¢ you could ride in the open-air car to Rainbow Lake. In high season, a flat car was towed behind to bring luggage and other goods up the mountain. The train had no turn-around. It backed back down the track.

At first they used a 25-horsepower wood-burning locomotive, then switched to coal-burning. Eventually, a steam electric plant was built and the train was converted to an electric street car. The car carried up to 50 people. It operated round trips every 30 minutes 9:00 AM till 11:00 PM from June first till the first Monday in September.



The route went up Fifth Avenue. It made a sharp right turn onto White Pine Drive and a left on what is now Crystal Springs Drive. It stopped at a Dance Pavilion on the edge of Rainbow Lake.

## RAILFANNING— Continued



From there you could take the funicular style railroad up to an observation tower. Sometimes the car would jump the track at the curve by White Pine. The passengers would get off, lift the wheels back onto the tracks and finish their trip.

It is said that the train made as much as \$600 a day during season. At 5 cents each, that's a lot of passengers!

As more and more people got automobiles, the train was discontinued. It was replaced by Jitney buses. A fleet of Model T touring cars ran every 15 minutes from Hendersonville and Laurel Park during the summer.

During WWI, coal to run the LPRR's electric generating station became scarce, and the automobile more numerous. Operations ceased in September of 1917.



## RAILFANNING— Continued

If you are looking for a small prototype for a garden railway model, this could be a great start.

The steam “dummy” could a LGB 0-4-0 Porter coupled with a coach by LGB or Bachmann.



The later years of the this line could be replicated by using a LGB or Bachmann trolley.



The track plan for this starter garden railway could be a simple loop or a shelf style point-to-point railroad. A quick E-bay search shows these models are still available.



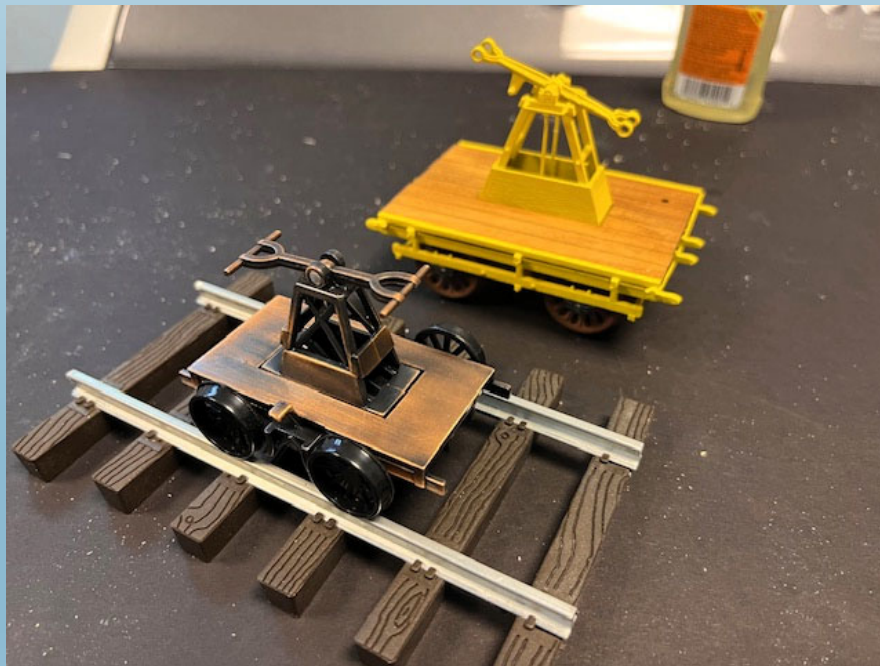
## **THE BACKSHOP**

### **MODELING PROJECTS AND TIPS**

Another quick update on my hand car and it's shed. Of course I found a similar model hand car in 1/24 scale on Amazon, which is also a pencil sharpener. What a deal for only \$9.93.



It's not as accurate as my 3-D kit, but with a repaint and some detailing it could pass the three foot rule.



## THE BACKSHOP

### MODELING PROJECTS AND TIPS

#### Continued

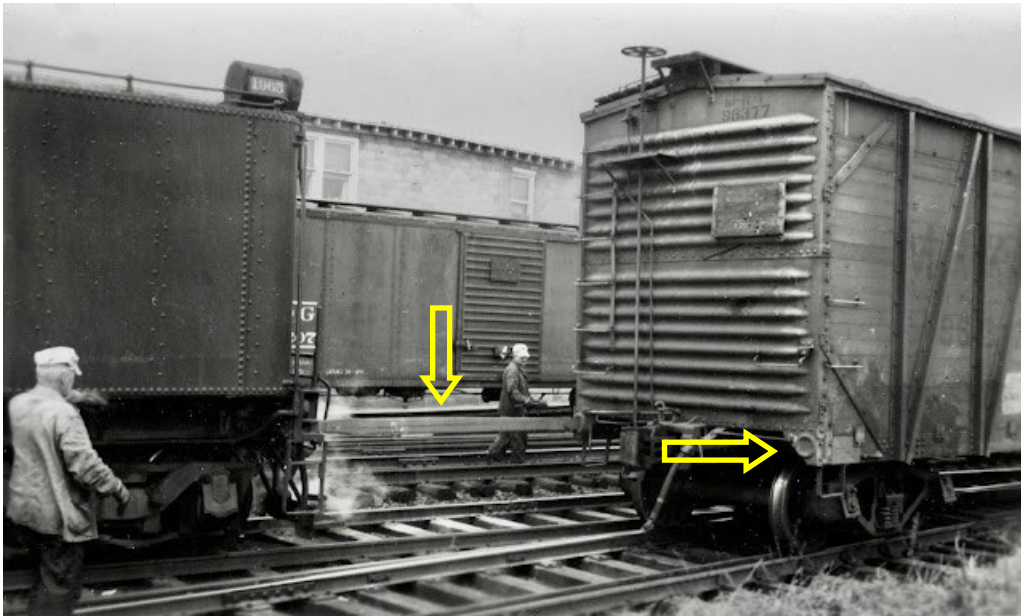
The hand car shed is a cast resin kit. It is not designed to have the doors in an open position, but I decided to assemble it with doors open so it'll have an interior and floor.

I used basswood strips which I pre-stained before cutting to length and gluing to the walls and floor. The floor rails are code 250 aluminum rail. Here is my progress so far. Still a ways to go. Hopefully, I'll be done next month.



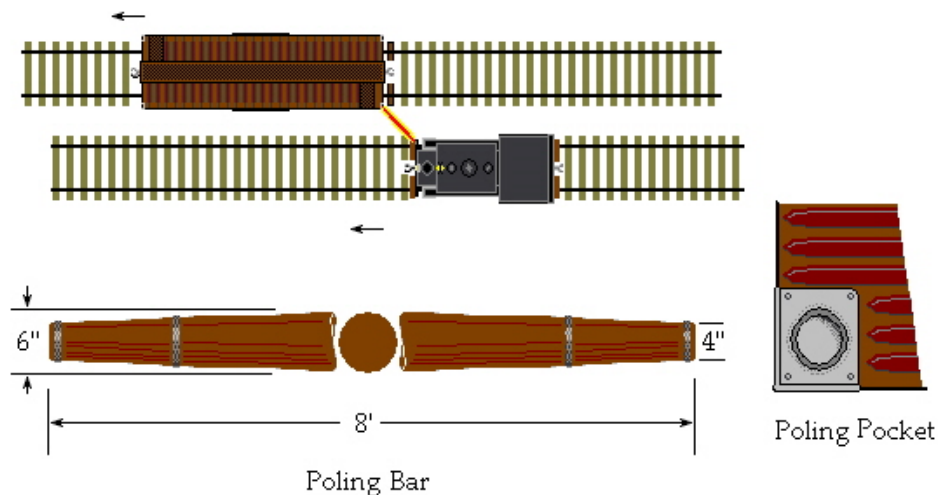


## RAILROAD TRIVIA ANSWER

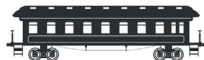


Poling pockets, dimples on locomotives and railroad cars, were used in a now-outdated practice called "poling" to move cars on adjacent tracks. A wooden pole would be inserted into the pocket on the locomotive, and the other end into a similar pocket on the car being moved. This allowed the locomotive to push the car sideways onto a different track.

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Oddly, this practice was never banned by the FRA or ICC. This method of moving freight cars has been replaced by using a reinforced sling (tow cable).



## WEB BYTES

### Links to Resources & Information

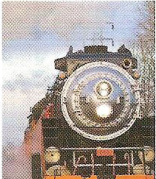
Railroad poling video information: [A Crazy Unsafe Thing Called Poling](#)

[Amazon.com : Treasure Gurus 1:24 Scale G Gauge Pump Trolley Hand Car Model Train Accessory Pencil Sharpener : Office Products](#)

Great Smoky Mtn RR— Rail-Fest May 16-18, 2025 [Home](#) | [Great Smoky Mountains Railroad](#)



## BUSINESSES ASSOCIATED WITH OUR CLUB

	<p><b>Jim's Train Sales</b> O &amp; G Gauge New &amp; Used Trains <b>Jim Hendley</b> Etowah, North Carolina 28729 <i>Lionel, MTH, USA Trains, PIKO, LGB Bridgwerks Power Supplies, Bachmann Split-Jaw Rail Clamps, O &amp; 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](mailto:hendleyjim4@gmail.com)

Or....(828) 333-2523

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

The **Asheville Train Lovers Luncheon** will be the first Thursday every month from 10am to 2pm at the Hendersonville Depot. **Bring trains to run.**

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

The **Columbus Train Lovers Luncheons** are held at 12:00 on the Third Thursday of each month at Sully's Restaurant in Columbus.

