

PGRS TRACKIN'



The Newsletter of the Piedmont Garden Railway Society

October 2022

Editor: Wayne Hamilton

Greetings

Welcome to Fall, that time of year when we start our daily battle with falling leaves. We are out of town all of October on the road camping, so this is a delayed newsletter, as our Wi-Fi connection would allow. I did email various folks for information about their layouts last month and I'll share those results as soon as I can. Also, I am trying to profile various members and share their garden railroading story about how they got into the hobby. Please send any idea, project, photo, 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 Special thanks to this month's contributors.

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Club Messages

As always, 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. Dues can be mailed to PGRS Secretary/Treasurer at:

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

The Autumn Rails train show was held Sept. 30 and Oct. 1 at the WNC Agricultural Center, Expo Building. Our Club was represented as the photos show.



Our Club Table



PGRS Members Tim and Fran

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Railfanning - Prototypes to inspire a garden railway layout.

We are lucky again be able to profile two railfanning trips this month. The first is the Rocky Mountaineer (RM) and other is the Conway Scenic Railroad.

Rocky Mountaineer By: Dave Smith

This is a "this n' that" about the Canadian based Rocky Mountaineer train tour. A 9+ hour, two-day, train ride begins in Vancouver BC, with a night hotel sleep over stop in Kamloops. The final destination is Jasper AB. There's also an option that takes a different route out of Vancouver and riders sleep on the train. I was told by several people that have done both that the stopover in a hotel is preferable. Too, by the end of the second day of spectacular scenery, even I as a train buff was ready for some feet on the ground activity.

The first day before boarding allowed a visit to Greenville Island which is a tourist shopping area. There is an interesting operating cement plant located there as well as a Canadian National boxcar converted into a caboose that now serves as a pet treat shop. (Photo 1 & 2)



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The day I rode, the RM consisted of 22 passenger cars pulled by two EMD GP40-2L locomotives and a power generator. (Photos 3 & 4)



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The Canadian Pacific and Canadian National tracks that the RM use have freight train superiority and many times the passenger train waits for freight to pass, and what trains they are! Consist after consist of 200+ cars, mostly single type cars of covered hoppers, stack packs and open hoppers. Most had two locomotives in front,

a single locomotive mid-train and a single locomotive bringing up the rear. (Photo 5)



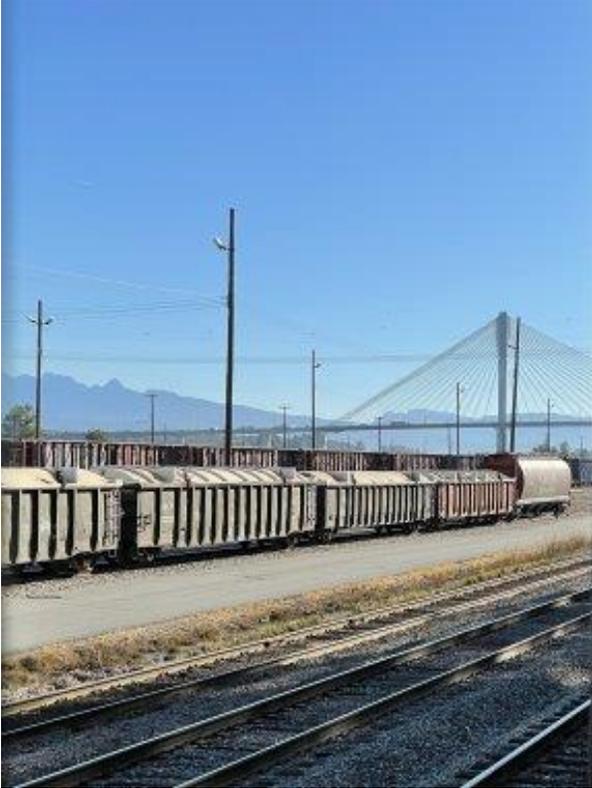
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One confusing open hopper load for me was of small looking gravel that appeared to be very wet. I was told this was coal, but this was nothing like any coal I ever saw. Turns out it is coal that has been ground down to a fine size for more complete burning and train after train was headed to... China. (Photo 6)



6

You'll be told that both sides of the train offer the same views but, to a rail fan, this isn't true. Sitting on the left (fireman's side) will allow one to see the immense yard operations in Vancouver. Too, the river and therefore an unobstructed view of the mountains are better seen from the left. (Photos 7 & 8)



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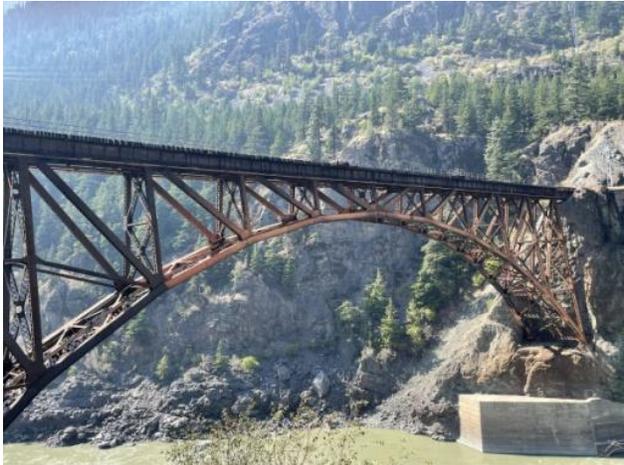
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There WILL be times when a highlight is on the right-hand side but for these types of scenes the train will slow down, and it is better to go down to the open platform and take an unobstructed photo than through the coach glass. One of these is "Hells Gate". (Photo 9)

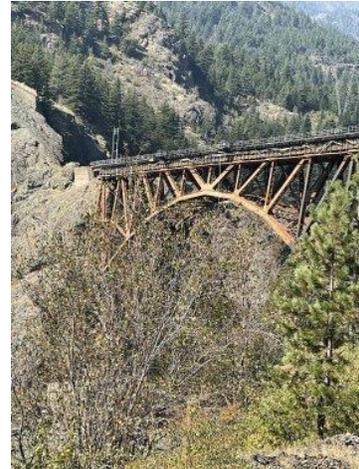


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There will be plenty of other chances for spectacular scenery and memorable photos but don't forget to just relax and make memories with you vision and not just your camera. (Photos 10 & 11)



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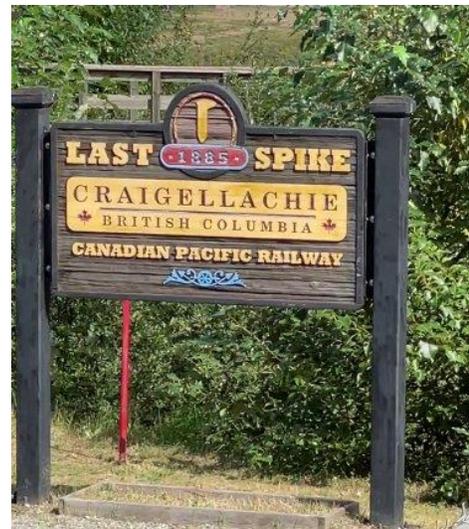


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One highlight for me was passing the historic site where the last spike was driven that linked the Canadian shores together. Like the one in the USA, this one act changed Canadian history forever. (Photos 12 & 13)



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If you have the opportunity, I recommend this once in a lifetime train trip.

The Conway Scenic Railroad By: Wayne Hamilton

In October of 2018, your editor and his lovely wife rode the 'Notch Train' which has since been renamed as the Mountaineer (Popular name). It is located along the old Maine Central Railroad in New Hampshire's White Mountains. Conway Scenic Railroad's trip offers a supremely scenic 4 to 5 ½ hour rail journey through the Mount Washington Valley and over the rugged Crawford Notch. Another feature along this line is the Frankenstein Trestle and the historical marker for the trestle is located along Route 302 near the Dry River Campground. The trestle is named for Godfrey Frankenstein, a German born artist who spent time painting in the Crawford Notch area during the 1800s.



Arriving in Crawford, NH



Ready to depart from the North Conway Station. North Conway station is a railway station located in North Conway, New Hampshire. Built in 1874, the depot was designed by Nathaniel J. Bradley in an eclectic Russian Victorian style. The station is also the terminus for the Conway Scenic Railroad. Northwest of the station stands a roundhouse, which now houses the Scenic Railroad's rolling stock; it was built around the same time as the station.



My wife and the Coach Car Interior



Arriving at Crawford Station



Motive Power doing a Runaround



Our coach and the open viewing car



Wiley Brook Trestle along the old Maine Central Railroad in the White Mountains, New Hampshire



The Mount Washington Hotel as viewed from our train. It was built by New

Hampshire native Joseph Stickney, who made his fortune in coal mining and the Pennsylvania Railroad. Ground was broken in 1900 and construction was completed in 1902. Stickney spared no expense in building the imposing hotel. The latest design and construction methods were used. Innovative and complicated heating and plumbing systems were installed. To this day, the hotel has its own private telephone system and Post Office.



Our trip passes by the Mount Washington Cog Railway. We'll have to ride this another day as Mount Washington was completely fogged in. A group was using a drone to film our train crossing the Frankenstein Trestle. Here is the link: [DROMERA: Frankenstein Trestle by Conway Scenic Train during Fall in New Hampshire - YouTube](#)

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The Backshop – Modeling Tips and Projects

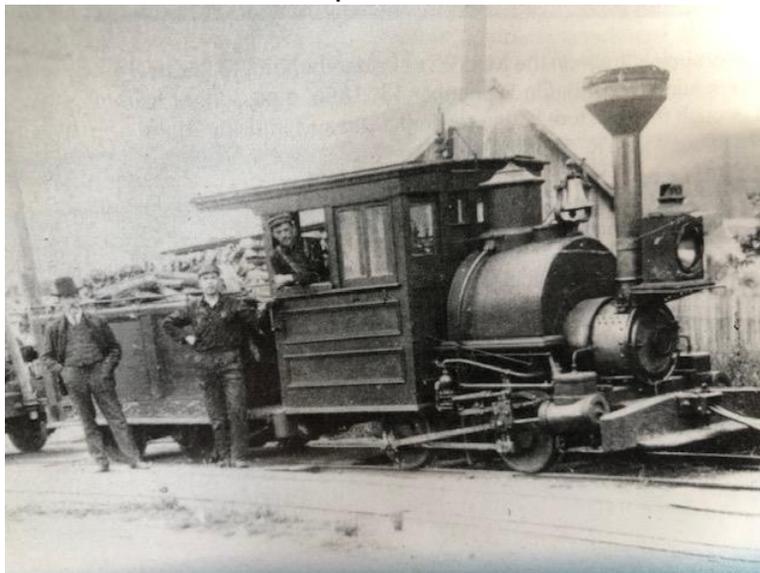
SMALL, INEXPENSIVE BATTERY CONVERSION USING PIKO 35040 R/C SYSTEM

Part One by: Doc Watson

A while ago I spruced up a LGB Porter by adding a wooden cab, new paint, new front and rear beams and a few detail parts. I ran it many times, but recently decided to convert it to battery R/C.



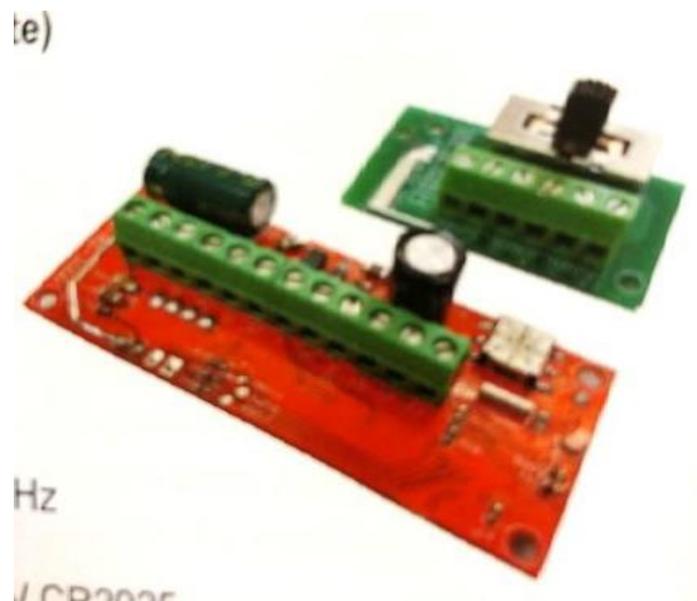
The obvious problem was it was too small to hold the battery, speaker and receiver equipment and the R/C units that I usually use were bigger than I liked. What it needed was a trailing car and it had to be relatively small to fit this application. After some research I discovered this photo.



As luck would have it, I happened to have one of these cuties. Perfect. But now the challenge to fit everything into it.

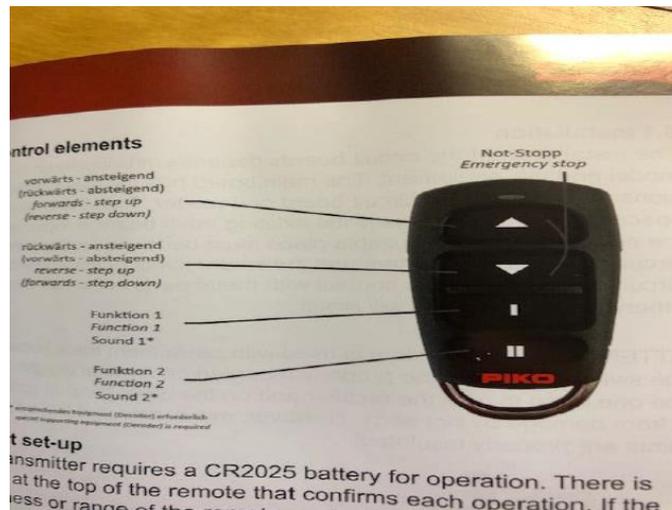


While reading a posting on Facebook, I discovered there was a relatively new R/C unit made by Piko. As it turned out, it was perfect. The PIKO 35040 is a very compact system that can handle up to 3 amps. This unit retails for just under \$90.

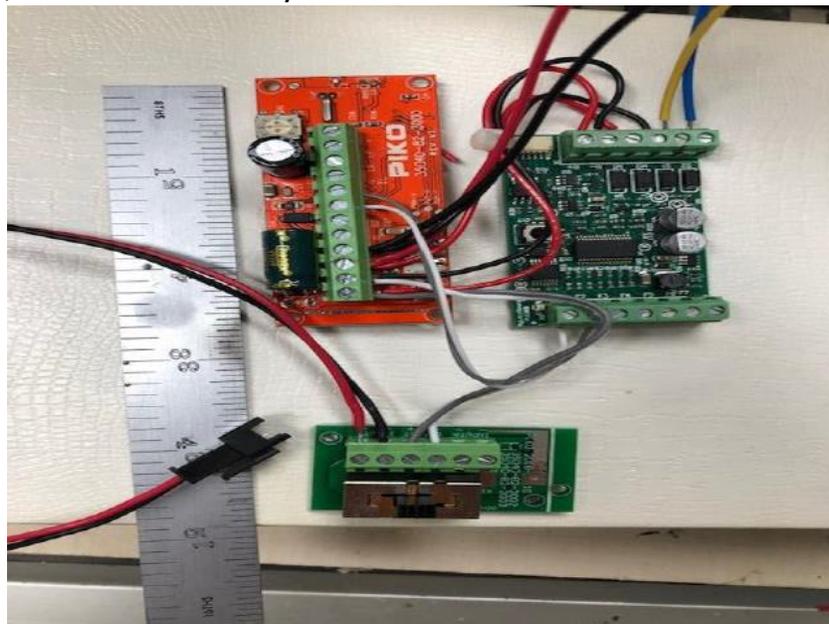


The receiver consists of two boards. The large one is the main receiver portion and the smaller one is an auxiliary board that allows you to switch between center off, track power or battery power. Nice feature. The two boards come pre-wired. I

opted not to use the small board and connected the battery directly to the master board. In addition to throttle, this receiver provides outputs for bell and whistle, forward and reverse lighting and sound board connections. Another nice aspect of this card is that it can be powered by a 9-volt battery for even smaller applications. The transmitter is a small key fob that provides forward and reverse buttons and bell and whistle buttons.



This photo shows how small the setup can be. In addition to the receiver board and power switch, I've included a MyLocoSound card.



And here is how I fit it all into my small, 2 axle trailing car. An 11volt Lithium battery sits underneath the receiver and the sound card sits in front.



The next photo shows the wood load I made to cover everything.



Next issue I'll show how I modified the Porter to allow the conversion.

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Railroad Trivia

Signal flags were used by flagmen, brakemen or posted at non-sigaled locations to warn of possible or known danger ahead or to receive special orders etc. Following is the standard flag colors used by most railroads from pre-1900 through the 1950's. Some are still used today. See if you know their meanings. Answers later in this newsletter.

Signal flags are colored as Red, Green, Yellow, White, Green and White, and Blue.

Here's a "why?" photo. It seems there's room for a turntable but a Wye was used instead.



Any guess about where this may be located? Who doesn't enjoy a wye? If you give up, it's in Carbonia on the island of Sardinia near Italy.

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A PGRS Member Profile or How I got started.....

By Jim Hendley

In December of 1990, when my first grandson was 9 months old, his father wanted to buy a train for him to put around their Christmas tree. I took him to a local New Jersey hobby shop, and I saw my first LGB train set, which was also LGB's first Christmas Train set. I had a growing Lionel collection, still all in boxes. After looking around, I told my son-in-law to think of this saying when buying trains for little kids: "Big trains for small hands". He agreed and purchased the LGB Christmas set, plus some extra straight track. Not to be outdone, I also purchased the same set and straight track to put around my tree that year, for when my grandson visited us. That 1990 LGB set got me "into" G Gauge trains. Now, with some extra yearly LGB Christmas cars added, that set is still running around my tree every year in our new home. That was the only G Gauge train I had until I retired in 1994 and moved to Lynchburg, Virginia.

As I am also a "Railfan", I joined the local chapter of the NRHS. One of the members owned a hobby shop and I started buying some more G Gauge trains. I had plans to start a Garden RR, I had a one-acre lot. But they opened a new Sagebrush Steakhouse in Lynchburg, VA. My wife and I went to dinner, and we discovered that Sagebrush had a G Gauge train running overhead. The manager came by our table, and I commented to her about how much I liked her train. She gave me a sad story of how bad the train was running, so I walked around under the oval of track and noticed several bad track joints, kinks in the long straight track, and the train going very slow around one end of the large oval. I pointed these defects out to the manager, and she asked if I could fix them. Of course, I said yes, and she gave us our dinner and drinks for free that night.

The next morning, I showed up with a ladder and some basic tools I would need. I had to re-lay all her track and run a second power feed to the other end of the oval to balance out her track voltage. The manager asked me to come in once a month to service her train, and that was the start of my train business. I soon found out where the rest of the Sagebrush locations were and was asked if I would like to be

hired as a subcontractor as their train service and salesperson. They had 20 locations at that time, most of them in North Carolina. I agreed to make a train service stop every 3 months at each location. As the business grew it became apparent, I had to move to NC from Virginia to be closer to most of their locations. We moved to Etowah in 1999 and I soon joined the PGRS.

From 1994 to 2008, I was the model train sales and service contractor for the chain of Sagebrush Steakhouse Restaurants in North and South Carolina. I sold to both existing and new locations constructed during that time. At one time I was selling, repairing, cleaning, and servicing trains in 27 restaurants. It was when Sagebrush hired me to keep their trains running, that I applied to USA Trains and Aristo-Craft to be an authorized dealer. I have been a USA Trains authorized dealer since 1994. I sold hundreds of trains to Sagebrush in the years noted from both companies. My long-time hobby became a good retirement business.

About 2 years ago we downsized from a 3200 sq ft home to a new one-story ranch without a basement. As such I do not have any running model railroad. Over a period of many years, I sold 90% of a large 3 rail O gauge collection and have a few favorite locomotives along with a few G Gauge trains on display in a curio cabinet in our living room. In my former home, I had a G Gauge 100-foot or more overhead train system running around my entire basement. I had a few engines, but my main power was an ABA set of LGB F3 Santa Fe engines pulling 22 freight cars. I used all USA Trains brand track with a Bridgwerks Power supply. I still enjoy the PGRS for the fellowship, train shows, and members' railroad open house days.

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Railroad Trivia Answers

Signal Flag Colors

Red: Danger or Stop

Green: Proceed Slowly

Yellow: Proceed Slowly Prepare to Stop

White: Line Clear, Proceed at Normal Speed

Green & White: Flag Stop, Stop for train orders. Used only at authorized flag stops.

Blue: Engine or Car Being Worked On. Do not move without authorization.

All signals must be displayed on the right side of the track in the direction of the approaching train and must be at least three quarters of a mile from the obstruction except for flag stop in which case the flag will be displayed at the station. In the case of a blue flag being displayed under no circumstances will the track be used beyond the flag, or any locomotive or car be moved without permission of the foreman in charge of the repair crew.

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Businesses associated with our Club



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

Garden Railroad Design, New and Used Track
You can now reach Jim at: hendleyjim4@gmail.com
Or...(828) 333-2523



Peggy Keyes
Owner / Chief Conductor
RightTrackTrainMuseum@gmail.com
828.625-5551

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!

<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. Hours for both years are Fri., Sat., Sun 1- 5 PM.

2022 - everything that is for sale in the museum - 20% off.

2023 - everything that is for sale in the - 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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Web Bits

Here are some more YouTube channels which may be of interest to our members:

Leather Jacket Guy

Train Guy

NS Reading Line Railfan

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