

PGRS TRACKIN'



Newsletter of the Piedmont Garden Railway Society

September 2020

Editor: Scott Williams

Boy Howdy it's been a pleasant summer. It's almost been too wet though for some garden plants and I have had to tear up some tomato vines that succumbed to bacteria wilt but I've eaten my fill of local sweet corn and fresh tomatoes from the local Farmer's Markets hereabouts for another season and put some more up in the freezer for later so it's all good!!

With our forced isolation this summer I hope our club members will send me a good photo or two to share of your Locos on a favorite spot on your layout or something **cool** that you've got going on in your workshop to share with everybody since we've been so isolated this year. **Please send me a photo or two.** That will really help keep us all in touch with each other until we can resume more normal club activities. I know we've all been thankful to have this great hobby to occupy our hands and our minds while we've been staying close to home this summer so please send me any photo of your latest project to share with all of us.

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Bob Thompson over in Union Grove NC sent me these photos. He's been very busy:

"Scott here are my latest projects that I'm pleased with. First, I have added battery power to my 44 ton brass diesel. I used 16 AAA 3.7v batteries wired in series/parallel. A G2 receiver from e bay. Works great. Anyone have thoughts on a sound system??? I don't think a diesel deserves Phoenix like my steam. Any ideas minibob@yadtel.net also just finished a Howe truss bridge kit which I'm tickled with. Next up radio then sound for my 25t Climax"



Great work Bob!! That truss bridge is truly a work of art!

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Bill Davies keeps making progress with his new outdoor layout in East Asheville:

"I've laid down 3/8 inch graystone as ballast, done a little more landscaping with stepping stones, found some short sections of track to complete one siding, laid out the barn yard, etc. Building the barn will be the next big project, along with the trestle. Also, thinking that I might need to raise the center lowest section of the wall about 2 inches and reduce the grade a bit more after reading many websites.....either that or get better engines after stripping the gears on the Bachman 10 wheelers, LOL.

I am now very versed at breaking down and repairing Bachman 10 Wheelers after stripping their gears and breaking the plastic axle joints/connectors on drive wheels. Of course this could be age, or the curse of buying used engines, or maybe their design by Bachman. It seems that I have two different versions of the 10 wheelers. A version 3 that I've used a long zip tie to tighten the motor to the drive gears (wrapping the tie around the motor and the weight as recommended by Schreyer)....works most of the time but will re-assess tomorrow. The version 4 of the Southern 10 Wheeler, uses plastic connector between the bushings of the drive wheel to keep them together, with one incorporating the gear mechanisms. I think the strain on the grades help degrade the integrity of these plastic connectors which, alas, has cracked and no longer holds the drive wheels together. This is an interesting design change from the solid metal axels for the version 3 drive wheels, though there is a plastic gear in the middle which seems prone to failure. Was going to upgrade this unit with the Annie Chassis that I bought last year at Larry Williams's recommendation (whished I'd bought 2!!), but there are some slight differences so went a head and bought a ET&WNC Annie shell while they are still available, and will simply cannibalize the detail parts to make an Annie unit. Bottom line is I don't think the Bachman 10 wheelers were built to pull even short trains up grades of 4% for even a short distance.

**** Yes. Many of us have encountered the 'frailties' of the early Bachmann Big Hauler locos. As you have discovered George Schreyer has posted several 'fixes' for them on his website. BUT, the Annie chassis that are still available affordably from the Bach-Mann are a more Robust chassis and an easy swap out on your early Big Hauler locos and can remedy many issues.**

George's website:

<http://www.girr.org/girr/tips/tips.html>

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'Connie' gets a Bachmann Big Hauler 'Chuffer':

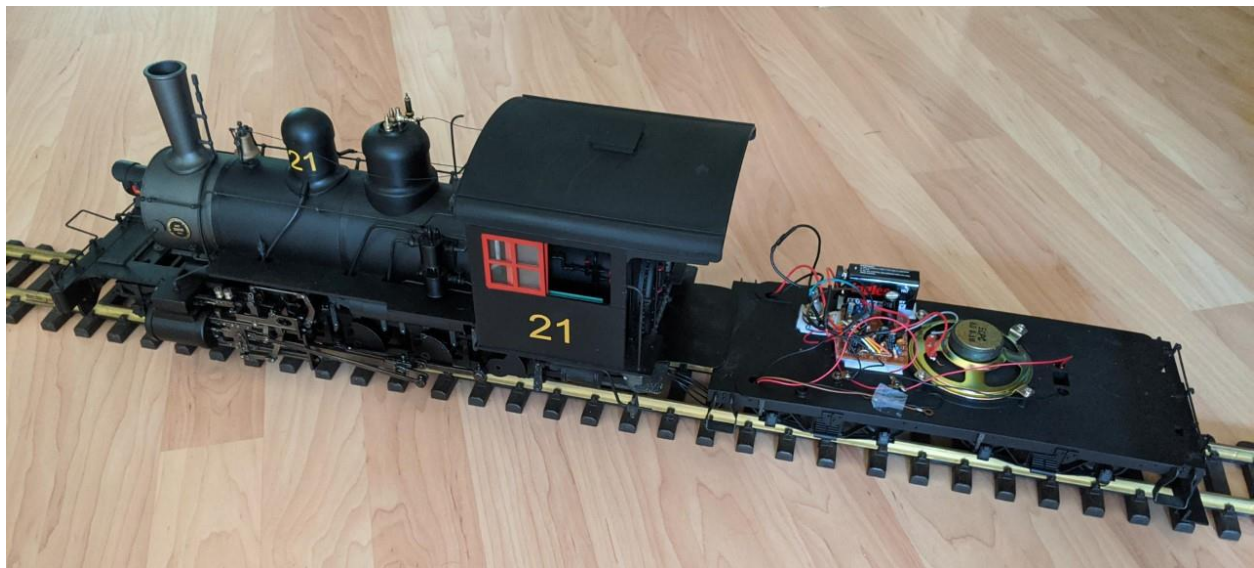
I bought a beautiful Bachmann 2-8-0 "Connie" about 10 years ago on the eBay. Listed in "**Excellent Condition.**" [Of course...Aren't they all?]. . .but when I received it and put it on my track and gave it some juice it ran about 4 inches and...stopped....**Dead**. At least it didn't burst in to flames!

"Caveat Emptor" [Buyer Beware], I've bought many of my Locos '**Used**' at auction and only one early Bachmann Porter model was a total 'write off'. [They're cheap plastic crap. Don't buy one unless it's a later model Spectrum Porter.]

Connies are notorious for having a cracked drive gear and in fairness to the Pirate that sold it to me, it was otherwise in “**Excellent Condition**” ...that is... **if I just wanted to put it on a shelf and admire it**. The drive gear was not only cracked but had three teeth missing which explains why it ran only a few inches and then stopped dead. I bought a Delrin replacement gear from NorthWest Shortlines back ‘in the day’ and followed the detailed advice and instructions on MyLargeScale forum and repaired it and it has performed **flawlessly** ever since. I don’t know where, or even **if**, you can still buy replacement gears for the Connie but they are a fascinating loco to watch run with their outside frame counterweights and detailed valve gearing and I highly recommend them. [**If ANYONE knows if anyone makes a replacement for the Connie drive gear, please share that with us.**],

In the meantime...just for something to do basically...I decided to purchase from the ‘Bach-Man’ a **Big Hauler** tender frame with the **chuff circuitry and speaker** and install it in my Connie tender just so that it’s no longer a ‘**silent runner**’. It bolts right in to the Connie tender. The Connie rear loco axle has four contact points that rotate on the axle and close the circuit to make a ‘chuffing’ sound with a Bachmann “chuff card”. I found that the original Bachmann connector to my Tender was flawed but I spliced in a new two pin connector and the Connie now makes the Bachmann ‘**chuff**’ sound as originally intended. It’s not very loud though, but it sounds good, and it’s better than nothing at all.

Next step, I’ve ordered a Railboss receiver to convert this loco to RC/Battery operation so I can run it anywhere, even without track power, and it will make a chuffing sound. In the future I hope to install a Phoenix sound card.



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Terry Ketcham says he has some empty LGB boxes that he wants to dispose of if anyone is looking for boxes for some of their stuff. Call Terry: 828-890-8246, or email him. terryketcham22@gmail.com



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Terry Ketcham also sends this insight about artificial scenery for Large Scale layouts:

Much of the scenery on the Apple Valley's large scale railroad is made from hydraulic cement. It takes rattle can paints very well and seems to be holding up OK in all sorts of weather. I use various shades of gray paints with some light brown for high lighting. I tried adding some greenery using the **bottle brush technique** for making trees but the material didn't hold up well at all.

That being said I was looking at artificial greenery material at Michaels the other day I guess used for creating indoor flower arrangements and such. I liked the different types of vines that they had to choose from. Thinking that they are plastic and discovering that some Floral designers use them for outdoor hanging baskets, I thought I'd give them a try. The vines come in 6' lengths and can be cut to any length you want. I'm still playing around with the locations of them but as of now I really like the color and interest that they are adding to the otherwise boring rock work.

But, of course, this has created another problem. In the past we have always had problems with the kids wanting to touch the trains as they chug along the layout, especially if we are running Thomas the tank train, now last Saturday I've noticed the ladies are touching and feeling the vines to see if they are real. Some of the vines are just set against the rock work , not fastened at all until I'm happy with a final location so of course when someone touches them, they fall down on the tracks.

Hey maybe a sign saying "poison ivy, do not touch" would work.

****Thanks Terry, keep fighting the 'good fight' against spectators fondling your plants.**

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The NC Arborteam has posted a new video of their model trains running around their layout:

Enjoy:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MQn2P01d5As&feature=youtu.be>

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Ottawa Garden Railway Society:

I don't know if any of you have ever checked out their website. These guys up in Canada have a really good website. I especially like their Locomotive Projects section. It's got some very helpful 'How to' information that I have found useful in the past. Here's the link for their webpage:

<http://ovgrs.ca/>

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This is one of the finest large scale layouts I have ever seen. Sundance Central:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPHASpKgRtQ&feature=youtu.be>

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MEMBER PHOTOS:

Doc Watson's son is a 'Wizard' with computer graphics and has deeply embraced the 3D printing process. He is helping Doc build his new scratchbuilt Mogul Locomotive project. Here's some photos from that Father and Son project. Doc says his son has a 'mid grade', liquid resin printer but the detail and results are truly astonishing:...



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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 viewing it.

Send your input to: srwavl@outlook.com

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Trivia Question: When Matthias Forney was issued his patent in the late 1860s for his popular little locomotives he originally intended them to operate in a fashion that might surprise some folks. What was that?

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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.

Don Watson
125 Mistletoe Trail
Hendersonville, NC 28791

docwatson@morrisbb.net

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Train Lovers Luncheons:

The current luncheons are:

Columbus Area: Meets every Third Thursday of every month at [Rural Seed, 322 E Mills St. In Columbus,NC](#) @ 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

Meeting the 4th Thursday each month at 11:30 AM 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. Track power, battery and live steam are all welcomed to run on their beautiful layout.

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Trivia Answer: Cab Forward was the way Matthias originally envisioned them to be run. Making them essentially a 4-4-0 in Whyte notation not the 0-4-4T as we usually think of them. Note the headlamp and Pilot location and direction in the photo below:



The **Forney** is a type of tank locomotive patented by Matthias N. Forney between 1861 and 1864. Forney locomotives include the following characteristics:

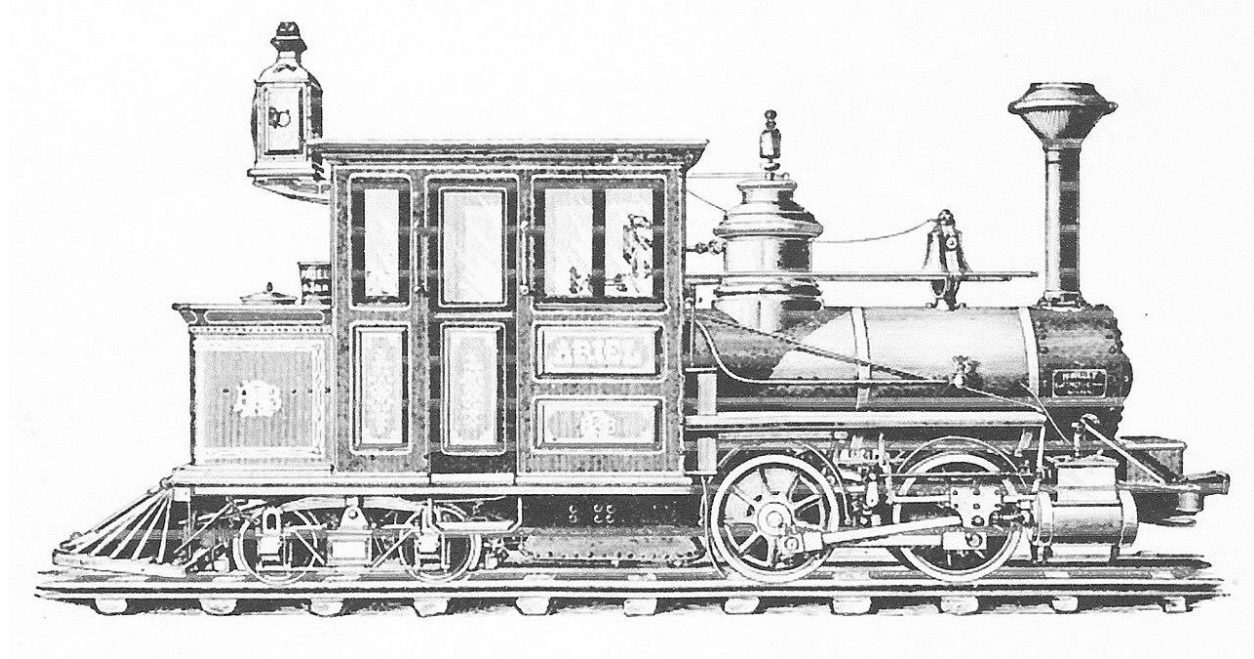
- An 0-4-4T wheel arrangement, that is four driving wheels followed by a truck with four wheels (though the term has become somewhat generic; many small tank engines of various wheel arrangements have been accused of being Forneys).
- No flange on the middle pair of driving wheels.
- The fuel bunker and water tank placed over the four-wheel truck.

The locomotives were set up to run cab (or bunker) first, effectively as a 4-4-0 (or 6-4-0), though the type achieved popularity for its ability to operate well in either direction. The 4-4-0 wheel arrangement, with its three-point suspension, was noted for its good tracking ability, while the flangeless middle wheels allowed the locomotive to round tight curves. Placing the fuel and water over the truck rather than the driving wheels meant the locos had a constant adhesive weight, something other forms of tank locomotive did not.

Large numbers of Forney locos were built for the surface and elevated commuter railroads that were built in cities such as New York, Chicago and Boston. These railroads required a small, fast locomotive that tracked well and could deal with tight curves. Their short runs meant the limited fuel and water capacity was not a problem, making the Forney ideal. However, their noise, smoke and tendency to drop ash and cinders (particularly from overhead tracks) made

them unpopular. As these railroads began to electrify or were replaced by subways at the end of the 19th century, Forneys began to disappear.

Forneys were also popular on the 2 ft (610 mm) narrow gauge railroads of Maine. The use of these locomotives differed in that they were run smokestack leading, like a conventional locomotive, and all driving wheels were flanged. The latter resulted in Maine narrow gauge railroads having comparatively broad radius curves. Further developments included the introduction of locomotives with a leading pony truck, giving a 2-4-4 wheel arrangement. This was done to improve tracking ability in these locomotives.



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Businesses associated with our club:



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!



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Split-Jaw Rail Clamps, O & G Gauge Track

Email: jhh1218@att.net
Phone: (828) 891-7570
Fax: (828) 890-3346

**** Jim Hendley has moved.** To reach him use the following number:

828-333-2523 and if the email above does not work try hendleyjim4@gmail.com

** Peggy Keyes announced on Facebook that due to Covid the museum will be closed until further notice. Check The Right Track Facebook page for further developments.