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Central California Coast

Featured -- F. John LaBarba

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES

Greeting from Banff in the Canadian Rockies. We are here to ride the Rocky Mountaineer train to Vancouver. Spent time at the Spiral Tunnels overlook. Got to see a very long freight train entering and exiting the lower spiral at the same time. Way cool but not easy to photograph!--



2-mile long freight snaking up to lower spiral tunnel



Model of the Spirals. Not in G-Scale!

OK ENOUGH ABOUT SPIRAL TUNNELS WHEN I SHOULD BE FOCUSED ON OUR CONVENTION!

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES

BAGRS MEMBERS & THE CONVENTION

As shared last month, we need to:

- Be registered for the convention to visit open railroads, attend clinics and the July 4 reception fireworks, also to enter the Vendor Hall on July 6 & 7
- Purchase tickets to attend the following events: N Bay BBQ: Roaring Camp Train Ride & BBQ: Ice Cream Social: Closing Banquet.
- Pick Up our CONVENTION CREDENTIALS at either the N Bay or S Bay Welcome Desk (for more about the Welcome Desks, read on!)

IF YOU DO PLAN TO REGISTER AND/OR BUY EVENT TICKETS, PLEASE DO SO ASAP TO REDUCE LAST MINUTE WELCOME PACKET PREP WHICH IS A CHALLENGE FOR OUR VOLUNTEER WELCOME DESK COORDINATOR, LYNN GERBER.

QUICK LINKS TO REGISTER FOR CONVENTION & TO BUY EVENT TICKETS

Family Registration: https://ngrc2023.org/event/ngrc-2023-family-registration/
Individual Registration: https://ngrc2023.org/event/ngrc-2023-individual-registration/

Napa Valley Wine Train: June 30: https://ngrc2023.org/event/napa-valley-wine-train/

N Bay BBQ Tickets: July 1: https://ngrc2023.org/event/herzog-bbq-and-bus-july-1/

Roaring Camp Train Ride & BBQ: July 5: https://ngrc2023.org/event/roaring-camp-rr-bbq/

Ice Cream Social: July 6: https://ngrc2023.org/event/ice-cream-social/ Closing Banquet: July 7: https://ngrc2023.org/event/closing-banquet/

All 12 bus trips: June 30 thru July 8: https://ngrc2023.org/bus-tickets/

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES

OTHER CONVENTION NEWS

A Day-By-Day CONVENTION CALENDAR is on the convention website home page at https://ngrc2023.org (Scroll down there to find it)

MAPS of the layout tours are on the website at https://ngrc2023.org/layout-maps/

The CLINIC SCHEDULE is on the website at https://ngrc2023.org/clinics/

National Conventions hosted by BAGRS have always been among the most ambitious garden railway conventions and NGRC2023 is no exception.

A core team of half a dozen BAGRS members have been planning NGRC2023 for the last two years. In the last year, the core team has grown to a dozen people. The dozen have now been joined by open railroad hosts and numerous volunteers in various roles to make NGRC2023 another great BAGRS convention.

We hope you will join us to enjoy all that NGRC has to offer and to help welcome fellow garden railroaders from across and beyond North America.



RANDOM NOTES IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER

When **Greg Hile** gave up a promising career in major league baseball to pursue a life of creosote and whistles, little did he know how long it would take to fulfill his other dream of being a garden railroad club newsletter editor. Greg's a busy dude, and he cried when Vin Scully died, but he wouldn't have it any other way.

A couple of random notes here, in no particular oder:

- 1. As I write this, it is less than a month before our convention. That hardly seems possible, but it is true nonetheless. It's been as much an honor as a labor of love to play a small role in the planning and execution of the events. The labor part has been well worth it because I know we put on a good show and we'll be doing it again. I hope to see you all there.
- 2. At the same time, it turns out we're not the only show in town. Just as our North Bay folks are doing a Pre-Convention Kick-Off with layout tours, a BBQ at the Herzogs, and an excursion on the Napa Valley Wine Train, immediately following NGRC 2023 our friends to the south at the Central California Coast GRS are hosting a two-day post-extension of NGRC 2023 on July 10 and 11. Details are located here in the newsletter and there is even a handy QR code to scan for even further info.
- 3. And if that wasn't enough, immediately following the CCCGRS two-day extension, the four-day 26th National Summer Steamup will begin July 12 at the Lodi Grape Harvest Festival grounds. If you're going to be stuck in Lodi again, as the song goes, July 12 to 16 would be the time to do it. Details can be found at https://steam-events.org.
- 4. I have a bit of a dilemma. The publication date of T&T is the fifth day of the month. July 5 is the fifth day of the convention (seventh if you count the North Bay events). So, I'm not quite sure what to do here. We could publish before July 1, we could publish right after the convention, we could publish during the convention as scheduled (I really don't mind), or we could just skip July altogether. Coincidentally (and perhaps ironically, given my personal statement below), I am leading a workshop on newsletters, websites, and social media the following day. My thought is to publish on July 5 and make handouts available to those who attend the workshop, but it's just a thought. What do you all think??
- 5. On a personal note, as many of you know, I have Parkinson's Disease. It is a progressively debilitating neurological condition for which there is presently no cure. No two Parkies, as we like to call ourselves, are alike: some get tremors (I rarely do), some have difficulty walking (I tend to walk like a drunken sailor), some have cognitive impairments (I do), others have difficulty speaking (I often do), and so on. About a year ago, I informed the BAGRS board of directors that I would probably need to step down as editor of this newsletter. I told the board that I would try to stay on through the convention, and I will be able to do that. However, my condition is slowly but steadily declining, to the point where the time has come to call it a day.

And so, I am not happy about it at all, and I wish it didn't have to be so, but the August issue (which will be a recap of the convention) will be my last as editor. It's been an honor and a privilege to serve BAGRS these past few years and I hope to continue to serve in whatever roles I can. I will remain on the board for at least the remainder of my term and I will assist whoever (and whatever) follows to make the transition as smooth as possible.

6. As for me, I think it's time to play with trains ...

FROM THE LOIS AND SHERMAN ZELL COLLECTION

As previously reported, the BAGRS community recently lost one of its founding members, Sherman Zell. The photos here came from the Sherman and Lois Zell collection of photographs graciously provided to us by Lois.

As we get ready to host the 38th National Garden Railroad Convention, please enjoy these memories from the 9th NGRC held in July, 1993.

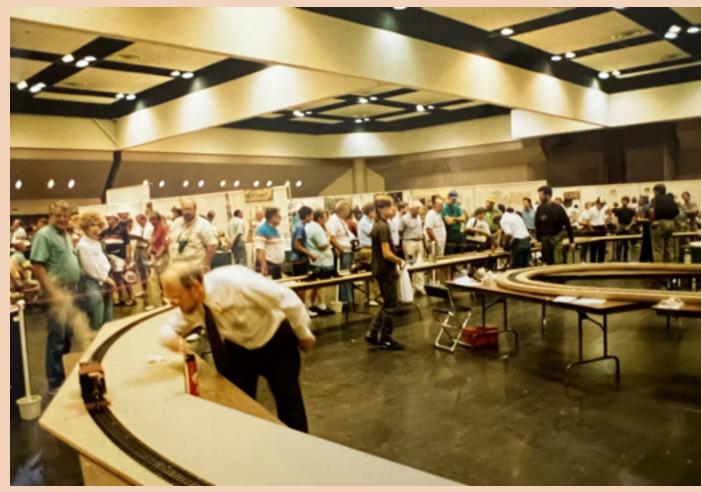
Can you identify any of the people or share any stories or memories from the 1993 or other BAGRS-hosted conventions?

Greg















NEWSLETTER SHARING

BAGRS has a policy of reciprocal sharing of newsletters with the following garden railway clubs. We do not share private member information such as home addresses or tour information without the express permission of the particular member.

Central California Coast GRS

Denver GRS

Gold Coast GRS

Orange County GRS

Puget Sound GRS

Redwood Empire GRS

Rose City GRS

Sacramento Valley GRS

San Diego GRS

Santa Clarita Valley GRC

The Garden Whistle

MEET YOUR NEW BAGRS MEMBERS

Wayne Grubbs, Cupertino, SNY/Santa Clara

Brian Parry, Walnut Creek, Diablo Valley, steamer interest

Angel Green, Madera, Outlying area, steamer interest

Brandy Jones, Mill Valley, Golden Gate

Colton Snell, Roseville, Outlying area

Richard Piasecki, San Francisco, North Bay/SF

Sasha Cox, San Francisco, North Bay/SF

Al Foley, Moraga, Diablo Valley

Daniel Brown, Aptos, Santa Cruz district

Rob Wullenjohn, Pacifica, North Peninsula

Rick Randazzo, San Jose, San Jose district

Dave Abelson, Los Gatos, Sunnyvale district

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COAST GARDEN RAILROAD SOCIETY
POST-NATIONAL GARDEN RAILWAY CONVENTION TOURS

10-11 JULY, 2023

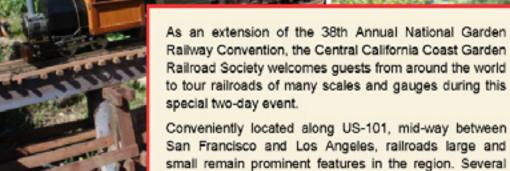
SAN LUIS OBISPO AND NORTHERN SANTA BARBARA COUNTIES FROM PASO ROBLES TO SANTA YNEZ

PACIFIC COAST RAILROAD
NORGROVE RAILWAY
BITTER CREEK WESTERN RAILROAD

CONTACT@CCCGRS.ORG



"The place to be to "22



San Francisco and Los Angeles, railroads large and small remain prominent features in the region. Several prototypical railroads are in operation serving the agriculture and agritourism industry. Railroad history is evident as you travel through the landscape and is prominently displayed at the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum.

We encourage guests to experience our area's natural beauty and popular destinations, including Hearst Castle, Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa, Pismo Beach, and the award-winning wineries that make this area the third largest producer of California wine.





FEATURED ARTICLE

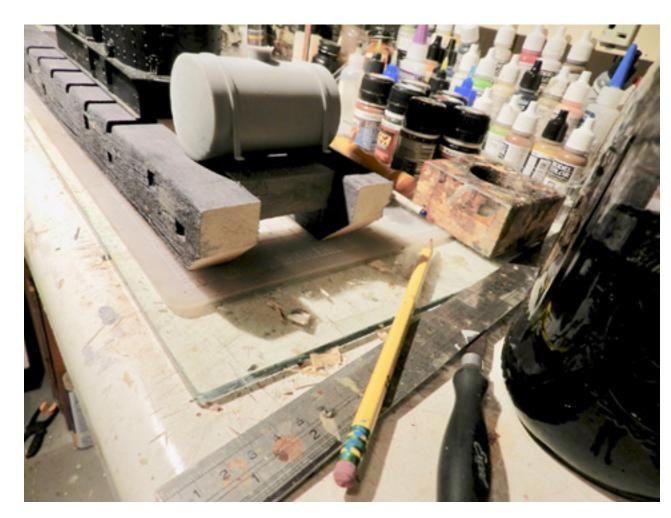
F. John LaBarba

EDITOR'S NOTE: The email was short and sweet: "This sucker has taken far too long."

Actually, there was a little more to it: "Still have the spark arrester, and the Willamette sign (courtesy of Bob Poli) to attach. But had to stop and show it, to take a break. 1/2 Scale with some 1/22 scale figures..."

I wholeheartedly agree and am very happy to show off the excellent work of F. John LaBarba, another of our convention layout hosts.





















ALL STEAMED UP...

A true Rennaisance man if ever there was one, **Richard Murray** has been the BAGRS coordinator of live steam events for about twelve years. He has written many "Plant of the Month" articles over the years, knows a thing or two about British cars, and has recently taken on the detailed art of bonsai. A retired dentist, born and raised in San Francisco, Richard has been married to Melinda Murray for 53 years.

ALL STEAMED UP ROB LENICHECK'S STEAMUP by Richard Murray

What beautiful day for a steamup. This was a makeup for Rob's previous rain cancelled steamup. Walking toward Rob's layout, I anticipated a delightful day without any rain. His gorgeous wisteria was in full bloom and covered the pergola over the steamup bay. To my dismay, instead of rain from the sky, it rained wisteria petals from a tree all afternoon—along with lots of leaves and seed pods. What a mess. The vegetative stuff got in all my boxes, my pant pockets, inside my collar, and even in some tight spots of my engines. At least this time the rain was dry. Actually, the wisteria was so beautiful that I am thinking of getting one for my bonsai collection.

Once again, Jim Goss brought three of Bill Allen's scratch built engines. He even ran the beautiful Garrett, which has the best sounding whistle I have ever heard on a G scale engine. It has such a sweet sound because four separate chimes work together like a barbershop quartet.

Host Rob ran a coal-fired engine. What a surprise! What did you expect? Does he even own a non coal-fired engine? He must have half a dozen, all scratch built or converted to coal. This day, his engine was a C-16 that he converted from butane to coal fired, a job that requires a very substantial amount of skilled work.

I brought my Mason Bogie 2-6-6 and quickly discovered that the couple height of the engine didn't exactly match the passenger cars. I was a bit chagrined when suddenly the engine took off without the passenger cars—twice. The quick fix was to let the engine run light. The result was that the engine ran for much longer without the weight of the cars. Still, the Mason Bogie is an engine that needs lots of attention, given that the small boiler requires the need of an axle pump. Trying to find the sweet spot for an axle pump requires frequent adjusting and observation. I also brought a backup, a Cricket II. It's about as fast as a Shay, and like a Shay is geared, so it takes grades easily. It doesn't have a Johnson bar, so direction is determined by which direction the flywheel is spun.

David Shawcross brought an Accucraft Forney, which has turned out to be quite reliable. It certainly is one of the best small and affordable engines. The father and son duo of Tim and Philip Boles each brought an Accucraft 7/8 Forney. Tim brought the butane-fired one and Philip brought the coal-fired one. Gary Whaley brought an Accucraft Mogul #11, which he

converted to coal.

Sanjaya Kumar brought the highly detailed Accucraft Darjeeling. Its prototype is a narrow gauge steam locomotive that was first built in 1889 for the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway. There were a total of 34 built through 1927. The B class locomotives were designed by Sharp Stewart & Co. of Glasgow. #778 is preserved in the United Kingdom and is the only one outside of India.

Steve Heselton came to say hello. Being the dunce that I am with computers, he tried to help me understand how to convert some photos to a thumb drive for my Convention clinic. He wasn't too successful, so we will need to get together again. Far more successful was

Rob's steamup. Thanks Rob.



Rob Lenicheck's coal conversion of a C-16.



Jim Goss' scratch built Blue Comet



The author's 2-6-6 Mason Bogie







The author's Cricket II



Gary Whaley's coal conversion of an Accucraft mogul







David Shawcross owns this Accucraft Forney



Philip Boles' 7/8 Accucraft coal fired Forney

Jim Goss' scratch built Garrett



LIVE STEAM CALENDAR

Saturday/Sunday, June 17, 2023

July 6-8, 2023 July 12-16, 2023

Sept. 2-3, 2023 Sept. 16-17, 2023

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NGRC 2023 National Summer

Steam Up

Roaring Camp Santa Clara Lodi

Ardenwood Los Altos

POSTCARDS OF THE PAST

Retired from the publishing industry, and back after a well-deserved sabbatical, **Bill Ralph** knows a thing or two about amusement parks and postcards. He is also a highly-skilled garden railroad creator. Working with brother Jim Ralph, the Porcupine Gulch Railroad, located in Fremont, California, was selected by Garden Railways Magazine as the Best Small Railroad in 2016 and rightfully so.



SANTA CLAUS, CALIFORNIA

SANTA CLAUS stands 365 days of the year on the peaceful Pacific shores as a sentinel smiling down on the unique colorful shops laden with unusual gifts and treasures to delight everyone.

Motorists traveling on the Coast Highway in Southern California near Carpinteria, beginning in 1948, were enticed to stop at a roadside Christmas-themed village by an imposing eighteen-foot tall Santa Claus head on the roof of one of the shops. Creative marketing and the naming of the collection of specialty shops Santa Claus Lane, coupled with the completion of the 101 Freeway a few years later, ensured the success of the imaginative enterprise.

Owners of the Date and Olive Shop obtained approval to create a popular seasonal post office substation with the postmark of "Santa Claus, California." In addition to a Toy Store, Candy Shop, Ice Cream Stand and Santa's Kitchen Restaurant, the Santa Claus Unlimited streamliner kiddie train ride circled the block long stretch of themed buildings. The twoton Santa squeezing down a chimney attracted visitors to the roadside attraction from the roof of the Candy Kitchen along with an oversize Snowman for more than fifty years. Even though the puzzling freeway exit signage still reads "Candy Cane Lane," the Christmas themed village and train ride are only memories while Santa was saved from destruction and permanently resides along 101 in a small park in Oxnard.

CIRCA 1960s POSTCARD FROM THE COLLECTION OF BILL RALPH

DAVE'S CORNER ...



Born and raised in San Francisco, **Dave Frediani** moved to Sonora in the early 1970s. Married for 50 years to his best friend Juanita, Dave once purchased an Accucraft 7/8 scale Emma locomotive, soon realized no one supplied 7/8 scale rolling stock, so he started building it himself, and hasn't stopped.

HOW IT ALL STARTED

I never grew up with trains as a kid. My passion with trains started when I moved to the small town of Sonora, California.

After living in Sonora for ten years or so, I was walking down main street right before Christmas and saw an L.G.B. train set running in the window of the local camera shop. I knew then that I had to have one.

After purchasing one of the train sets, I couldn't wait to get home and set it up around the Christmas tree. We're still putting that same train around the Christmas tree after over forty years.

One train leads to another and on and on it goes until I soon realized that I had more trains then brains. But something was missing, I didn't want more trains. I wanted trains that were different than the other trains that everyone else had.

From time to time, I would find myself at train shows not really knowing what I was looking for. The one thing I found myself buying were old Bachmann boxcars. At the time, you could pick them up for about \$10.00 or so. Soon I was shorting them up to 8-1/2" for my logging trains.

On a business trip, I came across 1:24 scale diecast model car kits made by Hubley. I believe there were 24 of them still new in the boxes. I shipped them home and started thinking, what was I was going to do with them?

A few months later, I meet someone at one of the train shows that built 1:24 scale streetcars using drive units called Magic Carpet Motors. After buying ten or so of the Magic Carpet Motors, I knew what I was going to do next.

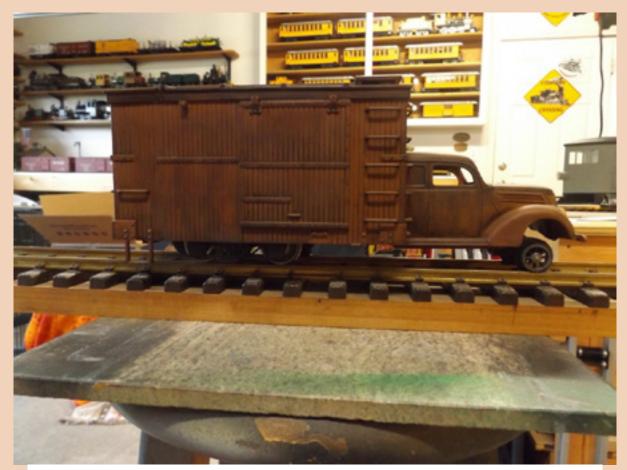
I started building my own version of a Galloping Goose. The first thing was to cut the Bachmann boxcars down to a length of about 8-1/2". Next I cut the diecast cars where I thought they looked good against the boxcar, and I built framework under the car and boxcar to mate them together. For the front trucks I used a single or double axle wheel set that matched the car that I was working with at that time.

I then used the Magic Carpet motor for the drive units. The first two units were track powered, after that all the rest were battery powered with R/C units. I think that I built about fourteen of them. I only kept three of them for myself, and all the rest went to friends.

After buying all the Bachmann boxcars and Hubley diecast car kits, the very first galloping goose that I built, I ended up using an old diecast Hulk Hogan panel delivery van—that my son purchase at a toy store—and a cut down Delton boxcar, just to see if it would work out.

These were fun projects and everyone who received one still has them or they've been passed down to some other friends.

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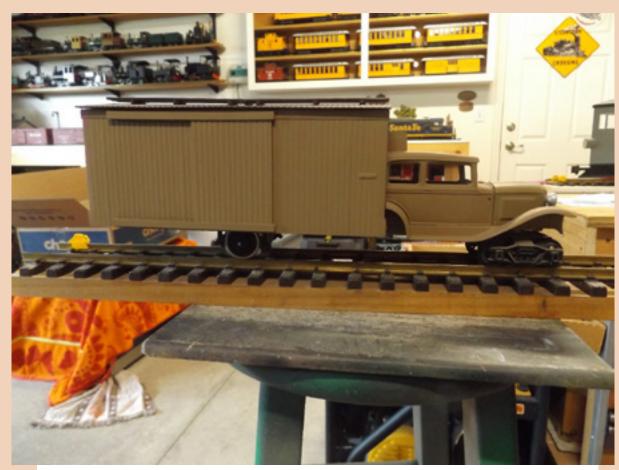
Here's two views of my first galloping goose, built using a die-cast Hulk Hogan Van and Delton boxcar





Here's a view of the Magic Carpet Motor (above) and the Bachmann boxcar cut down to 8-12" (below)





Here's a galloping goose built from a Bachmann boxcar and a Hubley Model A Ford





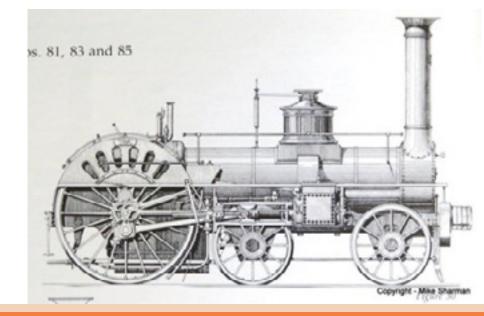
EAST DEVIL HILLS MODELING GROUP

Formerly of Fremont, California, **Henner Meinhold** now resides in Berlin, Germany. Like clockwork, Henner always submits his monthly contribution on time, although sometimes he's working with German time. The East Devil Hills Modeling Group meets regularly to create, collaborate, and share incredibly-machined models.

Bill Allen got some more work done on his "Trojan". Next step is the cab:



Mike Martin, who now lives in Southern California, was always fascinated by early steam locomotives. One of them is the Crampton which has a single huge driving wheel behind the firebox. The idea was to lower the center of gravity for high speed runs. He started to build one many years ago:



He made a CAD model of the locomotive:



And had many parts professionally cut or made them himself. Even the boiler was in progress:





This is how far he proceeded with the build:

Unfortunately due to work overload he abandoned the project and sold/gave it away. Now he regrets his decision and tries to locate the current whereabouts of the model. We hope he can find it and complete it!



After finishing the restoration of his Birmingham dribbler Dennis focused again on making ceramic "bricks" for burners. The idea is to have a material with low thermal conductivity, so the gas does not burn under the ceramic and the surface gets incandescent:



This is almost a work of art and the little pyramids are already glowing. Here is previous attempt, where the flames are not yet as nicely distributed, but part of the ceramic is incandescent:

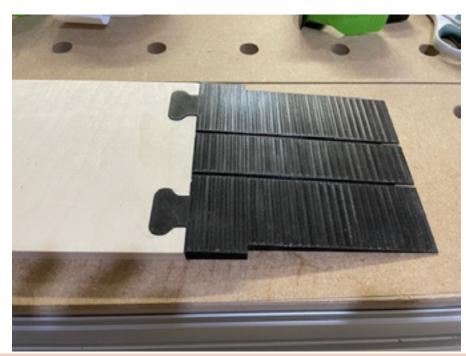


Sanjaya has been busy making wooden boxes for his various locos. The design is based on Bill Allen's ideas. Here's a picture of boxes in progress with finished ones in the background, and of another box being assembled:





The boxes have a floor with grooves as "rails". A ramp can be connected, so locos can safely be rolled into/out of the box:



I have been visiting the park in Wuhlheide (Berlin) again. In addition to the "official" 2' park railway, there is a club which collects and operates rare 20" field and mine railways. They carry passengers for free but ask for donations. A wise move, as the tips are usually higher than a fare ticket would be. Here a picture of the quite elaborate track/switches:



Someone built a charming "De Winton" lookalike with a vertical boiler and a pair of vertical cylinders, which is almost a big model loco.

They invited me to an event in July with my American logging show!

Henner



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

BAGRS BOARD AND CONTACTS

POSITION	NAME	EMAIL ADDRESS
President	Mick Spilsbury	president@bagrs.org
Vice President	open	
Secretary	Lynn Gerber	secretary@bagrs.org
Treasurer	Larry Silverman	treasurer@bagrs.org
At-large board member	Ray Turner	membership@bagrs.org
At-large board member	Greg Hile	gregory.hile@icloud.com
At-large board member	Richard Murray	steamer060@sbcglobal.net
At-large board member	Roger Nicholson	ran66x2@gmail.com
Scheduling Coordinator	Roger Nicholson	ran66x2@gmail.com
Live Steamers	Richard Murray	steamer060@sbcglobal.net
Membership	Ray Turner	membership@bagrs.org
Newsletter	Greg Hile	newsletter@bagrs.org

BAGRS DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS

Golden Gate	Ken Brody
East Bay	Bill Ralph
North Peninsula & San Francisco	Don Watters
Mid-Peninsula	Don Watters
Tri-Valley	Jim Rowson
Diablo Valley	Frank Lucas
Sunnyvale & Santa Clara	Mike Paterson
San Jose/Milpitas	Michael Laine
Santa Cruz & Monterey Counties	Trevor Park
South Santa Clara & San Benito Counties	tba
Members Outside BAGRS Districts	Nancy Norris

CALENDAR

July 1-9, 2023	38th NGRC	Santa Clara and Beyond	
July 10-11, 2023	CCCGRS Post-Convention	Central California Lodi	
July 12-16	National Summer SteamUp		

LIVE STEAM CALENDAR

Saturday/Sunday, June 17, 2023		Roaring Camp
July 6-8, 2023	NGRC 2023	Santa Clara
July 12-16, 2023	National Summer Steam Up	Lodi
Sept. 2-3, 2023		Ardenwood
Sept. 16-17, 2023		Los Altos
March 9, 2024	BAGRS Annual Meeting	Hiller Aviation Museum

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

NEED A BAGRS NAME BADGE?

Send a \$15 check, payable to BAGRS, for each badge ordered. Be sure to print the name(s) and City(s) for the badge(s) clearly. Send to: BAGRS Member Badges, 210 Friar Way, Campbell, CA 95008

BAGRS FOR SALE BY MEMBERS

List items you have for sale or items you want. You'll find it in the middle of the "Members Section" menu on our website, bagrs.org. Log in is required.

BAGRS ONLINE PHOTO AND VIDEO LIBRARY

Many photos & videos are hosted at: https://photos.google.com

Click on "Go to Google Photos", if offered.

Login with this email and password: BAGRSvideos@gmail.com BestClub4014

The upper-left corner has a pull-down menu to select ALBUMS. Then click on the album of interest.

THE LAST PAGE



I thought I had you last month, but kudos, praise and accolades to John Nicoles who correctly identified the ATSF tretle over Alhambra Avenue in Martinez. So, where might you find this beauty? Okay, here's a hint: many of you are hereby disqualified from participating this month, and you know who you are! The first person to correctly answer wins the praise and accolades of the entire garden railway community ... and a mention in the next issue.

TRELLIS AND TRESTLE

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Editor: Gregory Hile
Assistant Editors: Noëlla Simmons, Roger Nicholson
Regular Contributors: David Frediani, Henner Meinhold,
Richard Murray, Bill Ralph, Mick Spilsbury

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