

BAY AREA GARDEN RAILWAY SOCIETY

TRELLIS AND TRESTLE

JULY-AUGUST 2023



JOIN US AT:
BAGRS.ORG
FACEBOOK
INSTAGRAM

In This Issue ...

[Thank You Editor Greg Hile](#)

[President's Perspectives](#)

[NGRC 2023 Thank You!](#)

[Random Notes](#)

[In Memoriam -- Eric Child](#)

[In Memoriam -- Nigel](#)

[Mallinson](#)

[Newsletter Sharing](#)

[Meet Your New Members](#)

[Fall Open Railroads](#)

[We've Got the Pictures](#)

[Couple Show Off](#)

[All Steamed Up ...](#)

[Postcards from the Past](#)

[Dave's Corner](#)

[East Devil Hills](#)

[Progress on the Rural Burrill](#)

[Membership Information](#)

[Calendar](#)

[The Last Page](#)



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES

MOVING ON

NGRC 2023 gets extensive coverage in this T&T, rightly so given the thousands of hours many members invested in making it happen, but my focus is MOVING ON - to priorities for BAGRS for the rest of 2023.



A NEW WEBSITE TO LAUNCH

Given the huge amount of time that had to be devoted to NGRC 2023, we had to place development of the new website on hold for 3 months. At that point, about 80% of the work had been done.

We will resume work in August aiming to switch over to the new site in the Fall.

We are particularly keen to be up on the new site for the annual membership renewal process which has been a mystery to many members for years. We aim to make the process more intuitive via the new site.

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

New members who indicate an interest in Live Steam have been actively welcomed to the Live Steam Group for years by Richard Murray and the Group. We need to ensure that other new members get the same experience.

We should explore new members interests, for example:

- ◆ Visiting railroads to chat with owners about their experiences
- ◆ Joining operating sessions
- ◆ Learning about sources to acquire equipment
- ◆ Scratch building options
- ◆ Plants that work with a garden railroad and where to find them

We need members who are willing to buddy-up with new members, understand their interests, connect them to appropriate members and ensure that new members know about T&T, open RR weekends, our Annual Meeting, GR News and more.

WILL YOU SIGN UP TO BE A NEW MEMBER 'BUDDY'

We want to recruit 15 to 20 members willing to be a buddy for one or two new members in any 12-month period.

We will support you by providing information on things like sources of equipment and can help you to identify members to reach out to if a new member has a specific interest, like plants that make sense around a garden railroad.

This is not a job that requires you to attend regular meetings!

To sign up, please contact me by email (president@bagrs.org) or by text (415.342.5795)





PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES

INSTAGRAM POSTING SHATTERS RECORD

A short video of the Del Oro Modular RR at the convention shattered BAGRS Instagram single post views record. With 3,000+ views, it stormed past the previous record of 1,000.

Other short videos from the convention are getting way more views than our average # of views in the prior 12 months.



SO - NOW WE NEED MORE SHORT VIDEOS!

By SHORT we mean 10 to 20 seconds of live action.

Please send me 1 or 2 of the best short videos of your railroad in action.

Via Email to President@bagrs.org or by text to 415.342.5795

When we post videos on Instagram & Facebook we note which RR is featured but never its location. We are also blessed with short videos shot by **Teya Caple-Woods** :Thank you, Teya!

A BLACK CANYON RR UPDATE

Where's the fun if you can't talk about your own RR?

Typically Baron Spilsbury has to convince the Baroness that railroad investments are required, but, recently the roles were reversed. The Baroness pointed out the Black Canyon Mine & primary source of funds for BS VENTURES still had its original, unassuming entrance and suggested an upgrade was overdue.

Work on the new entrance was finished in June.

Meanwhile, the Baron has acquired another locomotive because shipments of whiskey from BS Liquors and meat from BS Livestock are going farther afield (at least that was the rationale given to the Baroness).



NGRC 2023 IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR

The convention is covered elsewhere so I have only a couple of notes:

- It was a ton of work especially for a core group of members who invested months of their time. This was my first time being part of the group and I was stunned by the volume of work. Work needs to be streamlined and the time demands on members reduced if National (or Regional) conventions are to continue. **GR News** will be looking into this with clubs, like BAGRS, which hosted conventions recently.
- We believe attendees enjoyed the convention, but are not taking that for granted. We are asking them via a survey to all paid attendees.
- We have also sent a survey to BAGRS members who opened their railroads to get feedback about how that went for them.

NGRC 2023 THANK YOU!



Russ Miller is the immediate past president of BAGRS and chairman of the 38th National Garden Railway Convention held here in the Bay Area.

A resident of Castro Valley, Russ also maintains and operates the Stanton Canyon Railway.

Well, my BAGRS friends, we made it through another wonderful National Convention. We had a full week of open layouts, covering the area from the Russian River up North all of the way to Hollister in the South, a distance of over 175 miles! And that's not even counting the postconvention layouts that were open even further South in the San Luis Obispo area.

Being spread over such a large area had its logistical problems, but with the support of REGRS, led by Ken Brody, and the support of CCCGRS, led by Mark Edwards, the many volunteers from BAGRS were able to pull it off. Many, many BAGRS volunteered their time to make this event a success, some working for almost three years! Thank you all so much! Thank you to everyone who held an open house tour, a presentation, or a clinic ... our attendees loved them.

No one can do an event like this alone and I'm forever grateful to the core group of committee members that put in countless hours to pull this event together. A big thanks goes to Rob Lenicheck, along with Jack Verducci and Steve Heselton, who recruited and oversaw the extensive list of clinics that, by all accounts, were well received by our attendees.

Ray Turner organized and reorganized the layout tours numerous times as new layouts were added and some layouts, due to unfortunate circumstances, had to be removed. Ray did a great job with this difficult task...

Pete Pearson did an amazing job organizing and running all of the security at the Santa Clara Convention Center during the days the Exhibit Hall was open. He recruited many people from BAGRS and beyond to make sure there were absolutely no problems. I think this is the fifth time Pete has run security at an NGRC, and he was my very first volunteer this time... Amazing Dedication, Pete!

Helping Pete in the vendor hall was Bob Guinan. Bob made first contact with most of the vendors that attended and kept them informed on what was going on. The Vendor Hall is very difficult to manage, and I could not have pulled this off without the help of Bob and Pete.

Most people know that Steve Smith did a great job organizing the bus tours and their hosts. This was not easy this year as we did not have an accurate count of the number of people on each bus until late in the game. A lot of tough decisions had to be made and Steve is a great sounding board and helped with a lot of key decisions. Steve also did a great job identifying and buying the Audio Visual Gear that we used in our clinics and banquet. The prices to rent this stuff from the SCCC is absolutely insane, and we made the decision early on to buy instead of rent. All of the items purchased are for sale, so if you need a nice projector, screen, PA system, or laptop, contact me and we can work out a deal.

Lynn & Ron Gerber took over the Herculean task of overseeing the onsite registration process. They recruited some amazing volunteers and were able to organize and distribute all of the packets to our attendees. This was not easy and again, some tough decisions had

to be made, but all-in-all, the registration process went better than expected... in no small part to their countless hours and dedication. Thank you so much for taking this on!

Another amazing couple, Tim & Nancy Csabanyi, ran the NGRC Store for the entire week. I love that I can put my entire trust in them to do a fantastic job, and they delivered!

Speaking of trust, in it from the start as our Treasurer extraordinaire was Lawrence Silverman. He kept the books organized and made sure all of the money coming in and going out was always accounted for. His job is not quite done as we're awaiting some revised billing, but it's looking like we will be close to breaking even.

Greg Hile took on the task almost 2 years ago of developing the NGRC2023 website. I don't think he realized how difficult this would be, but he stuck to it through illness and setbacks and made a website that worked and worked well.

One of the hardest working volunteers was our own BAGRS President, Mick Spilsbury. He took on the task of cleaning up the data collected on the website and making it usable. He also oversaw the Social Media outreach and produced the "Constant Contact" emails that were so helpful. Basically, he tied up all of the loose ends... and there were a lot of them.

I also must thank my oldest daughter, Victoria Meyer for running the highly successful NGRC2023 Facebook and Instagram pages. I sent her a lot of short video clips that she added to her own to make the very popular shorts that were viewed by thousands.

And last, but definitely not least, I must thank my lovely wife for putting up with my NGRC2023 obsession for the last three years and for designing the beautiful logo and branding the entire convention that tied everything together. The tour book, the shirts, the posters, and the hats just would not be the same without her.

Thank you all!

2023 NGRC Chairman, Russell Miller



There are still a few 2023 NGRC Convention Cars available.
Please contact [Russ Miller](#) for details.



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 order:

1. Well, it turns out I was right when I said last time that we put on a good show, because by all accounts, the convention was a rousing success.

2. My preconvention role was to develop the convention website and act as registrar. For a variety of reasons, this process had several glitches. At one point I had tech support in the United States, Canada, Ireland, Bulgaria, and India working on issues (by the way, the Bulgarians were the best). One of the glitches was the loss of the names of eighteen registrations. I was able to piece together sixteen of the eighteen, but two of them were impossible to fix, and I named them John Does 7 and 8, assuming we would identify them when they showed up. Not sure if this was a good thing or a bad thing, but we never did figure out who they were.

3. I got to visit some amazing layouts, eat some tasty BBQ, enjoy the ice cream social, and attend the closing banquet, but two events stood out for me. On Thursday, I got to be one of the tour bus guides. As we tooted around Palo Alto and the vicinity, I got to ham it up with a captive audience of 56. A good time was had by all, we saw several wonderful layouts, and the bus driver took us for a surprise drive-by of the boyhood home of Steve Jobs.

4. The second major highlight was the cocktail reception before the Friday night closing banquet. The Fresh Picked Bluegrass Railroad Band, featuring our own BAGRS members Joyce Hennessey and Bill Lavender, provided an exciting and extremely entertaining set of train music. We need to get them back to other BAGRS functions!

5. There were a few bittersweet moments. We lost three layout hosts before the convention. A memorial to Sherman Zell was previously published in *T&T*, and in this issue we say good-bye to Nigel Mallinson and Eric Child. Another moment I witnessed was a couple of BAGRS members lamenting that, due to age, 2023 would likely be their last convention. These moments constitute a continuing reminder that we're all getting older—wiser no doubt—but increasing unable to meet the rigors of our avocation. How we address these issues, both with regard to individual members and with maintaining the vitality of the organization and the hobby itself, will be a major initiative of the future but also a challenge I think we can meet.

6. As Mick so eloquently put it a couple pages back, this is, indeed, my last issue as editor. It's been an honor and a privilege to serve these past three years. The torch is being passed to Roger Nicholson and I am quite confident Roger will do an excellent job. Keep in mind, however, that I don't plan to go quietly in the night. I am hoping to write an article or two down the road with perhaps a focus on BAGRS or railroad history. Who knows, but in the meantime, I think I'll go play with trains ...

Greg

IN MEMORIAM -- ERIC CHILD

Written and Posted on Facebook by Trevor Park

Eric Lynn Child: March 25, 1944 – June 19, 2023

Today the Fern Creek & Western team lost one of our own. It is with a heavy heart that we report that FC&W co-founder Eric Child passed away after a valiant battle with cancer.

A lot can be said about Eric. He was a person that was driven, certainly funny, sometimes very stubborn and strong-willed, but above all, he had a heart of gold that was unmatched by just about any one out there. Eric made it his life goal to be inclusive, especially when it came to introducing people to model and toy trains. More specifically though, his calling was to foster a passion for trains in aspiring young train fans. He was a strong advocate for kids to have a hands-on experience with trains, breaking the stereotypical scene where the adults run the trains and the kids watch. Nowhere was this more evident than the annual toy train Christmas show founded by Eric at the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, where he made it a point that the adults brought trains for the kids to run. Eric made the dreams playing train come true for countless young kids, but there was one kid with a big dream in particular that Eric worked tirelessly to make a reality.



It was 9 years ago this week that Eric and I broke ground on the Fern Creek & Western. At the time, I was 14 years old and I had dreamed for well over half of my life about having a garden railroad. It was not practical to have a garden railroad at the house where I grew up, and instead I had been involved in helping on other peoples' garden railroads for many years. When I first started spending a lot of time with Eric perusing rail car restoration of full-size equipment, I quickly learned that Eric had previously had a garden railroad that he tore out as he didn't want to maintain it anymore. One day, I came up with the brilliant idea to put the railroad back so I could live my dream of building a garden railroad. Much to my surprise, Eric agreed to this outlandish idea! As we were standing there postulating about what the track plan would look like, I noticed the old water feature from Eric's previous railroad, which was overgrown with fern-like plants. Like any good railroad, we had big dreams of building west (for about 500 feet). And thus, the Fern Creek & Western construction commenced!

Eric and I started construction. The original layout of the railroad looked unrecognizable compared to how it looks today. Over the years, the railroad went through many changes, some of which challenged our construction capability. But one thing became clear to me very quickly before any changes were made. It takes a village to maintain the railroad. The FC&W team became more than Eric and me, and it excelled the railroad to become better than it could have ever been with just Eric and I working on it. Eric's inclusivity allowed so many talented people to help us along the way.

Eric and I started construction. The original layout of the railroad looked unrecognizable compared to how it looks today. Over the years, the railroad went through many changes, some of which challenged our construction capability. But one thing became clear to me very quickly before any changes were made. It takes a village to maintain the railroad. The FC&W team became more than Eric and me, and it excelled the railroad to become better than it could have ever been with just Eric and I working on it. Eric's inclusivity allowed so many talented people to help us along the way.

While many of us have worked tirelessly to build the FC&W into what it has become, only one person was with the railroad every day, doing everything from basic maintenance to carrying out our wild dreams of expansion on the days when the rest of us weren't there.

Eric's dedication to the Fern Creek & Western was unmatched. Not only was he dedicated to building the railroad, but he was dedicated to sharing the railroad through open houses, Halloween events and just letting the neighborhood kids come run trains. Beyond the railroad though, Eric was a friend to all of us, a mentor for garden railroading and for life in general, and a person that was selfless in his ability to derive joy from the pride and accomplishments of others who he touched.

The FC&W team as a whole has made this railroad beautiful and fulfilling, but it was Eric that made my childhood dream of having a garden railroad come true. For that, I will be eternally grateful, and I remain humbled by his generosity to let all of us participate in such a fulfilling project as the FC&W. I think I can speak for all of us by saying thank you Eric. Thank you for everything you have done for us and so many others. You will be missed by all of us more than we can express.

So with that, the burning question you likely have is what does the future hold for the FC&W. We are continuing forward with opening the railroad for the National Garden Railway Convention in just 2 ½ weeks from now. Eric was fighting his cancer until the bitter end in order to be present for the convention as we had been preparing for this event for well over 2 years. His passing has motivated the FC&W crew to work even harder and make the railroad look the best it ever has in his honor. We also plan to open up after the convention for the public, but there are no firm dates yet as to when this will be. However, after these events the railroad will have to ultimately meet its demise. The Fern Creek & Western will live on somewhere else someday, but this particular layout will be no more in the near future. The open houses we have this year will afford everyone the opportunity to enjoy the FC&W one last time before it goes into hibernation. For now though, our crew must continue to push forward and work tirelessly to present the railroad in its best appearance for the NGRC, which is exactly what Eric would have wanted.

Eric, you have your highball. Nothing but clear iron and green signals ahead.

Sincerely,

Trevor Park
FC&W Co-Founder



IN MEMORIAM -- NIGEL MALLINSON

Nigel J. Mallinson, age 69, passed away on Thursday, June 15, 2023. Nigel was born in 1953 in Preston, England, to Derek and Dorothy Mallinson. He graduated from Oak Grove High School in San Jose in 1971. Nigel married Margaret Halford in May 1976.

Nigel was a business owner and Service Manager at C & N Tractors in Watsonville, Calif., where he was instrumental in developing a special bug vacuum for strawberry farmers to use on their tractors for pesticide free farming. He was a mechanic by trade, and loved working on classic cars as well as helping restore vintage tractors at the Agricultural History Museum in Watsonville. He also spent time working in his backyard on his other favorite hobby, his garden railroad. Nigel and his wife belonged to a travel club and loved going on RV outings with friends.

Nigel is survived by his wife, Margaret; daughter, Lisa; as well as a sister, Diane; and brother, Scott. Nigel was always the first to help someone if they needed something, and was a wonderful husband and father who will be greatly missed.

In honor of Nigel's leadership in his area's annual garden railroad tour and food drive, we post this reprint of an article from the Morgan Hill Times featuring Nigel and his layout.

Trains for a cause

By: DEBRAESKINAZI@NEWSVMEDIA.COM

August 11, 2016, *The Morgan Hill Times* <https://morganhilltimes.com/trains-for-a-cause/>

Margaret Mallinson used to soak in a hot tub on their patio. But four years ago, her husband, Nigel, swapped it out for piles of dirt, a retaining wall and a small logging town. That's how it all began.

"Where you're standing used to be my spa. Does that tell you anything?" says Margaret.

Four-plus years ago, Nigel, 63, began constructing an elaborate garden railroad in their Gilroy backyard. "A lot of it, I built. Like the hotel, the saw mill, the mine—that's all scratch built," he says.

The first summer he began working away at the 1:20 scale railroad, he added the waterfall and has gradually been incorporating other elements into the layout of his town, aptly named Mt. Madonna.

The logging and mining town is set in the 1920s, complete with steam-powered engines, buildings and cars all derived from the period. Much of Nigel's construction is made from real redwood lumber he sourced from a felled 100-year-old tree on a friend's property. They are cut like miniature two-by-fours, or as siding, or left to resemble realistic logs.

Nigel is a member of the Bay Area Garden Railway Society, part of a national organization of garden railroaders. The local club was founded in 1988 and is one of the oldest and largest clubs in the U.S.

The society will hold their 22nd Garden Railroad Tour and food drive this month, benefiting St. Joseph's Center in Gilroy and Community Pantry, Now Community Food Bank, in Hollister. The tour will include 10 layouts at homes in South Santa Clara and San Benito counties.

This is the only annual garden railroad tour in the greater Bay Area that includes a charity food drive—which helps bring in more traffic.

In early July [ed. note: 2016], the Bay Area club hosted the 32nd Annual National Garden



Railway Convention and opened up 90 railroad layouts all over the Bay Area.

Nigel Mallinson's was one of the garden railroads featured. "I had 400 people on the Fourth of July," he says. "There were people from Australia, New Zealand, Germany. People from all over the world."

His favorite part, and what most impressed his fellow railroad enthusiasts, are the moving parts and audio that accompany his layout, referred to in the craft as 'animation.'

There are about 50 people in Nigel's town. Onlookers will find loggers sending redwood logs down an animated slackline, miners shouting orders, construction workers building, engine house workers tending to trains and even scantily clad ladies of the night.

We have the jail and if you look in the front there is a lady of the night distracting the sheriff so the prisoner can escape out the back," says Margaret.

Mixed into the layout are animals, a hotel, a graveyard, a hobo camp, people fishing, even a tow truck driver.

"One of the logging trucks went down in the river and had to get a tow," Nigel points out.

Garden railroaders invest a lot of research, time and money into their layouts.

Roger Stump, 69, of Hollister, has been running a garden railroad since 2004. He was exposed to trains as a child, but didn't take it on as a hobby until he saw a show on TV called Whistle Stop Gardens.

He and his wife, Donna, have a layout in their backyard that is about 625 square feet. Roger says Donna's talent is in choosing the plants and rocks and picking their placement in the railroad garden.

"I like determining what's going to happen and where it's going to happen. I have a lot of fun doing that, but I think probably the most fun is sharing it with other people," he says.

Nigel Mallinson and Roger Stump both enjoy relaxing with their layouts in the afternoons. They are also thrilled to talk with fellow garden railroaders and encourage people to get started building their own.

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

Camilla Cheng, Milpitas CA, SJ/Milpitas district

Dennis Eichner, Pebble Beach CA, Golden Gate district

Fred Witt, San Jose CA, SJ/Milpitas district

Mark Mack, Foster City CA, N. Peninsula & SF district

George Schauer, Redwood City CA, N. Peninsula & SF district

Paul Wallace, San Carlos CA, N. Peninsula & SF district

Brett Allard, San Jose CA, SJ/Milpitas district

James Burke, Vallejo CA, Golden Gate district

FALL OPEN RAILROADS: Can you be open?



Hello members who invested a lot of time opening for the convention and so have an 'openable' railroad.

Hello members who could not be open for the convention and but could be open soon.

We hope to schedule some open railroads in September and October because:

1. We have a raft of new members and we would like to give them the opportunity to see some open railroads this year.
2. So much work went into open NGRC RRs which should have a second viewing!
3. Our railroads are the Crown Jewels of BAGRS and always deserve to be seen.

If you could open your railroad on any the **7 Sundays from September 10 through October 22**, please let us know by going to the link below before **August 15** and checking the Sundays that you could be open. **This will take you just a couple of minutes.**

We will then see if we can put together some groupings of RRs that make geographical sense for some of the Sundays.

We will share the outcome with all who respond no later than **August 25**.

This is the link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FallOpenRRs>



WE'VE GOT THE PICTURES

Convention Photos from a Variety of Attendees

Wow! Are there are a lot of photographs from the NGRC 2023 convention!

Credits for the following photographs include:

KB -- Ken Brody
GH -- Greg Hile
SS -- Steve Smith
MS -- Mick Spilsbury

Also, many thanks to Teya Caple-Woods of Chesapeake, Virginia for all of her Facebook posts filled with literally hundreds of photos from the convention. You may find her page [here](#).



A Word to the Wise (at Roaring Camp)
-- GH



Steve Smith's layout -- SS

WE'VE GOT THE PICTURES

Convention Photos from a Variety of Attendees



Mark Samson -- GH



Fun times at the Ice Cream Social -- GH



Ken Brody layout -- KB



Roaring Camp -- GH

WE'VE GOT THE PICTURES

Convention Photos from a Variety of Attendees



Gary Whaling manning the BAGRS booth -- GH



Joyce, Bill and the boys really rocked, er, bluegrassed the place -- GH

WE'VE GOT THE PICTURES

Convention Photos from a Variety of Attendees



Del Oro -- MS



Some of the guys at the registration booth -- GH



Chris Gathard is pleased -- GH

WE'VE GOT THE PICTURES

Convention Photos from a Variety of Attendees



Liz Spilsbury, Malinda Jungst and customer at the Kid's Clinic



Carnivale Comes to Porcupine Gulch -- GH

WE'VE GOT THE PICTURES

Convention Photos from a Variety of Attendees



Ed Sykes loading a bus -- SS



Mike McKenna -- GH



The Exhibit and Vendor Hall was busy -- GH



Gary Woolard and Ron Lenicheck share a moment -- GH



At a sold-out Kid's Clinic session -- GH



Likewise Pete Pearson and Richard Murray -- GH



Eric Moe and Daniel Smith -- GH



The Prez Speaks -- GH



At the Closing Banquet -- GH



Ken Mitchrone and Michael Brown talk about Ward Kimble and Walt Disney at the Closing Banquet -- GH



We like trains, too! New friends from the U.K. -- GH

“Couple Show Off Detailed Orient Express Backyard Railroad,” by Calvin Nuttall, *Morgan Hill Life*, July 12-25, 2023



While some Morgan Hill homeowners might fill their backyards with flower beds, vegetable gardens, or a pool, Alex and Yarka Kennett’s outdoor decor would not be complete without their working scale model of the iconic luxury railway the Orient Express.

Wending its way through sculpted grassy hills and hand-painted snowy mountains, past miniature train stations and dollhouse-scale villages, the battery-powered replica train meanders through a tiny Europe in the couple’s backyard.

"I've just always loved trains," Yarka said as she watched her radio-controlled engine valiantly haul its complement of passenger cars up the slopes of the Austrian Alps. "And I've always loved the Orient Express, its history and all of the stories about it. So we thought it would be fun to recreate it."

Built in the late 19th century, the real Orient Express was a passenger railway that traveled the length of continental Europe. While it was at first an unremarkable railway service, the Express has been portrayed in countless pieces of film and literature over the years, earning it a luxurious mystique.



As first- and second-generation European immigrants respectively, Yarka and Alex view their homage to the iconic railway as a way to celebrate their heritage. A retired architect, Yarka is the artistic force behind the project. A real estate broker and board member for the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, Alex fashions the terrain and lays the tracks that guide the little locomotive around the backyard diorama.

"I have the ideas, and he makes them come into reality," Yarka said. "We learned a lot of new techniques. We learned to work with cement and concrete and stone. Everything you see is a live plant. I just hope they don't get too big!"



The Kennetts are members of the Bay Area Garden Railway Society, a group dedicated to outdoor miniature train projects like theirs. One of the largest such groups in North America, the BAGRS (or 'Baggers,' as the Kennetts call them) recently hosted an international convention July 1-9, which attracted participants from as far as Japan and Australia to admire society members' displays.

"The whole Santa Clara Convention Center was taken over with rail layouts," Yarka said. "People came from all over the world. Some even had live steam engines with real coal and water powering the train."

Founded in 1988, the BAGRS was created to support the development of a community of garden railway enthusiasts in the Bay Area by providing resources to members such as tours of existing rail layouts, organizing clinics, publishing a monthly newsletter, and managing the National Garden Railway Convention. The society is home to about 300 members.

This year was the Kennetts' first time having their own railway showcased in the convention. The BAGRS arranged for buses to transport convention-goers between homes of society



members who have permanent displays installed. They were excited to welcome visitors to their open house July 7, though some parts of their display remained incomplete.

"It is never done," Yarka said. "There is always something to fix or something new to add. We started building it in August two years ago, and there are still some features that are under construction."



ALL STEAMED UP ...

A true Renaissance 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.

CONVENTION WEEK

by Richard Murray

Tuesday of Convention Week was my chance to host an open house.

I had been working on the garden for about seven months. Much of the time I was pruning. One of the things that I had been postponing for years was the painting of many of the old and broken down buildings that I got for free over the years. Finally, most got painted. Practically all the buildings had no sign boards except a bank building which had hand painted signs. I figured if someone else could do it, so could I. One of my favorite courses in school was drafting and, therefore, I knew I had some skills for the job. I tried my luck at hand painting a sign on just one building. It took a long time and required lots of patience. I first blocked out the letters in pencil and then followed with some high quality paint using a very fine brush. Where I painted a letter too thin, I repainted the letter a little thicker. Where I painted a letter too thick, I thinned the letter with a little of the background color. The first sign actually looked ok, so I wound up doing a total of eight buildings. I was eventually ready to do a very special sign: My sister-in-law had been bugging me for years to build a Chinese laundry. Not only did Melinda's sister provide the correct Chinese characters for "Chinese Laundry," but she also included a lesson on Chinese calligraphy. I even did the lettering in traditional Chinese red. My in-laws were happy with the result and hopefully will quit bugging me now.

During the open house, the layout was always quite crowded but not so crowded that the engineers couldn't get to their engines when necessary. People still had room to move a bit. At our last convention six years ago, I had about 400 visitors. This time I had about 300. A 30% reduced attendance seemed common throughout the convention. Melinda put out lots and lots of goodies for the visitors, and by the time all visitors had left, practically everything was gone. That's when the excitement began. Mike McKenna, one of the engineers, started flying his drone over the layout. It was amazing the control he had over the drone. Yet, it had built in software to override his control in order to avoid crashing into ground based objects.

On Wednesday, the BAGRS trailer was supposed to enter Hall C at 8:00 a.m. by way of the cargo door on the back of Hall C. Unfortunately, a number of vendors had crowded onto the ramp so tightly that hardly anybody could move including all the vendors in the back of the line. All the railroad setups were supposed to get in first, unload, and then quickly turn around their trailers and get out. It didn't work out that way. There was even a 1/2 hour delay because the convention center rep said the proper auto insurance was not on file. It seems only "hired" trucks and trailers could enter. Enter the hero of the morning, Pete Pearson, our chief security officer. He gave the vendors a quarter and said all vehicles were now "hired." That was ok with the convention center rep, and a few vehicles starting entering, including a truck with one of the biggest trailers who wasn't supposed to enter yet. A big hassle ensued: he parked right smack in the middle of the steamers assigned spot. The driver said that it normally takes two hours for him to unload his truck. All the steamers waiting to set up the track were going to be stuck twiddling their thumbs for two hours. Someone suggested

that we help unload the truck to speed things up. All of us did indeed help unload the truck. Finally at 9:30 a.m., Bob Trabucco was able to drive our trailer into the hall. On Thursday I gave a clinic on "Bridges in the Garden Railroad". I'm not much good on extemporaneous speech, so I spent several months trying to memorize a written speech. I gave the 45minute speech to myself about 15 times before I was comfortable. About 40 people showed up and I heard no snoring. Success! I heard a couple of others were not so lucky. One had just ten show up and another just two.

I had an awkward coincidence. At the exact time of my speech, I was also supposed to let in many steamers and their steam stuff by way of the back doors of the hall and give them their registrations. I had already arranged for our registrar, Lynn Gerber, to give me all of their registrations. Since I hadn't learned yet how to be at two places at the same time, I gave all the registrations to Gary Whaley and had him open the back door to the hall. It took me weeks of planning for the steamers to get their registrations and bring their steam stuff into the hall: We couldn't bring our steam stuff in through the hotel because carts with wheels were prohibited. We couldn't bring our stuff through the cargo doors on Wednesday and Thursday morning because the parking spaces were reserved for the vendors. On top of those problems, the registration desk was located at the opposite end of the facility, and entry to the hall wasn't allowed until registration packets were picked up. My brain was bursting. Eventually, I was able to simplify some of the complexities, and on the last day before the the hall opened, I learned too late that some of the rules were not as rigid as I had thought.

Throughout Thursday, Friday, and Saturday the steamers ran their engines and talked to visitors. We even had one of the visitors run his engine on our track. Each day we had enough steamers to run the full six hours the hall was open. The Public Day seemed the most busy. I talked with a couple of vendors, and they seemed to be pleased with their sales. One of the hits of the show was the collection of scratch built engines by BAGRS steamers. The two tables allowed us to display about 10 engines and one pile driver. In response to a common question, the answer was, "No sir, these engines are not for sale. They are a demonstration of the amazing skills that our members have."

Thanks to all the steamers who worked long hours to make our steam track a big hit.

Please say a prayer for our little 25 lb. dog who chased a squirrel and came up lame. She needed reconstructive surgery on her knee. She now has a metal plate on her knee, too many sutures, and the hated Victorian collar.



Note Mike McKenna's drone surveying the layout.

The infamous ramp to hall C where trucks and trailers were in a snarled mess.

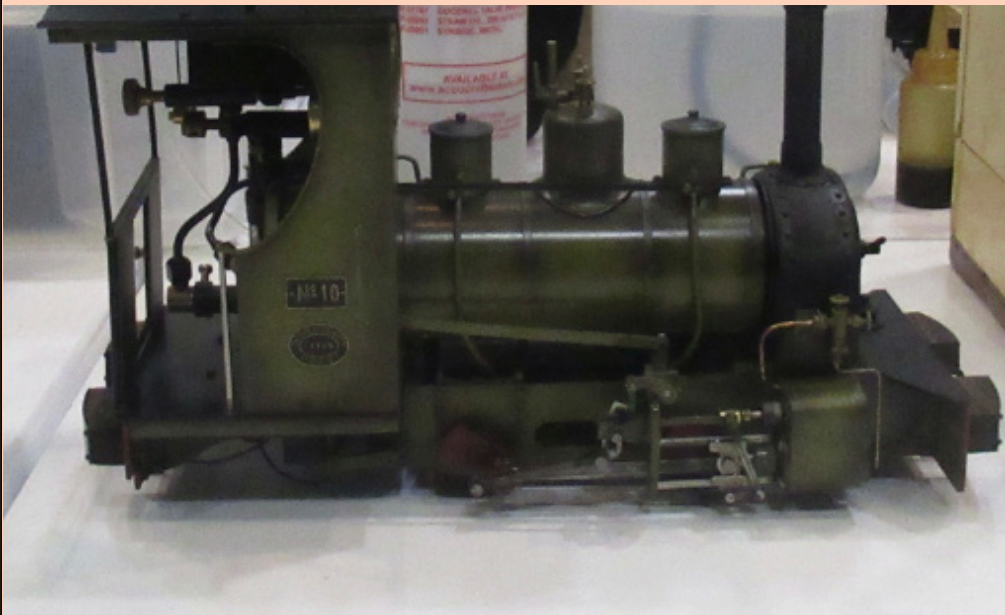


The hall was huge!

The highly successful display of scratch built engines by BAGRS steamers.



Mike McKenna's engine, whose prototype fell off a lift and into an abyss, was a featured article in *T&T* a couple issues ago. He also brought a steam powered Ferris wheel.



Sanjaya Kumar's 0-4-0 Hunslet Waril.

Jim Goss owns this Garrett with more wheels (22?) than Carter has pills.



Tim Boles gets a faceful of steam from his 2 cylinder Accucraft Shay.



Chris Gathard shows off "Lucille," an improved Ruby. He was one of those who showed up every day to help.



Chris Coley' powerful British engine pulls a proper era passenger car





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.



San Jose & Alum Rock Park Railway

Rail service into California's oldest municipal park, originally known as "the reservation," began in 1896 from the end of the horse car line on Santa Clara Street, in downtown San Jose, through two tunnels and over dozens of trestles to the bucolic destination. Passengers paid twenty five cents to travel the eight-mile route in street cars pulled by steam dummy locomotives (disguised to appear as a street car to avoid frightening horses that may be encountered on the way).

The narrow gauge line was purchased by the San Jose and Santa Clara Railway in 1898, operated as the park division and electrified in 1901. Power was received from overhead lines strung from the largest gasoline fueled electric power house on the West Coast, located at the mouth of Alum Rock Canyon.

Part of a consolidation of Santa Clara Valley railroads, the San Jose and Santa Clara Railway was sold in 1910; however, major flooding the following year wiped out much of the railways infrastructure into Alum Rock Park. An entirely new rerouted standard gauge rail line built to first class interurban standards was completed and put into operation by the Peninsular Railway in 1913.

The proliferation of automobiles and the impact of the great depression signaled the end of rail service into Alum Rock Park, and the historic line was abandoned in 1932.



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.

There's Always Another One

Since I was all caught up with all my projects, I decided it was time to try to finish up my McKean motorcar.

So after working on the McKean car off and on for over a year now, I was on a mission to finish it. But as always something always comes up. I was able to finish the painting, and installing an Air Wire R/C unit with sound capabilities, and now all that's left is to install the windows.



But then it happened, my good friend Bill just came back from Ireland and while he was there he went to a museum that had some models of old Irish motorcars.

One that we really liked was an articulated Atkinson & Walker motorcar from the Donegal County Railways.

After his return we had lunch together, and he talked about what a great time he had in Ireland. Then we started talking about the articulated motorcars. Before the lunch was over, I knew I was going to build one.

The photos from his cellphone weren't the best and the models didn't have all the details that I needed to build this car.

Looking over the internet I found only a few pictures of this motorcar. As it turns out there were quite a few different versions.

I was soon off to Tap Plastics in Stockton to purchase more Styrene. On the ride home, I kept thinking about how long this car was going to be.

This was going to be a freelance 7/8 scale motorcar and as always it would be built from 1/8" and 1/16" styrene with the help of Evergreen Plastic strips. For the power units I'm using two

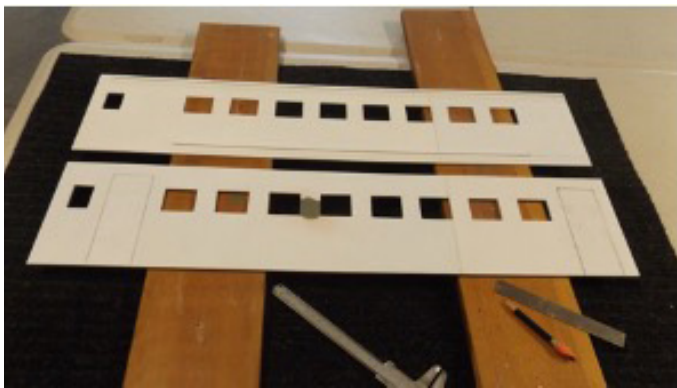
motor blocks from a U.S.A. Trains diesel locomotive.

This is going to be a big one. The passenger section alone will end up being over 31" long and the crew section, with the spacing for the two sections to articulate, will add another 11" plus 4" with couplers. The total length will end up being 46" with a height of 9" and width of 5-1/4".

Here's one version of the Atkinson & Walker Motorcar



Here's the start of my freelance version of the motorcar.

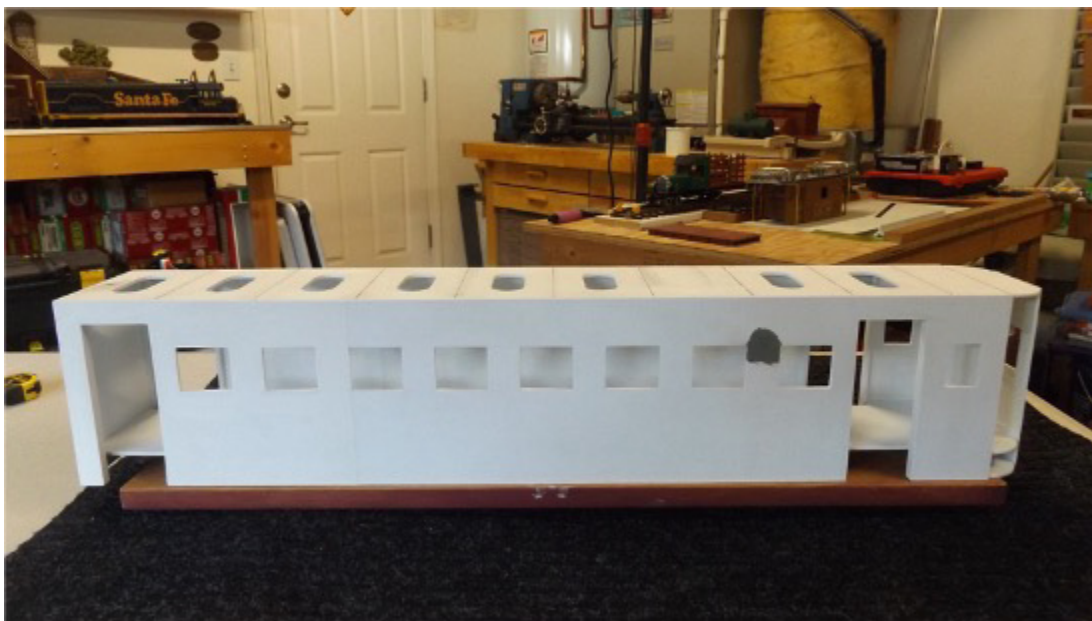


I hope to finish the passenger section of this motorcar this month and finish up the crews section next month. So this will be a two part article.

The rear corners were formed by planking the corners with Evergreen #156 styrene strips. It took two rows of the #156 styrene strips to make up the 1/8" thickness of the side walls. I found this method a lot easier then trying to bend the styrene in tight corners.

After sanding the corners, I used glazing putty to hide any gaps left behind from the styrene strips. The glazing putty can be sanded to a smooth finish within an hour.

Next I brushed on two coats of primer to check for any flaws, then sanded the primer to a smooth finish.





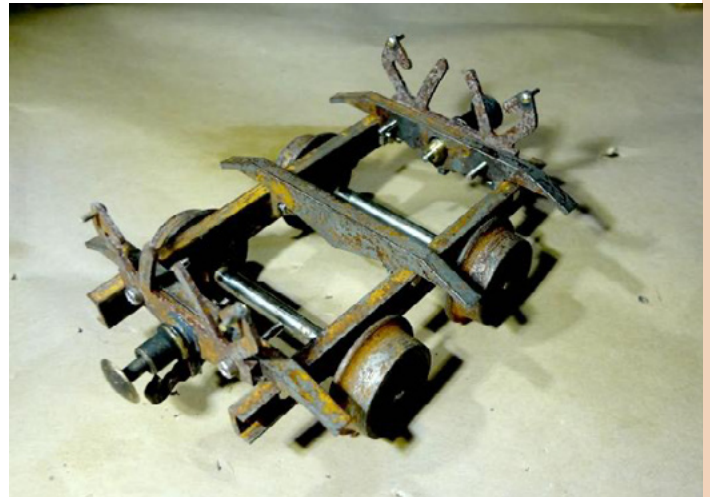
EAST DEVIL HILLS MODELING GROUP

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.

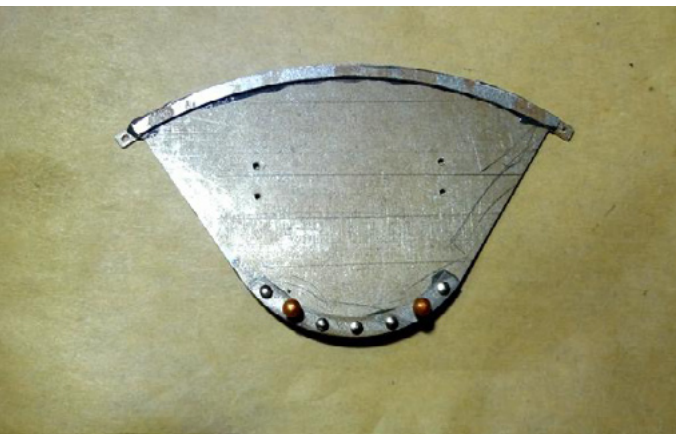
As everybody is busy preparing for the convention, this month only a brief update. Bill Allen's "Trojan" is now completed, except the tender. Building tenders is his least favored task, so he puts it off till the end.



Dennis continued working on tipper cars for my rack loco and the almost finished chassis.



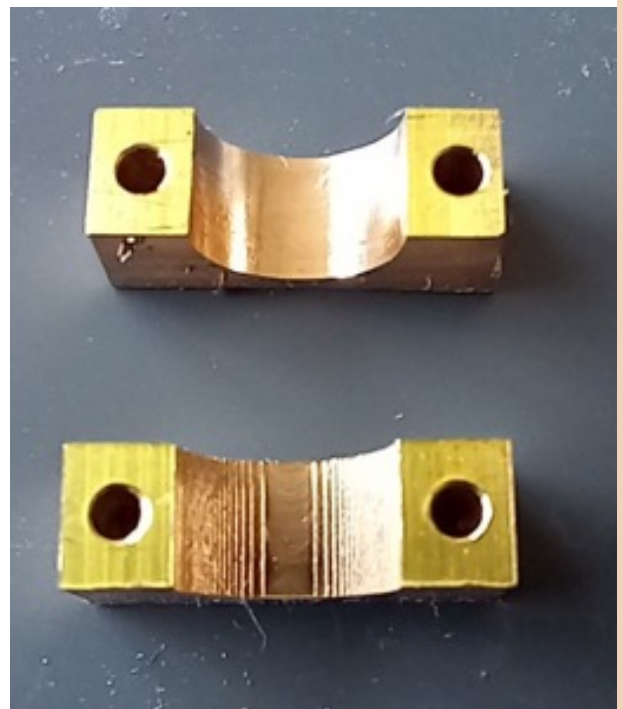
The rust is real!
Currently he is working on the tips:



As my rack loco is now undergoing test runs, I am very much looking forward to pushing a string of tippers up the hill. I will even get some of the original iron ore from the former mine! I started with little trucks for transporting a horse-drawn wagon with my Hit & Miss loco. A prototype is in operation on a preserved field railway in Germany (<https://bimmelbahn-forum.de/forum/index.php?thread/10902-feldbahnbilder-von-der-strube-bahn-schlanstedt/&pageNo=40>):



As I needed 16 half-bearings for the 2 trucks, I came up with a scheme to machine them on my CNC-mill without intervention. The shape of the “half-pipes” was milled using a 3D technique called waterline milling, where the shape was produced by removing subsequent layers. The remaining little steps were removed with a reamer:



That's it for this month. I wish you all a successful convention!

Henner

PROGRESS ON THE RURAL BURRILL

Photos and Text by Robert Burrill



Our July 7 & 9 2023 RR
OPENING REPORT
Robert L. Burrill Conductor of
R.B.G.R.R.

“Staying on track is my ambition. I want to open the gates to Disneyland.”

Twenty-eight years in the making, and with 188 visitors, July 7 and 9, 2023 provided the largest group to ever visit the Rural Burrill Garden Railroad in Milpitas.

Art training deals with the courage to reach for perfection. To control the details is my goal.

Welcome to the growing Rural Burrill Garden R.R.—track power converted to “Air Wire” Battery Radio Control featuring America’s first Streamliner, The “Yankee Flyer.” (In 1934 the first-diesel-electric locomotive was built by the Boston Maine & Maine Central Railroads to “lift the Spirits of America” after The Great Depression. Likewise, the R.B. Garden R.R. built another version of the Zephyr to lift Our Spirits after the Covid-19 Pandemic).



We celebrated an APRICOT SUMMER with an Apricot Express Train loaded with the beautiful Blenheim Apricots that were tasted by our many guests—from all over the USA and many international travelers from Germany, Switzerland, Canada, and Australia.



MORE TO COME NEXT TIME!

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	greghile@outlook.com
At-large board member	Richard Murray	steamer060@sbcglobal.net
At-large board member	Roger Nicholson	ran66x2@gmail.com
Scheduling Coordinator	Roger Nicholson	scheduling@bagrs.org
Live Steamers	Richard Murray	steamer060@sbcglobal.net
Membership	Ray Turner	membership@bagrs.org
Newsletter	Roger Nicholson	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	
Members Outside BAGRS Districts	Nancy Norris



LIVE STEAM CALENDAR

August 12	Hiller
Saturday/Sunday, Sept. 2-3, 2023	Ardenwood
September 16-17, 2023	Los Altos
Saturday, 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, bags.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.



It's truly been an honor and a privilege. If you're looking for me, this is where you will probably find me. The pool is always open, the drinks are free, and the gate's unlocked. Come on by and bring a train. It'll be ready soon ...

Greg

TRELLIS AND TRESTLE

Copyright ©2023 Bay Area Garden Railway Society. *Trellis & Trestle* is published monthly. Submissions are encouraged. Please contact the editor for further information. We reserve the right to edit for length, clarity, and content.

Editor: Gregory Hile

Assistant Editors: Noëlla Simmons, Roger Nicholson

Regular Contributors: David Frediani, Henner Meinhold,
Richard Murray, Bill Ralph, Mick Spilsbury

JOIN US AT:

BAGRS.ORG **FACEBOOK** **INSTAGRAM**