

BAY AREA GARDEN RAILWAY SOCIETY

# TRELLIS & TRESTLE

JANUARY 2021

## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I am honored and very happy to have the opportunity to serve as the new editor of *Trellis and Trestle*. Let me say, first of all, that I have big shoes to fill. Ray Turner served magnificently in this role for the past eight years and we are all forever in his debt for the legacy he left.

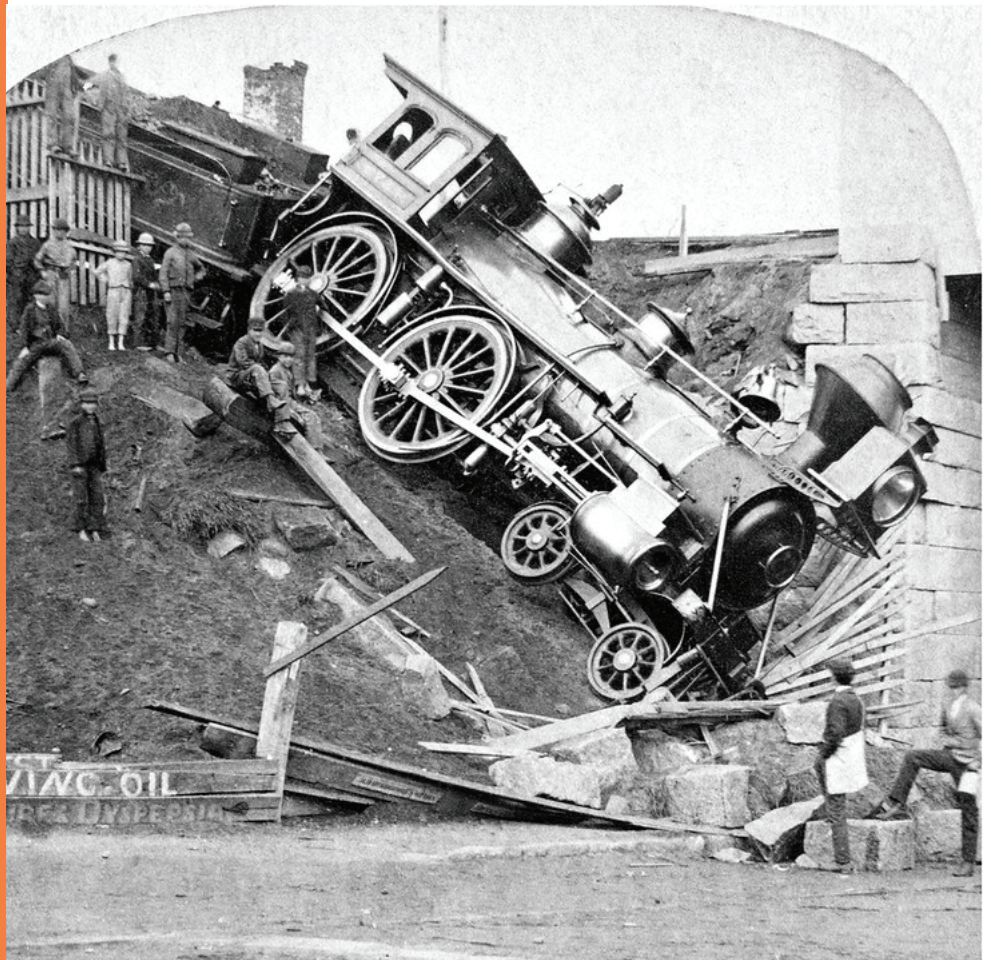
Thanks to modern technology there is the opportunity for some changes to the style and content of *Trellis and Trestle*, some of which you will see in this issue, but the goal is to always provide the best foot forward for BAGRS and to grow and solidify our membership. I'll have a bit more about me and my layout later but please know that your comments and suggestions are always welcome. Among the future goals are better integration of our BAGRS website and social media with the newsletter for greater outreach.

- GREG HILE

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## THE YEAR 2020-I GUESS IT COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE





# THE PREZ SEZ

*Russ Miller, BAGRS President*

2021... It is so nice to say that. Say it out loud... Twenty Twenty One. I'm so looking forward to this year, mostly to put 2020 behind us but also for all of the possibilities. Sure, the first few months look like they will be a repeat of last year but by Spring, things should definitely be better... Right? My wife Jenifer, who works as a hospital chaplain, received her first shot of the COVID-19 Vaccine on Christmas Eve. Within the next few months, most of our members hopefully will be able to get the vaccine. The more protected we all are, the more confidence I have that we can gather again as a group. As stated in last month's newsletter, the Annual Meeting has been put on hold as we wait to see what transpires on the pandemic front. Hopefully this delay only lasts a month or two...

Because I'm really hoping that we can hold the Annual Meeting, possibly in an outdoor setting, preferably in someones backyard in conjunction with a large, members-only swap meet sometime in April or May. We want to keep it safe (and legal) so we just have to see what the

State of California decides. I'd love to have layout tours again, starting up in May or June... I'm thinking we can make an effort to stagger visiting hours so that only a few visitors are at any house at any given time. Of course, going off of open house tours from years past I'm not sure if that is even necessary. Well,



unless food is being served or we have a social planned. As many of you are aware, I'm also the Scheduling Coordinator and the job is doubly tough this year. Not only do we not know what the state has in store, other events that are normally planned well in advance also are being held in limbo. I always try to plan our tours so that they do not coincide with events happening in the same general vicinity. I remember all too well the traffic on Highway

101 being slowed in the North Bay by the NASCAR races in Sonoma or traffic at a standstill in the South Bay because of the Historic Races in Monterey. Besides traffic concerns, I also do my best to make sure that our tours don't conflict with other events that our members like to attend, such as the Summer Steam-Up or the Good Guys Car Shows or even the National Garden Railway Convention scheduled this year in Nashville on May 30th thru June 5th. I was waiting to hear from our friends in Nashville before writing this letter, as I'm concerned that the recent bombing in downtown Nashville, along with recent COVID-19 surge restrictions, might affect their plans. Make sure to monitor their website, [www.ngrc2021.com](http://www.ngrc2021.com) if you are planning to go.

We're in the home stretch now but we cannot let out guard down; everyone- please remain safe so that we can gather together again at some future date. I am hopeful that we will see each other soon! I can see the light at the end of the tunnel... and I know its a train... a G-Scale train!

# MARKETING

*Mick Spilsbury, BAGRS At-Large Board Member*

## GARDEN RAILROADING COMMUNITIES

Conventional wisdom has put it about that garden railroading is in decline, but some healthy on-line communities would suggest that it's alive and kicking.

## GR NEWS

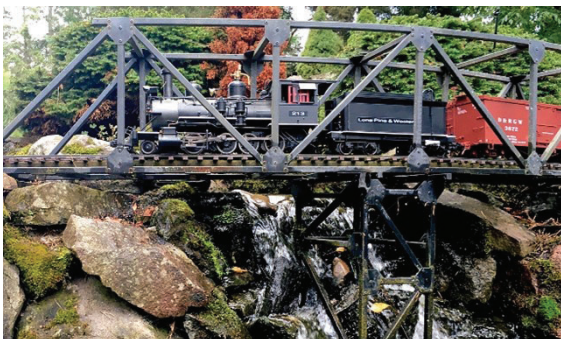
The new GR News community has gathered 110 clubs with over 7,000 members in the space of 3 months. Its website has had more than 5,000 unique visitors from the US, Canada, Germany, Australia, the UK, New Zealand and 35 other countries. More than 30 vendors are interested in placing ads. I hope you had a chance to view the first issue at <https://www.grnews.org/get> It's still there if not!

## FACEBOOK

The new GR News Facebook Group has 750+ members but is dwarfed by long established groups. G-Scale – Garden Trains has 6,800 members, G Scale Garden Railways 4,400. The quality of images and videos across all the Facebook groups is amazing.

## INSTAGRAM

There are numerous garden railroading hashtags posting wonderful images. Just search 'garden railways' or 'garden railroads' to find them. We have added 200 followers to BAGRS' Instagram in the last 6 months by posting our own great images like these:



All in all, to plagiarize a famous line from Monty Python - 'We're not dead yet! Happy New Year!'

# NEWSLETTER SHARING

*Mick Spilsbury, BAGRS At-Large Board Member*

## **Other Garden Railway clubs sharing newsletters with BAGRS members:**

Central Cal. Coast GRS: [https://bags.org/resources/Documents/CCCGRS\\_12\\_20.pdf](https://bags.org/resources/Documents/CCCGRS_12_20.pdf)

Denver GRS: [https://bags.org/resources/Documents/DGRS\\_11\\_20.pdf](https://bags.org/resources/Documents/DGRS_11_20.pdf)

Gold Coast GRS: [https://bags.org/resources/Documents/GCGRS\\_11\\_20.pdf](https://bags.org/resources/Documents/GCGRS_11_20.pdf)

Orange County GRS: [https://bags.org/resources/Documents/OCGRS\\_12\\_20.pdf](https://bags.org/resources/Documents/OCGRS_12_20.pdf)

Puget Sound GRS: [https://bags.org/resources/Documents/PSGRS\\_1\\_21.pdf](https://bags.org/resources/Documents/PSGRS_1_21.pdf)

Rose City GRS: [https://bags.org/resources/Documents/RCGRS\\_12\\_20.pdf](https://bags.org/resources/Documents/RCGRS_12_20.pdf)

Sacramento Valley GRS: <http://www.svgrs.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/12dec20.pdf?1606864678>

It should be remembered that most garden railroad clubs welcome members of other clubs when traveling in the area (after COVID).





## FEATURED ARTICLE

PLANTING THE  
DURANGO & JASPERSTORY AND PHOTOS  
BY JIM ROWSON

I will admit that, until now, I have shown no ability to keep plants alive (I once killed a cactus by underwatering it, for example). Given that the Durango & Jasper is meant to be a garden railroad, this clearly needed to change.

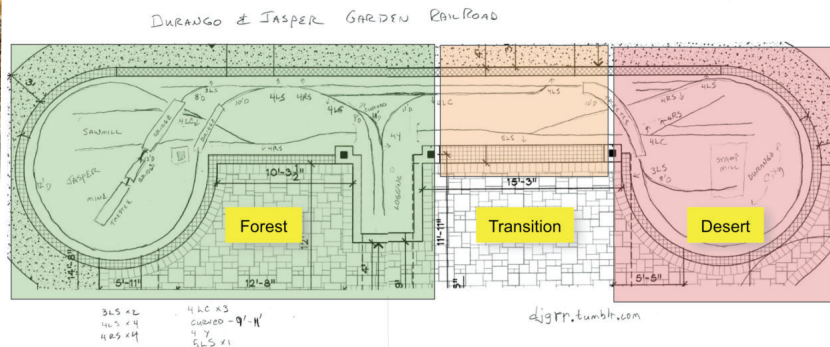
Starting from such a stunning position of ignorance, I decided to take advantage of a lucky coincidence and hire Nancy Norris, the former gardening editor for Garden Railways magazine, to plan, install, and teach me about these living things that I will be nurturing. She lives not far from me.



# FEATURED ARTICLE

## Planting the Durango & Jasper

Nancy first came by in September, 2019 for an initial chat, We chatted about my vague plans and she seemed to like the general flow. She had lots of good ideas and we modified my initial thinking. Here's a track plan with some colors to mark the different zones as I loosely described them to her:



In the forest area we have, of course, trees. The peninsula in the center is a log loading area and we chatted a bit about making that have some different colors and perhaps some bonsai-like plants. The desert area will have succulents and cacti of various kinds. The transition will attempt to make a smooth segue from forest to desert. We also spoke about adding some more drama in some of the rock formations.

Nancy came a couple of days later to take the next step of selecting specific plants and getting more detailed about what to do. The last time she was here we ended up buying a few hundred pounds of rocks, some that are a bit of a contrasting color to the existing granite, to build some interest near the right end of the transition area (we were talking about something we called a "rock fall" in that area).

We started in the desert area with a few trees and some groundcover/cactus. We have clay base soil so she "amended" it by mixing 50-50 with purchased top soil (not with any kind of extra additive just plain top soil).

Picking the plants was a super important part of this and she did this part pretty effortlessly based on her encyclopedic knowledge. I did buy her book which seems to have some info in it but nothing like having somebody who knows what they are doing



After planting, she (and I) deeply watered (down to about 6 inches) every couple of days for the first couple of weeks, EXCEPT for the succulents that she let acclimate for a few days before the first watering (something weird about those plants that they need time to get over the shock of transplant)

A few weeks after planting, Nancy gave the plants a very light surface dusting of fertilizer (nothing fancy just plain old fertilizer). She seemed to scratch the surface and water it to get the fertilizer into the soil a bit. She said this is worth doing once a year in the spring.

One trick she used was to add a pretty deep layer (like 2-3 inches) of non-growable fill around the plants in an effort to discourage weeds. We used "fines" (the same rock as most of the rocks used in the landscaping) then a mixture of small (3/8") and larger (3/4") rocks to add realistic texture. I've been pretty diligent at picking the weeds early when they are just getting started to try to keep them from spreading. This hasn't been onerous as they have been relatively few of them to deal with. Nancy suggests spraying some very narrow sprays of vinegar on top of where the weeds poke out as a way to discourage their growth without nasty chemicals

We had aphids on one of the tall succulents and discouraged them with soapy water (another one of her non-



# FEATURED ARTICLE

## Planting the Durango & Jasper

chemical ways of dealing with pests).

At one point we had some squirrels digging up between ground cover plants and they added more of the fines plus small rocks which seems to have discouraged that. An alternative was to use some spices dissolved in water as a spray (like cayenne pepper) to make it unpleasant for the critters (our critters are pretty easy compared to other locales).

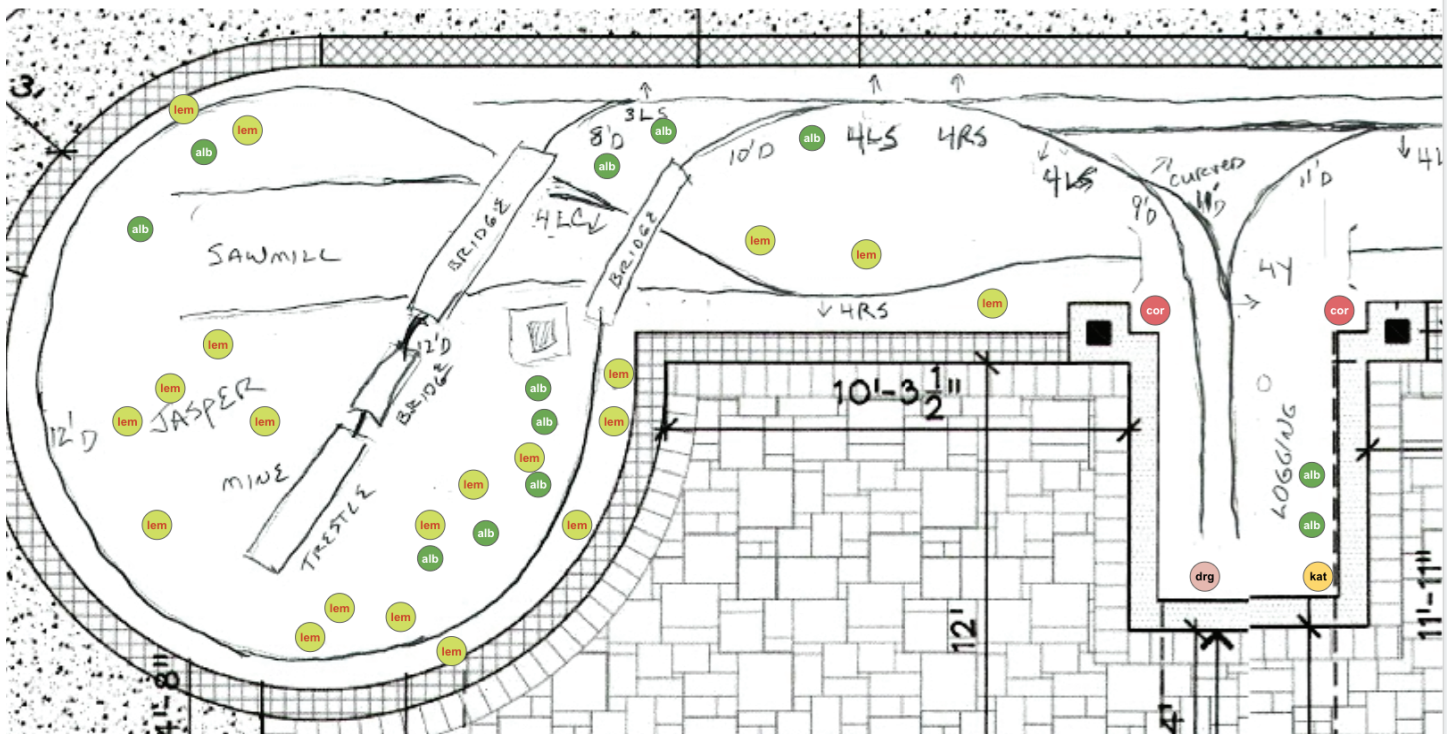
And a few design tips that I \*think\* I learned during discussions with Nancy:

- Put tall stuff in the front, not the back. Shorter stuff in the back adds to the depth using forced perspective
- Don't line things up, put them down in groups of 3 in triangles.
- Have clumps of the same plants but mix in a plant from the neighboring clump so you get a bit more organic mixture
- Some of the groundcovers, like the Bacopa above, tend to cascade down the rocks, so plant them at the ridge line
- Play with color, again with groups of the same color but splashes of another color mixed in as you move from one area to another

We then added some transition trees, also succulents but more tree-like and less cactus, and some bonsai-ish trees for the log loading area.

A lot of work was done over the next few months -- not only with plants but with rocks and tunnels and the like -- and by March, 2020, I'm happy to report that the plants that Nancy picked and planted are doing pretty well! My bad plant mojo has not been enough to overcome her strong flora fu. We were still fighting irrigation a bit but made good progress was made and I think there's a good plan in place to get it under control. This picture is of an 11x17 map, first cut at some of the trees on a bit more than half of the Durango & Jasper. The plan was to create a laminated 2 part map so I (and visitors) can figure out what's what:

Durango & Jasper plant map



# FEATURED ARTICLE

## Planting the Durango & Jasper

Durango & Jasper RR plants  
Pleasanton, California, Zone 9

### TREES and SHRUBS

(Kat) Katsura Japanese maple – *Acer japonicum* 'Katsura'  
(Lio) Lions head Japanese maple – *Acer japonicum* 'O Jishi'  
(Cor) Coral bark Japanese maple – *Acer japonicum* 'Sango Kaku'  
(Pyg) Japanese maple – *Acer japonicum* 'Sharp's Pygmy'  
(Drg) Japanese maple – *Acer japonicum* 'Red Dragon'  
(Box) Willow leaf boxwood – *Buxus sempervirens* 'Salicifolia Elata'  
(Skl) Skeleton bush – *Corokia cotoneaster* 'Little Prince'  
(Cop) Mirror bush – *Coprosma repens* 'Pacific Sunset'  
(Fus) Thymeleaf fuchsia – *Fuchsia thymifolia*  
(Myr) Dwarf myrtle – *Myrtus communis* 'Compacta'  
(Ros) Rosemary – *Rosmarinus officinalis* 'Irene'

### DWARF CONIFERS

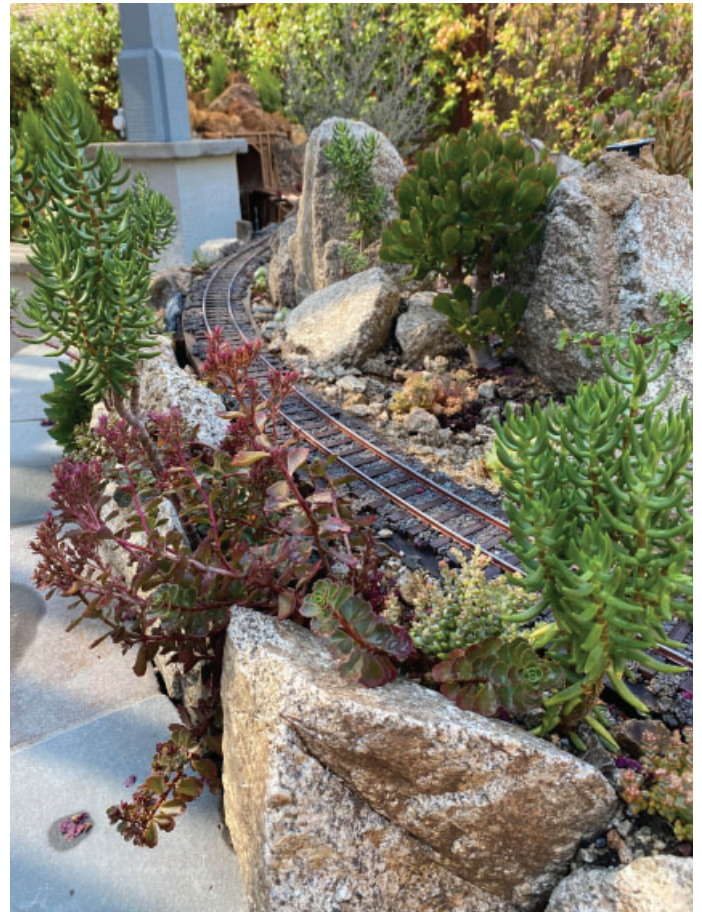
(Pod) Mountain plum pine – *Podocarpus lawrencei* 'Red Tip'  
(Lem) Lemon cypress – *Cupressus macrocarpa* 'Wilma Goldcrest'  
(Alb) Dwarf Alberta spruce – *Picea glauca* 'Conica'  
(Jun) Dwarf Japanese garden juniper – *Juniperus procumbens* 'Nana'  
(Str) Blue Star juniper – *Juniperus squamata* 'Blue Star'

### GROUNDCOVER

(Brs) Brass buttons – *Leptinella squalida* 'Platt's Black'  
(Als) Sweet alyssum – *Lobularia maritima*  
(Lob) Lobelia – *Lobelia erinus*  
(Sax) Mossy saxifrage – *Saxifraga x arendsii* 'Red'  
(Bab) Baby tears – *Soleirolia soleirolii*  
(Bac) Bacopa – *Sutera* 'Gold 'n' Pearls'  
(Elf) Elfin thyme – *Thymus serpyllum* 'Elfin'  
(Fer) Fern

### SUCCULENTS (desert and back of Jasper)

(Aeo) Black rose aeonium – *Aeonium arboreum* 'Zwartkop'  
(Gol) Jade – *Crassula sarcocaulis* 'Gollum'  
(Ken) Jade – *Crassula sarcocaulis* 'Ken Aslet'  
(Tom) Crassula 'Tom Thumb' (green pagoda w/red tips)  
(Blu) Echeveria 'Blue Prince' (blue-green w/ purple edges)  
(Per) Echeveria 'Perle Von Nurnberg' (blue w/lav. tips)  
(Spr) Echeveria 'Spruce Oliver' (green w/red tips)  
(Sub) Echeveria subsessilis  
(Bar) Golden barrel cactus – *Echinocactus grusonii*  
(Csh) Cushion spurge – *Euphorbia* 'Blackbird'  
(Zeb) Zebra plant – *Haworthia fasciata*  
(Rol) Rollers – *Jovibarba (Sempervivum) globiferum* subsp. *allionii*  
(Ice) Orange ice plant – *Lampranthus aureus* 'Orange Form'  
(Ele) Elephant bush – *Portulacaria afra*  
(Gol) Goldmoss stonecrop – *Sedum acre elegans*  
(Spn) Spoon-leaved stonecrop – *Sedum spathulifolium* 'Cape Blanco'  
(Drg) Stonecrop – *Sedum spurium* 'Dragon's Blood'  
(Jel) Red jelly beans – *Sedum rubrotinctum*  
(Min) Miniature pine tree – *Sedum tetragona*  
(Hen) Hen and chicks – *Sempervivum tectorum*  
(Cob) Cobweb houseleek – *Sempervivum arachnoideum* 'Cebenesé'  
(Blk) Hen and Chicks – *Sempervivum* 'Black Rose'  
(But) Hen and Chicks – *Sempervivum arachnoideum* 'Cobweb Buttons'  
(Chi) Chinese Dunce Cap – *Orostachys iwarengé*





# FEATURED ARTICLE

*Planting the Durango & Jasper*





# MEMBER UPDATES

Mike Laine offers this beaut and wishes to send Season's Greetings to all his BAGRS friends. Hopefully all are well and ready to steam on into the new year!



## RONALD GIES

(NOV 30, 1947 - NOV 21, 2020)

Many garden railroaders knew my husband Ron as a shy supporter of this hobby. He had been ill for many long months with heart disease.

Ron worked most of his later years as a computer programmer for Kaiser Permanente.

He helped my daughter's family start an organic farm ([rootpowerfarm.com](http://rootpowerfarm.com)) in Ellsworth, Maine. There his ashes will be dispersed in a ceremony near a new memorial orchard, fall of 2021.

I will be building a new home there as well.

— Nancy Norris



# MEMBER UPDATES

From Dan DeVoto:

I decided to do a run in the opposite direction because my favorite locomotives are Shays. Most of our viewing seating is inside the basic oval of our layout. That's the reason we ran left to right, that way we could watch from inside the oval the drive side (working fun side) of the Shays. Our railroad is 12 years old and have never run the other way, so it was about time. This is my first layout video since we decommissioned our pond in 2017. Look to the left when crossing the the bridge...Shrubbery VS. Water and Fish. The pond had become a real maintenance issue after 20 years. It was kind of cool to run the other way.

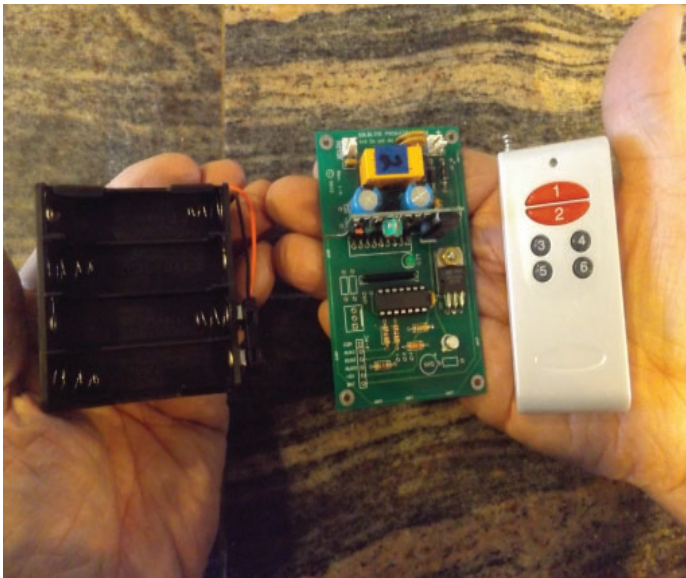
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o4JYcLY5HcM>

Dave Frediani writes:

Here's another 7/8 scale box cab that I built of 1/8" and 1/16" styrene. I used an Aristo- Craft motor block that I converted it to battery power with an R/C control unit. This Covid 19 better end soon I'm running out of room.

Thanks for looking.

Dave



# MEMBER UPDATES

From Robert Burrill, every New Year is all about Time. More than Railroad time. Now it is time to refrain from embracing and time to keep our masks on. What can I do? I will share my R.R. films. As a 35 year career photography-educator using film as a teaching tool-- I feel 2021 is time to put my railroad film making to work for our remarkable members that share a love for trains. Every film has a back story. . . This year I plan to share one film each month.

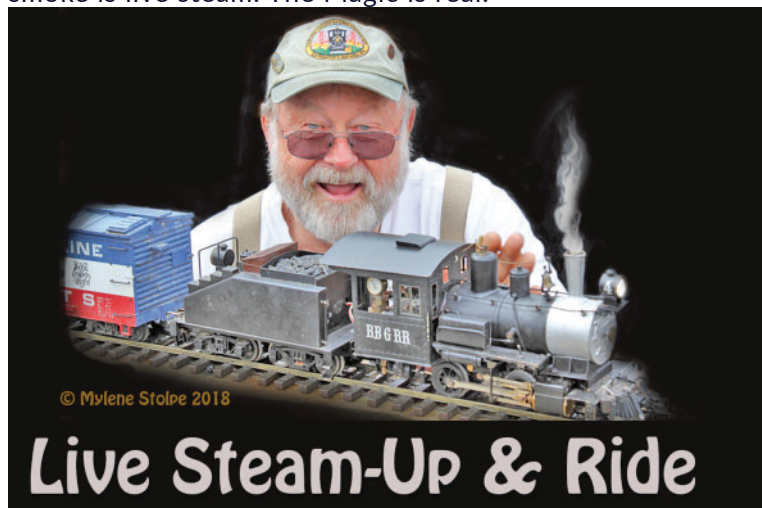
I have two published films on Henner Meinhold. (Henner has been a regular in our newsletter and is one of the club's best 'Go-to-R.R.-Persons'.) Recently Henner has moved back to his family in Germany, but we do have 'Facetime' to complete Loco 119.



This month I am excited to share a new 7 minute R.R. film that came together in time for last Christmas. This film was made for children of all ages. Perhaps Santa is the engineer. Here is music that was inspired by America's R.R. from its beginning in the early 1830's. After our 'Horrific 2020-Experience' I felt it important to have some fun.

This video is about the magic world of live steam model railroading in the garden. Here on the Rural-Burrill-Garden-Railroad the procedures of running a live steam locomotive is labeled & demonstrated so that anyone aspiring to learn this endeavor can come-on-board and go for a ride.

The locomotive is a 0-4-0 switcher, purchased from Pearse Locomotives in the U.K. Robert Burrill added the running lights and Henner Meinhold added an electronic bell and whistle powered from a 6 volt battery in the tender. The locomotive is real in every facet running on distilled water, steam oil and ignited from butane gas. Even though the model locomotive is smaller- steam is steam- and water in the boiler gets extremely hot. The smoke is live steam. The Magic is real.



<https://youtu.be/SxMx89jvHzM>



# EDITOR'S PAGE

Greg Hile, Editor

Well, here's my first attempt at Trellis and Trestle. It's been a labor of love and I know I've made a few mistakes and missteps along the way but it will get better I promise.

And it will be on time. A couple things happened here. One, I have been dealing with an ongoing family emergency involving multiple hospitalizations of my 90 year-old father-in-law. He's home now and doing better but, like Burgess Meredith said in the movie Grumpy Old Men, some days you wake up and realize you're not 83 any more. Two, setting up a new template turned out to be far more work than I thought it would be. However, except for the inevitable tweaks to come, the heavy lifting has been completed and things will go quicker and smoother for me in the future.

Which makes me appreciate the efforts of Ray Turner, my predecessor, and all of the contributors to our newsletter all that much more. Ray has been an enormous help during this transition period and I can't thank him enough. Those that contributed material this month were also great -- keep it up! You are the ones who make BAGRS the club that it is.

And now a little about me. I am a retired minister, educator, political junkie, and legal gadfly who still plays with trains. Over the years I taught history at the college and graduate level (at a seminary and at that university in Berkeley), and biology, photography, and graphic arts at a high school in Concord before finishing up as an administrator at the high school. I practiced pastored churches in Berkeley, Corning, and worked on roughly twenty political campaigns. In reality, it all sort of made sense. If you're interested, you can follow my journey at [gregoryhile.com](http://gregoryhile.com).



law in southern California for 12 years, Sacramento, and have managed or Some might say I couldn't hold a job but interested, you can follow my journey at

I also love trains. My layout -- the Carquinez seems to get finished, however, and has been A flood from a city-owned water tower several the layout. This past year, a huge tree behind our This necessitated removing essentially the entire completely changing the backyard sun and shade of the tree removal, some of which you will see ongoing. The C & AV RR is a loose (and getting looser) depiction of the city of Martinez around the turn of the 20th century. Martinez is a county seat, was on the Pony Express and the Transcontinental Railroad, the home of John Muir, the birthplace of Joe DiMaggio, all of which I am modeling.

and Alhambra Valley Railroad -- never the subject of one disaster after another. years ago, wiped out our back yard and property split and had to be taken out. layout before removal of the tree and environment. But I got some great photos shortly, and the reconstruction is now

As for the newsletter, I have some random thoughts in no particular order:

- One of the things I want to include is a monthly article featuring a member and their layout. This month Jim Rowson and his Durango & Jasper is the subject. If you are interested in featuring your layout or some aspect of it, please let me know.
- You might be asking yourself about the Where Is it? photo. So am I. Don't worry. It will return next issue as soon as I figure out where it is.
- There are several things I am discovering I need to work on for future issues. For one thing, I am using Adobe InDesign to lay out the issue and am not sure where the Spell Check feature is. Please pardon any typos.
- Viewing the newsletter may best be done using a two-page view. I suspect this issue may be one of the first garden railroad newsletters to feature a centerfold, and the multi-page columns were designed for multi-page viewing.

Greg



# MYSTIC MOUNTAIN RAILROAD UPDATE

Ray Turner

Last month I reported on extending a spur (Team Track at Outaluck) to create a siding while adding another industry (TBD) to send and receive freight on my RR. After rebuilding a turnout given to me, I built a trestle to span a gap and laid track to complete the siding.

The trestle was built out of my favorite (for outdoor use) material – Acrylic. I used a template developed for a previous trestle to fabricate several bents out of 3/8" square stock (approximately 8" timber in prototype size).



After painting it dark brown, I installed it trimming the individual piles to match the ground and laid in the track. Finally, I ran a train through the siding several times to verify success.

Next month I'll add another spur.











**Mort Grosser's festive LGB 0-6-6-0 delivering a load of Christmas trees to the village on Kevin Lynch's layout. Nollaig Shona!**



# COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONICS

Ray Turner

## Using free software (JMRI) for insurance records

JMRI (Java Model Railroad Interface) is software written by dedicated model railroad volunteers and made freely available on the internet (<https://www.jmri.org/>). "Java" is the language it is written in and it runs on Windows, Macs, Linux . . . pretty much any computer. It has extensive capabilities for model railroad work and is used on many of the smaller scale model railroads, but not so much on G gauge railroads. Suffice it to say it can:

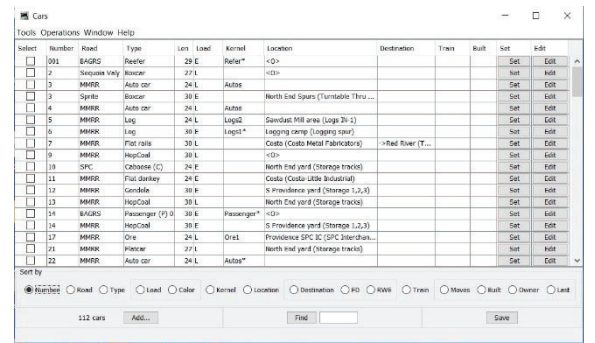
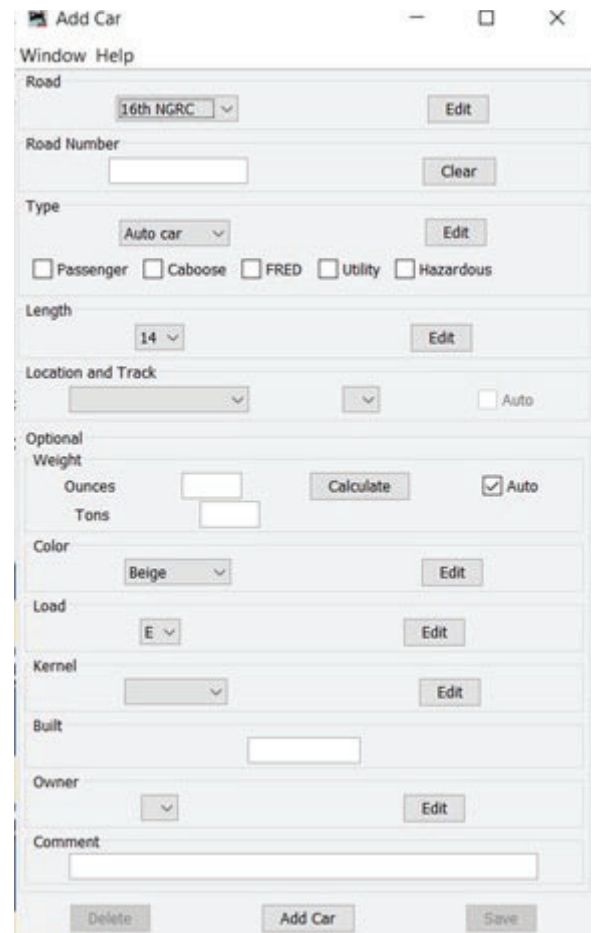
- Run trains from a cell phone,
- Draw track diagrams on a tablet where turnouts can be activated with a screen press,
- Show train movement on the track display,
- Control track-side signals in a realistic way,
- Schedule train/car movements over the railroad,
- Easil set control parameters for a DCC-run locomotive,
- And a lot more.

But I want to suggest that - for G gaugers - JMRI has a great database for keeping insurance records of your equipment.

After downloading and installing it (and Java, if you don't already have it), launch it. Go to *Tools/Operations/Settings* and enter your RR name, select "G" for scale, and check the box "Add Operations Menu to Main Menu". Go to *Tools/Operations/Cars* and you will get an empty form to fill in each of your cars: road name, number, car type, color, built by (mfg.), etc. You can record a lot of other info., but those things are for Operations, not for insurance records. You could use one of these other fields for your cost/value information.

Click the *Add* button at the bottom. Enter as much info. as you like for a car and click *Add Car*. Don't forget to *Add Car* and *Save* after entering each car's info. Most of the fields in the form have an *Edit* button to the right. This is used to add choices to the menu, for example to add a new color to the color selector or a new road name (railroad) to that selector. Be sure to click *Save* after adding each car or after any edits.

There is an extensive on-line help system which explains each form if you need it. After entering all your cars, you get a database like this one for my railroad. You can export your roster from the *Tools* menu, if you need to.





# COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONICS

Ray Turner

Similarly, under the *Tools/Operations* menu is a *Locomotives* choice.

Add your locomotives in a similar way to cars using *Add Locomotive* and *Save* buttons.

When you are all done, note that you can sort these lists by road name, number, type, and many other ways, and then print them for your records.

Finally, return to the *Operations/Settings* menu and click the *Save* button and then the *Backup* button which will create a dated backup file. Please don't forget this or you will be very sad.

One final suggestion – take video scanning your collection and railroad. That will be another piece of evidence in the unthinkable happens and is easy to do

Number	Road	Model	HP	Type	Len	Consist	Location	Destination	Train	Built	Set	Edit
1	MMRR	2-4-2T		Steam	60		Storage (staging)				Set	Edit
2	MMRR	0-6-0		Steam	50		Storage (staging)				Set	Edit
3	MMRR	4-6-0		Steam	60		Storage (staging)				Set	Edit
4	MMRR	4-6-0		Steam	60		Storage (staging)				Set	Edit
5	MMRR	4-6-0		Steam	60		Storage (staging)				Set	Edit
6	MMRR	0-4-0		Steam	32		Storage (staging)				Set	Edit
8	MMRR	0-4-0		Steam	32		Storage (staging)				Set	Edit

Sort by:  Number  Road  Model  Consist  Location  Destination  Train  Moves  Built  Owner  DCC Address  Last

7 locomotives    Add...    Find    Save

**Add Locomotive**

Window Help

Road: 16th NGRC [Edit]

Road Number: [Clear]

Model: 0-4-0 [Edit]

Type: Steam [Edit]

B Unit

Length: 32 [Edit]

Location and Track: [Auto]

Optional Weight

Tons: [ ]

Horsepower: [ ]

Consist: [Edit]

Built: [ ]

Owner: [Edit]

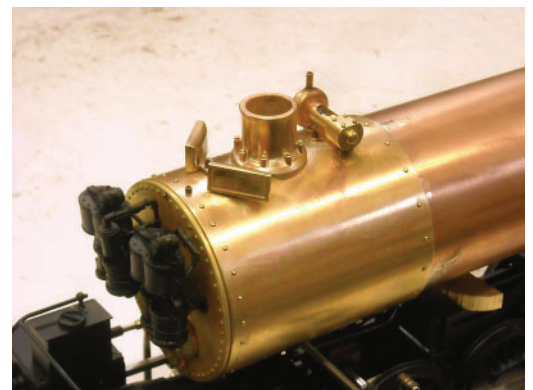
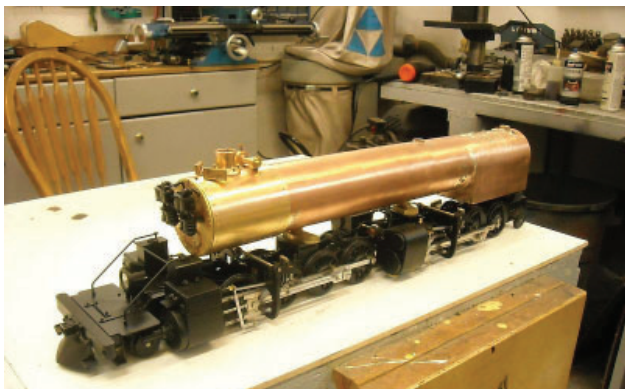
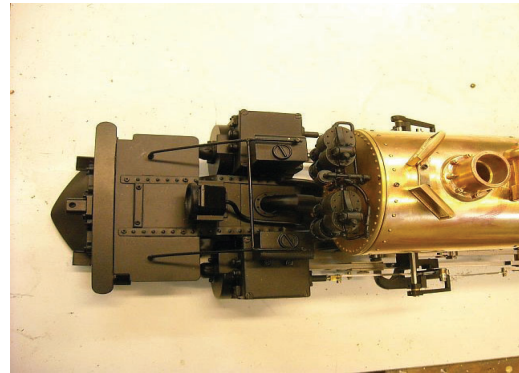
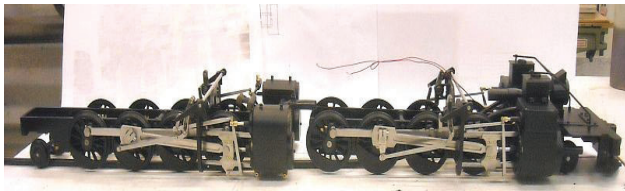
Comment: [ ]

[Delete]    [Add Locomotive]    [Save]

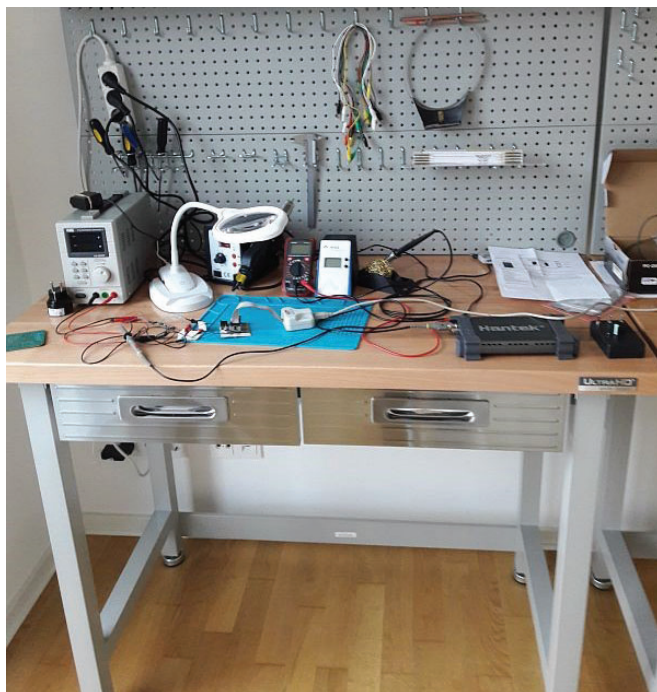
# EAST DEVIL HILLS MODELING GROUP

Henner Meinhold

Bill is well on his way with the Northern Pacific Z3 Compound Mallet. The chassis runs already on air. This was only a couple of weeks ago. In the meantime he worked on the boiler with some fancy details



My new workshop in Berlin is filling up. The electronics “department” with power supply, hot air work station, soldering station and oscilloscope is complete. Currently I am working on a second version of a RC to DCC converter, which allows any DCC decoder to be radio controlled. Having had access to Dennis’ CNC mill has spoiled me. So I invested in a small but sturdy CNC gantry mill.



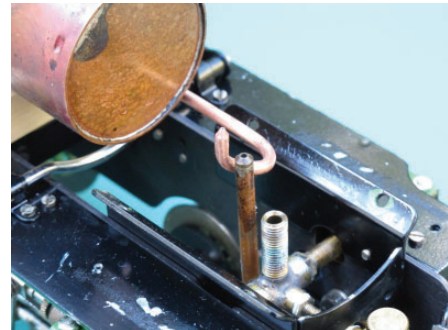
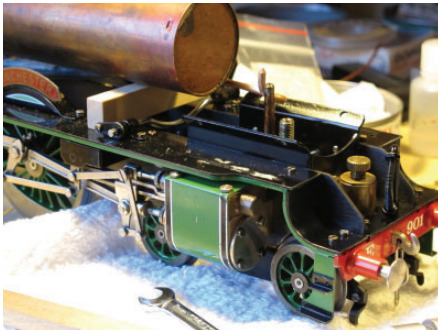


# EAST DEVIL HILLS MODELING GROUP

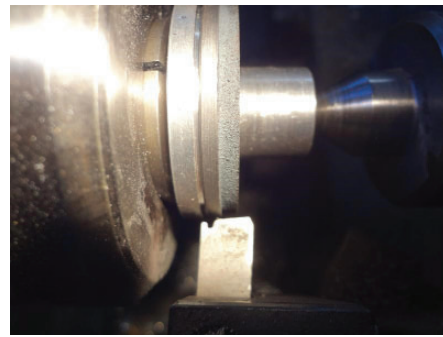
Henner Meinhold

Steve Shyvers reports:

“Work progresses on the Aster “Schools” locomotive. The current task is reinstalling the steam piping to the blower and to the cylinders. I keep finding things that need adjustment or repair, and then that leads to more stuff needing repair. Last week I tried to straighten a bent handrail stanchion, and of course I broke it. At least the cylinders and valve gear are back together. Some small improvements will have to wait until the loco is disassembled again for repainting. But bright new paint can wait until the loco gets some miles behind it. Other loco/rolling stock projects are on hold while waiting for wheels from Canada and parts from England. The Covid situation is not improving delivery times.”



Sanjaya Kumar is working on a British “D” design. He recently got the wheels from Walsall. As his Sherline lathe is too small for these wheels, he asked Dennis for help. For his big lathe the task was an easy one. Dennis is an expert when it comes to masterfully grind form tools with a Dremel. With this tool he can finish the complete tire of a wheel in one setting. Of course, the lathe must be very sturdy for this job.



Eric Maschwitz is an excellent woodworker. For the BRIO layout of his son Ryden he built 2 Westside Lumber Heislers, painted and with decals:



Let's hope for a better 2021!  
Henner

# POSTCARDS OF THE PAST

Bill Ralph



## Scenic Railway, Mount Tamalpais, California

266 curves in a little over 8 miles with maximum grades of up to 7%. It's no wonder that the Mount Tamalpais and Muir Woods Railway was marketed as the grandest mountain railway ride on earth and the "Crookedest Railroad in the World". Envisioned as a standard gauge electric tourist railroad to remote Bolinas Beach via Mount Tamalpais, the steep and winding route was completed as far as the 2436 foot summit in 1896.

A 3 mile spur line to Muir Woods added in 1902. The spectacular railroad was served by a stable of geared Shay and Heisler steam locomotives and unique "gravity car" coasters for the return trip. The MT&MWR was never electrified and never reached the beach. At one point on the winding route to gain 163 of elevation the track paralleled itself 5 times in a twisting "Double Bow Knot". Railroad passenger's paid \$1.50 for the breathtaking trip or \$1.99 that included the ride on the Mt. Tamalpais Ferry boat from San Francisco.

Visitor's to the summit enjoyed unsurpassed views of Northern California as distant as the Sierra Nevada range and were encouraged to spend an additional \$1.00 to spend the night at the Tavern of Tamalpais Hotel complete with an upscale restaurant, and dance pavilion. A promotional brochure read: "All should stop over night and see the gorgeous sunset and sunrise for which Mt. Tamalpais is noted, the scenic and color effects are indescribable. The rates at the Tavern are reasonable. If a stay at the Tavern is contemplated, there are miles of picturesque mountain trails through wooded canons and different places of interest to visit".

Visitors to Mt. Tamalpais completed their trip with an unforgettable "Gravity Car" ride back down to Muir Woods and Mill Valley at a breakneck speed of 12 miles per hour! By 1929 a competing automobile highway to the summit, dwindling ridership, and a devastating wind driven wild fire on the mountain signaled the end of rail operations on the Mount Tamalpais and Muir Woods Railroad.

From the postcard collection of Bill Ralph



# MUSINGS OF A THEME PARK FAN

Bill Ralph

## JUNGLE ISLAND

Bud Hurlbut had an idea. His recently completed Calico Mine Ride concession at Knott's Berry Farm was a huge success and he was getting itchy to take on a new project. Recognizing that Knott's lagoon area across highway 39 was being underused with only a miniature train ride and Merry-go-round, he envisioned an elaborate South Sea Island Boat Ride cruise around a tropical island, obviously inspired by Disneylands Jungle Cruise.

Hurlbut's plan included connecting the attraction to the Berry Farm and Ghost Town with a locomotive powered aerial tramway over the highway. He went as far as building a scaled down steamboat for his ride and having bulldozers dig an extensive channel system on the south roadside property. Even after re-theming it Fur Trapper of the Great Northwest to be more park compatible, Hurlbut was unable to fund the expensive attraction. His miniature steamboat, the Cordelia K, instead was installed inside the park in the lagoon near Fiesta Village while the empty trenches on the southern property laid abandoned until 1964.

An employee of the parks Stage Coach concession, John Holland, approached Walter Knott about opening the Overland Trail Ride, a simple wagon ride pulled by 2 horses through the overgrown channel past animated animals, abandoned covered wagon's and a miners cabin. Holland's concession lasted only a few years and once again the property laid undeveloped.

In 1964, Walter Knott hired Illinois landscape artist and woodcarver Forrest Morrow to refurbish Ghost Town's fabled wooden Catawampus feature. Knott was so impressed with the work and with Morrow's mail order Wood-imal creations that he offered him use of the undeveloped concession site across the highway. 77 year old Morrow jumped at the opportunity and moved his family to Southern California promptly creating Jungle Island, a maze of meandering walking trails through dense foliage filled with fantastical wooden playground equipment and dozens of hand carved Wood-imals in the shape of "giant grasshoppers, an octopus, wild boars, dinosaurs, familiar farm animals, pre-historic monsters and purely imaginative creatures". Most visitor's to Knott's Berry Farm didn't realize that there were attractions across the highway, and with it's 25 cent entrance fee, Jungle Island was never very profitable and only lasted several years.

As late as 1972 Hurlbut was still refining his dream of an expansive lagoon attraction, however it was not to be. Ultimately a tunnel was constructed under highway 39, now Beach Blvd., and the southern property now includes a huge parking lot, Soak City water park and a detailed replica of Independence Hall.



From the Collection of Bill Ralph



# RAILROAD MEDIA

Jim Maley

**Introduction** – Well things did not go to plan as we transition into winter and reminds me of an early Spielberg film, *The Color Purple*. At the time of writing, almost the whole state is declared Purple and the “never ending story” continues.

With the promised vaccine, we have a chance to “beat the wrap” and looking forward to the new year like never before. So forward with optimism... My parents got through the last pandemic and hopefully so will all of us and back to normal at some point in BAGRS and life in general.



**Crown Royal** – For some reason, the media is alive with stories of British Royalty. Certainly not a Royal Family buff, but a few years back was told by a friend that the Crown series on Netflix was well worth watching. Was a bit skeptical but tried Season One, E-1 and my wife and I hooked (and still hooked through Season Four). Anyway, two train media opportunities jump out of this. One a TV feature and the other a book finally read.



**The Secrets of the Royal Train** – Here in the US, this great feature was recently offered in mid-November by PBS. As usual, I was “a day late and hour short” but fortunately caught this on Demand and certain glad I did. Actually, this is E-1 of a short series called *Secrets of Royal Travel* and have to say, I was fascinated with this 45-minute feature. To me, this documentary was so good I did not want it to end. I was “blown away” by the opulence of Queen Victoria and then how the train became very functional under George and Elizabeth and so important to the war-effort.

Apparently details of this train were actually kept classified by the UK until 1946. The train (threatened by budget cuts) is still important to the Royal Family and pride themselves on being about a third of the speed of Britain’s high-speed trains believe it or not. I could go on and on about this fine documentary feature but will let you read

about in this story.

<https://news.yahoo.com/secret-history-royal-train-000000925.html> - Royal Train Report

Now, how do you watch this documentary? We saw it on PBS Demand but will it be there when this T&T is published?

**Book Report** – *Mrs. Queen Takes the Train* by new fiction author William Kuhn. Alright, I know you think I am “Royal Buff” oriented but not really. Purchased this book for a modest price on Apple Books and it sat for maybe 6 months of the Pandemic while Jack Reacher was breaking skulls among other fictional characters (did you know Lee Child is British?). Anyway, watching the Crown, I remember downloading it and started reading



Well, the book was very well written for an author’s first fiction novel. During the first part of the book, seemed like a screen play as Kuhn would jump back in time with little or no warning. Being a fairly rapid reader (wife says I skim), it sometimes confused me.

This fictional story is about Queen Elizabeth in her 90’s going AWOL and mingling with the people on an ill-advised trip to Scotland. Kept thinking of Richard Burton as King Arthur singing to Julie Andrews and asking the question of “What do the simple folks do?”. Seems to me a story about this mythical king of Camelot comes to mind when Arthur and Merlin took off in disguise into the country-side to find out just what do simple people actually do. Anyway, it took almost 400 pages (iBook) but Her Majesty finally did board a train in London bound for Scotland and met a lot of interesting folk along the way (most interesting part of book). The characters aboard the train felt she looked familiar and thought she might have been Helen Mirren. Anyway, all’s well that ends well and it did. This book is mostly about the Royal Family and the underlings who tend her (don’t use the hated word “serve” by the staff). I



# RAILROAD MEDIA

Jim Maley

was pretty well versed in “upstairs, downstairs” stuff from many seasons of Downton Abby and to some extent the Netflix Crown Series. If you like those stories, you will like this book but if you don't, you might skip it. I tolerate this stuff as well as the next guy but was ready for the book to end. The British Train System and even the Royal Train are mentioned quite a bit, but this is really not much of a train story unfortunately.

Note: I once thought I saw Helen Mirren at a Giants Game at the Stick years ago but definitely not her Royal Highness..



**Catching the Katy in Niles** – Recently, my son Dan was trying to get back to his Niles home for 49er kickoff when he saw significant Railfan activity near the Union Pacific tracks. Had to mean something so he parked and waited but for what? Sure enough, here she came! Yes, the *Union Pacific* with the beautiful Katy Locomotive (UP 1988) in the lead. He carefully caught this interesting train with iPhone and the some of the footage is shown here via Dropbox. Dan says very happy he missed some of the first quarter. When you see Railfans in Niles it pays to be vigilant.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/43g8e1i7eauoyqs/Katy%20Visits%20Niles.mp4?dl=0> – Dan Maley Video

For more information of the History of the Katy, see: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Missouri-Kansas-Texas\\_Railroad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Missouri-Kansas-Texas_Railroad) - Katy History

**Winslow AZ Calling** – Did not get back to Route 66 this year but maybe in the spring. Here is a website for a little city making a comeback. For me it's not the song or the “corner” drawing me, but the fabulous *Harvey House, La Posasda*. Just a great place to go to dine with the Harvey Girls and watch trains.

<https://standinontheCorner.org> – Winslow Arizona

**(Editor's Note: I once stood on a corner in Winslow, Arizona and saw a flatbed Ford but couldn't find the girl slowing down to take a look at me. So I left ...)**

**I Miss OSH, How about You?** – Here is a little nostalgia about this “long gone” hardware store in a train setting: [https://mercurynews-ca-app.newsmemory.com/?publink=4068a82ca\\_1343919](https://mercurynews-ca-app.newsmemory.com/?publink=4068a82ca_1343919) – OSH Sign

**Railroad Song of the Month** – Well, hardly a surprise here. *She Caught the Katy* with the original version by Taj Mahal. This song refers to the old passenger Katy train and the “Mule”. Well, the mule refers to a slower freight train often “caught” in a siding by Hobos. Those were the days when freight trains pulled to the side for the faster passenger trains. Now the reverse is true as the freight lines rule the rails. Much harder to “catch” from a Hobo viewpoint.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8\\_mcvifJ5N0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_mcvifJ5N0) – Taj Mahal

I know some of you may be disappointed so here is the popular Blues Brother's version of the same song. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5xexv-dMrM> – Blues Brothers

**Christmas Catalog Memories** – Received in the mail recently, a Christmas catalog from a company I never heard of. I was a company called *Schrader's* and a Railroad Catalog. Mostly just accessory stuff (like calendars, pins, patches etc.) but interesting. Flipping the page were calendars and thoughts drifted back a few years and time to visit OSH for a free one. No, just another thing of the past. Memories continued to drift back to cold Aurora IL in December and walking somewhere in the snow with a Christmas Book as we called it then. I don't remember the circumstances

but there were three treasured, *Sears Roebuck's*, *Montgomery Ward's* and *Spiegel's*. For my brother Bill and I the most treasured ads were from



the man himself, A.C. Gilbert. His loveable call, “Hello Boys!” was a call to action to “politic” from the folks an American Flyer Train or maybe even a chemistry set that had the potential to “blow stuff up real-good”. This was something a lot of kids wanted to do as innocent mischief. Maybe it's time to search for the TV Movie of 2002 called *The Man Who Saved Christmas* with Jason Alexander (*Seinfeld's* George Costanza). It must be available somewhere. Usually, I don't start thinking Christmas until well after Thanksgiving, but this year it was Halloween. I wonder why?



# 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. 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 e-mail and password: BAGRSvideos@gmail.com BestClub4014

The upper-left corner has a pull-down menu (3-bars) to select ALBUMS. Then click on the album of interest.

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## *FUTURE EVENTS OF INTEREST*

2021 Jan. 29-31, OPsig/LDsig, Mountain View, <http://www.pcrnmra.org/sigs/>

2021 February 6-8, New Zealand National Garden Railway Convention,  
Christchurch, NZ, [2021ngrc@culcreuchfold.org.nz](mailto:2021ngrc@culcreuchfold.org.nz)

2021 April 22-24, PCR/NMRA, Fresno, <http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2021/>

2021 May 30- June 5, NGRC, Nashville, <https://ngrc2021.com/>

2021 July 4-11, NMRA, Santa Clara, <https://www.nmra2021.com/>

2021 Oct. 3, Just Trains Open House

2022 NGRC, Denver

2023 NGRC, S.F. Bay Area

**Pretty much everything is subject to possible  
cancelling and rescheduling.**

# FROM MATTHEW



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# TRELLIS AND TRESTLE

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