

Ghost Train Event

Jeff Lange hosted the annual Ghost Train Event again this year on October 16th. This event is a fantasy time when each of us can decorate a car, loco-

motive, or a whole train with a ghostly or Halloween theme. Several members brought decorated cars or short decorated trains. Two examples of the several trains and cars are shown below.



Open House At The B&MR

By Jeff Lange

On Saturday, October 9th, the Rose City Garden Railway Society was treated to an open house at Allan and Kathryn Warrior's home. It was a later start than normal, (4:00 p.m) due to the addition of lights in almost all of Allan's buildings. The people starting arriving amidst raindrops around 4:15 p.m., and trains were constantly running until we took a break

for dinner around 6 p.m. Fortunately the rain held off. The lights were turned on in the buildings of Creston, Iowa, the farms, and West Village and trains were once again travelling along the mainline, with small switching procedures to add more rolling stock to the existing engines. The mainline track is approximately 500 feet in a "folded dog bone" design that uses the yard on three sides of the house.

Bill Dippert ran his Denver and Rio Grande Mogul (with sound) and freight train. Allan Warrior had several of his kitbashed CB&Q diesels ahead of a variety of mixed freight and stock cars. Allan likes to run long trains of up to 40 cars. Jeff Lange ran his "Colorado" live steam mogul, and pulled an army vehicle train from the WWII era that was sitting on one of Allan's sidings. Jan Zweerts brought his wonderful European train with his nice diesel elec-

tric pantograph locomotive, and three nicely lighted passenger cars to keep pace with all the other trains on the layout.

Allan has added quite a few new buildings, and has completely rebuilt his train station along main street (Adams Avenue) in Creston, Iowa. A brief history of Creston, and what Allan is modeling with his very realistic layout is described next.



Adams Avenue and part of the Creston switch yard

During the dinner hour, we were treated to Terry Shellenberger's DVD of our club's visit to Tom Miller's open house. It was almost an hour of trav-

eling the mainline with our group in tow, behind Tom, and his other engineers. (See the October 2004 newsletter for details.)



One of the major sources of revenue on the CB&Q was the transportation of agricultural products. The CB&Q sponsored many shows, fairs and training sessions to help farmers become more productive.

One of the farms on the M&BR



Jeff Lange's live steam "Colorado" pulls a WWII military train past the West Village



Jan Zweerts' European train passes over Elm Street and out of the switch yard toward the mainline

Creston, Iowa

After the Civil War, the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad (B&MR) was in a rush to get the railroad constructed across Iowa and into Nebras-

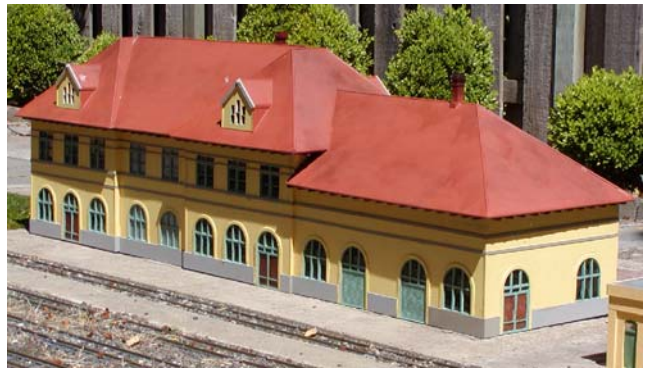
ka. Some shortcuts were taken! Cuts were not dug as deep as they might have been and fills were not as high as desirable to keep grades at a minimum. The least resistance was taken wherever practical. The railroad later had to rebuild and reroute some

of its tracks. Some of the abandoned railroad right of way later became part of U.S. Highway 34. The B&MR was the construction company of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy (CB&Q) and became part of the Burlington Route in 1898.

When the rails reached Union County in 1868, the county seat was at Petersville in the eastern part of the county. Afton is near Petersville and later became the county seat in 1868. Cromwell, Iowa was at first selected as the second division point in Iowa, and the B&MR laid out the town of Cromwell in 1868–69. But there was not enough flat land for railroad use at Cromwell and the site was five miles from the summit, so a site five miles to the east that was to become Creston was selected. This part of Iowa has gentle rolling hills and Creston is the summit of the drainage areas between the Mississippi and the Missouri Rivers. This decision was the death knell for Cromwell and the current town of Cromwell is largely deserted. Creston was incorporated in 1871 with a population of 411.

In that era, towns which were not county seats usually didn't amount to much, and since several B&MR officials stood to profit from the sale of lots in Creston (the 300 acre townsite was owned by those officials), the railroad began to lobby for the transfer of the county seat from Afton to Creston. Several schemes and elections were held, but the county seat stayed in Afton. Finally, the railroad moved a large force of workers into Creston and qualified them as residents. On Nov. 25, 1890 a special election secured Creston as the seat of Union County. Once the votes were tallied and certified, the large labor force left town.

The railroad became Creston's largest employer. A large 60-stall roundhouse and a large machine shop were built. By 1875, as many as 50 trains a day were being made up or despatched. Passenger service increased so that by 1894 there were 18 passenger train stops daily, and by 1910, 24 daily passenger trains were scheduled. By 1890, the wooden passenger station was becoming dilapidated and inadequate. In 1899, a magnificent new station was erected.



Allan's model of the 1899 station

Designed by prominent Chicago architects Daniel Burnham and John Wellborn Root and built of yellow pressed brick at a cost of \$65,495, it was called the largest and finest station in Iowa. The foundation is concrete footing and rubble foundation. A cut stone base rises to the window sills. The yellow pressed brick walls are interrupted by stone belt courses. Heavy copper cornices cap the walls and a semi-glazed roof has five dormers as features. (The copper cornices were removed in support of the Korean War.)

The building is 171 feet long and 43 feet wide and measures 53 feet to the ridge of the roof. The building is steam heated throughout. Since this station is a division point, the second floor provides offices for the local officials and the telegraph office.

Passenger service declined after 1946 and the station was sold to the city of Creston for \$1.00 in 1974. After much controversy, the city gutted and refurbished the station and it became a city office building and meeting place on December 3, 1978. The passenger waiting room was restored to its original condition. The express freight and baggage rooms on the east end of the building are now a senior citizens service center. A small Amtrak station was built in 1969 just to the east of this historic building and continues to serve the California Zephyr.

Allan's mother grew up in Creston and his family frequently used the CB&Q to travel from Omaha to Creston to visit relatives.

Allan is modeling the Creston, Iowa division of the CB&Q from 1934 until the merger in 1969 with three other railroads which became the Burlington Northern. This era was chosen to coincide with the

introduction of diesel power, the Pioneer Zephyr, through the last diesels purchased by the CB&Q, the SD-45, in 1969. All of Allan's diesels are models of CB&Q prototypes and have been purchased/modified and painted to be true to the time when they were used in the Creston division. Several of the buildings in the town of Creston are 1:32 scale models of actual buildings in the town. Allan is a member of the Burlington Route Historical Society and does research to keep the models of trains and buildings as close to the prototype as possible within the limited scope of what is available commercially that can be kit-bashed or what can be scratch built (depending on his ambition at the time)

President's Note

As most of you know, November is the month that the Columbia Gorge Railroad Club hosts its annual open house. This year they extended a hand asking us to help. During the meeting at Chuck Weber's house in August, Ken Shipman handed out training schedules for the month of September and October which was included in our newsletter, and suggested we attend and learn how to run trains around their layout. Several of us attended and we were immediately overwhelmed with the intricacies of their system.

Their layout consists of over 30 blocks and the mainline has 8 cab engineers running trains. All mainline trains are managed by an east and west dispatcher, depending on which direction your train is traveling. In addition to the mainline, there is a switch yard called Wishram and the Portland switch yard. The Portland switch yard is further divided into 3 yards; North and South Albina and the Union Station. All yards by are managed local dispatchers. All of these people are on an elaborate intercom system with dedicated channels so the Cab engineers can talk specifically with the dispatcher with their train. All that I have mentioned can be seen from the aisle, with the exception of the 2 mainline dispatchers, which are located below the layout in a large room with video monitors showing them areas of the layout. Also located below the layout are Spokane and Seattle, which serve as destinations and origins of trains.

An engineer on the mainline has a large desk panel (cab board) with a schematic of the layout shown on it. There are toggle switches to turn blocks on or off. Two engineers use one cab board and move the toggle switches to transfer power and control the train they are responsible for. Vertically in front of the engineer is another board with an indicator light showing the progress of the train through the layout. The engineer often cannot see the train being operated, but it is a good idea for the engineer to glance at the train occasionally to make sure it hasn't derailed, come apart or lost the caboose. It is more important to follow the train's progress on the display panel so that you do not cause a rear end collision with another train. The only other difficult thing to remember is to turn the block off once your train has cleared it so that someone else can use it. Otherwise, you might be controlling more than just your own train or vice versa.

Now you have a little idea what it is like to run trains at the Columbia Gorge. Next month I'll tell you how well we fared as engineers during the open house. If you would like to attend, the open house is every weekend in November 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., \$4 for adults and children \$2.

—Dennis Peoples

Schedules & Timetables

Be sure to check the RCGRS Website for any updates or changes. <http://www.rcgrs.com>

November 13, 2004: RCGRS Annual Banquet.

December 12, 2003, Friday, 6:00 to 10:00 p.m.: Jan & Rae Zweerts are having an open house. They live on a houseboat at Jantzen Beach, The Christmas ships will be sailing past their house that same evening. Jan's European railroad is on a barge next to the houseboat.

Hot Cider and Chili will be served, Finger food is welcomed. An RSVP would help them figure out how much chili to make. Address: 1859 N Jantzen Ave. Portland 97217 (503-247-7531 or cell phone 503-705-3840).

Directions: Take I-5 to Jantzen Beach exit. Park between Home Depot and the Burlington Coat Fac-

tory. Walk from the parking lot south to the pedestrian gate down ramp #4. The pedestrian gate is open 6 to 10 p.m. Tell the security guard “Zweerts Party”. Then walk west to Row O. and proceed down Row O to the last home on the walkway. Watch for two train signs.

Warnings: The ramp is grated and is steep (10% slope), wear non-slip shoes. Put your keys away before you leave land. The 1:1 trains have the right of way.

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Dues Are Due!

The dues are \$30 per year for an individual and an additional \$6 per year for a significant other. There is only one class of member and all dues paying members have a vote in the business of the society. All dues are payable in December for the following fiscal year.

Name _____
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Return the bottom section of this page with your dues payment to: RCGRS, 7910 SW 19th Avenue, Portland, OR 97219 Make checks payable to RCGRS.