

You Are Invited To A Rare Event

RCGRS members are invited to have lunch with Accucraft "Big Wigs" on Friday, September 12, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. You can ask questions about your Accucraft live steam or electric locomotives and maybe hear what will be released in the future.

Meet at Flying Pie Pizza
 7804 SE Stark Street
 Portland, OR 97215

For additional information, contact Len Merritt at 503-475-8123

November Banquet Meeting By Steve Cogswell

Help Wanted! I would like to invite anyone interested to help organize this year's club banquet. I have the same site and meals reserved as we used last year (Kingstad Conference Center in Beaverton) for Saturday, 8 November 2008 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. That's all that is done for now. We need to make decisions about activities, classes, speaker(s), raffle and prizes, and anything else we want to do. Anyone is invited to participate, and almost all of it will be done by email or phone, so there won't be any driving back and forth for meetings.

Even if you don't want to participate in the total planning, your ideas or suggestions are welcomed and appreciated.

All Aboard! The Sumpter Valley Railroad

Reserve your seat on the Sumpter Valley Railroad for **Sunday, October 12th.**

The cost will be divided by the number of attendees. We will have the whole train to ourselves plus guests, and it promises to be a great day. A vote approved that we invite other railroad clubs in our

area to participate. Our club last made this trip September 15-17, 2000.

Your Action is Requested by October 1st!

Please contact Jen Eckardt at jen@eckardt.us or 503-466-3963 with your name, contact number, email address and the number of seats you would like to reserve.

The round trip is scheduled to take 6 hours running between McEwen Station and Sumpter Station there will be full access to the back shop. Locomotive cab rides are expected to be available for a small number in the party.

The track edges the tailings toward Sumpter and the scenery looks somewhat like it did in the 1930s when the gold digging was active. The disturbed landscape is impressive and may leave you thinking that putting up with the EPA has a positive side.



The automobile trip is over 300 miles and will take approximately 6+ hours each way. Car pools are strongly encouraged. There are excellent overnight accommodations in the Baker/Sumpter area. There are good camping facilities as well, including the park near McEwen station.

For over thirty years the Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration Inc. has been dedicated to rebuilding this remnant of the past for the enjoyment of future generations. Since the first excursion train pulled out of McEwen station in 1976, an almost all volunteer staff has rebuilt over five miles of rail line, fully

restored two original steam locomotives, refurbished numerous pieces of rolling stock, and constructed all the facilities it takes to run a railroad.



The SVRy 40-ton Heisler built in 1915

While traveling through the forests and gold dredge tailings of the Sumpter Valley, visitors are given a glimpse back in time without having to leave the comfort of the present. Operating between McEwen and the historic mining town of Sumpter, the steam-powered excursions of the Sumpter Valley Railroad offer an enjoyable way for the whole family to spend a day.

Visitors will have an opportunity to tour the gold dredge at Sumpter and the back shop of the SVRy. Sumpter is a nice little town to explore before the return trip.



The SVRy 2-8-2 “Mikado” built in 1920 by ALCO

Barbara & Jerry Clarke’s Open House

A great day for an open house! Barbara’s developing new railroad extends around three sides of her house. The railroad is an aluminum single track “dogbone” design with a reversing loop in the front yard and a reversing loop with a switch yard in the far side yard. Since Barbara only runs battery powered locomotives, the polarity problems associated with track powered reversing loops are avoided.

The back yard is a large water feature that has prompted several discussions on how to install a track across it and make sure that a train would not end up in deep water in case of a derailment. A special aluminum bridge was constructed that runs along the edge of the patio and across the pond. A secondary steel bridge has been constructed (seen in the back ground) that is proposed to become the new right-of-way (it will not be partially submerged as seen in the picture).



New switch yard and reversing loop



Temporary aluminum bridge along the edge of the patio and over the water feature. A possible new steel bridge is shown to the left.



The track leaves the temporary aluminum bridge and goes toward the loop in the front yard.



Barbara interrupts chief hamburger chef Jerry to thank him for his efforts.

Open House at the “TOOTNLADY”

Judith Hinamin opened her garden railroad to RCGRS members and guests for the first time on Sunday, August 24th. Judith prepared a delicious meal of fried chicken, salads, and desserts for all of the attendees. The day was cool and the timing was good because it started to rain soon after the meal was finished.

Judith’s wonderful garden was started in 1978 after finding a back yard full of weeds at her new home in 1977. Because her working days were long on hours, she wanted a “low maintenance garden.” She soon discovered that no garden is “low maintenance.”



Judith adjust the controls on her railroad. (A blanket is covering the controls because there was a threat of rain)

With advice, information and donations of plants from other gardeners and friends, the garden has grown. There are 120 Rhododendrons, 530 Clematis, and perennials from all over the world. She learned how to weld in order to make garden art and made many of the models featured in her railroad.

Her railroad is on a waist-high berm and hosts a village, RR station, school with football field, waterfall and pond, mayor's manor, hermit's camp, "fishing hole", church with a cemetery, and many other details. A new feature on a separate but adjoining berm contains a large circus display. The railroad is track powered. There are loudspeakers mounted on the wall of the berm to give sounds of a working village and railroad.

Her garden was featured in an article in the June 1998 "Better Homes and Gardens" magazine and was also shown on Mike Darcy's garden program.



A view of a busy village. The Mayor's Manor is in the far background



The new circus is in town!



The “Mayor’s Manor”. There is a large soiree in progress in the back of the manor.

New Railroads By Dave Kookan

Hanging on my workbench wall for many years has been a sign that reads, “Nothing is impossible if you don’t have to do it yourself.” I should have paid more attention. Also, I would now add, “Nothing is too expensive if you don’t have to pay for it yourself.”

This story really began in April when Margaret and I hosted the RCGRS. Some club members, unable to run their big engines on our layout, pointed out

how easy it would be for me to construct a large outside loop, with 4 ft minimum curves, that they could use. I must admit, at that point, I agreed with them.

Of course, right about then, track prices rapidly inflated but the 100 foot outside track loop of Aristocraft brass from Tammies was constructed. Then came a moment of truth. I suddenly realized I now had no way to access the storage sidings I had built for our TL & C!

The solution was simple. Just bridge from one railroad to the other with two switches. Wrong! Now I had to take my engine from the inside railroad to the outside railroad, pick up my cars from the siding, and then back up all the way to the inside railroad.

I knew a track-powered double cross over was possible, since I had seen one during the National Convention in Chandler. After many dead ends of inquiry, correspondence with Aristocraft finally solved the problem, at my expense, of course. They supplied the engineering and St Albans supplied the parts.



The entire switching assembly is 7¹/₂ feet long and a foot wide. This, of course meant tearing out part of an existing wall, removing and revising some of the original trackage, Margaret having to move or remove plants and trees, etc. Most of you know the routine.

After ballasting and leveling the outside loop, but before any major permanent changes were made, it needed testing.



On August 21st, Ron and Merlene Bacon came over to see what had transpired. I greatly needed and appreciated the use of Ron's large locomotives and rolling stock, and gratefully accepted his advice and skills.

We successfully ran Ron's Challenger. We successfully ran his big passenger cars, successfully ran on both railroads at the same time which included passing on parallel curves, and successfully ran trains through the switching complex between railroads.

Margaret and I will make an effort to get things completed in the next couple months, and then we will look for an open weekend when we can invite the club. Some of the original TL&C has been re-curved, with more work to follow. After it has been re-leveled and ballasted, we will be ready to issue an invitation.

The invitation will not extend to anyone wanting to run on Margaret's new "Hartland barrel railroad," which as yet, does not have a name. For that matter, the outside loop, which we consider to be separate

from the TLC, does not have a name. We are open to suggestions.



The new "Hartland Barrel Railroad"

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President's Message

Hello Garden Railway Fans,

Summer is rapidly marching towards fall and we will soon look back and long for the sunny days of summer, but in the meantime we still have some great things yet to do.

I'm looking forward to Harvey and Arlyn Becker's layout in Bend, Oregon on Saturday, September 13. From the photos I've seen I don't want to miss this opportunity. I hope many of you will join me in supporting our members from central Oregon.

Coming up in October is our trip to the Sumpter Valley Railway. This promises to be a great event. We have chartered the train for the whole day. That includes a round trip from McEwen, where the railroad shops are located, to Sumpter and back. There will also be cab rides and self-guided shop tours and much more. Contact Ron Bacon for further details and Jen Eckardt to sign up. **Deadline is October 1.** The cost will be determined by how many sign up for the trip.

Recently Bill Derville and I met with representatives of AI's Garden Center to discuss a RCGRS proposal to install a holiday display at AI's Garden Center, Sherwood location. The intent is to have a railroad themed garden display at a public location during the holiday season. I'm hoping to enlist your support for this project. If you would like to help, please contact me at garylee@constructavision.com.

We recently held an operating session on our Baker & Grande Ronde, and I was impressed with the level of interest in realistic operation. It was the hottest day of the year, 100+ degrees, and yet 18 of you weathered the heat. A number of live steamers participated and none were deterred by my 6% mainline grade. Even Mike Greenwood's exquisite, scratch-built 4-2-0, performed beautifully. It was a fun day of operation and I look forward to running my railroad like the real thing at future operating sessions with a schedule, way freights, through freights, locals, passenger trains and extras. It would be fun to form a SIG (Special Interest Group) for monthly operating sessions. Contact me if this is of interest you.



Ron Bacon's #4 live steamer pulls in to Whiskey Creek with a load of logs destined for the mill. (photo courtesy of Ron & Merlene Bacon)



Penny Walker watches as Madeline Eckardt coaches her cousin Georgia Buck from England as the train heads downgrade toward Whiskey Creek.

Schedules & Timetables

Make sure you check the calendar on our Website at <http://www.rcgrs.com/> for the most up-to-date schedules and timetables.

It is the Society's policy to attempt to have an event or open house on every second Saturday of the month. Other and additional dates during a month are also available and encouraged. Anyone inter-

ested in having an Open House or sponsoring an event, please contact **Christina Britain**.

September 13, 2008, Saturday, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.: Open House at Harvey and Arlyn Becker in Bend, Oregon. **The rail road will be open at 11:00 a.m. for early arrivals.** The host will provide a main dish. Other dishes of salads, snacks, and side dishes are welcome. 541-383-1864
bharvey@bendbroadband.com

Layout: Please bring trains to run on either battery or track power. Railroad is track powered with a remote control panel for all track blocks and switch machines. Layout is a folded dog leg with reverse loops at each end; allowing trains on the mainline to run automatically. Mainline track is 275 ft with additional 125 ft track for: yards, siding, & turn-outs. All curves utilize LGB R1 (5ft dia.) track, grades average 3.5% to 5.5%, bridge clearance = 8.5 inches, & max. trestle height of 24 inches. We operate Bachmann spectrum locomotives, LGB mogul, and H-L-W 4-4-0.

Directions:

From Mt. Hood: take Rte 26 thru government camp to Rte 97 South. At Madras follow signs to Bend. In Bend, get off at Exit 136 (Butler Mkt Rd) and turn right onto Butler Mkt Rd (stay in righthand lane). At first signal cross over Rte 97, (Riverhouse on right corner) and proceed up Mt. Washington Drive. Take left onto Todds Crest Drive. Third house on Right. Parking on street.

From I-5 at Salem: take I-5 South, get off at EXIT 253 (Rte 22, Sytaton/Detroit lake), and turn left onto Rte-22/N Santiam Hwy. Follow N Santiam Hwy. N Santiam Hwy becomes Rte-20 at junction of Rte 126. Continue on Rte 20 thru Santiam Pass and Sisters into Bend. In Bend Rte 20 merges into Rte 97. Proceed south on Rte 97 and turn right onto Mt Washington Drive (Riverhouse on corner). Proceed up Mt. Washington Drive &

take left onto Todds Crest Drive. Third house on Right. Parking on street.

October 4, 2008, Saturday, 5:00 to 8:30 p.m.: Open house at Shannon Pratt's railroad, 6677 SW Bancroft Way, Portland, OR. The track on Shannon's railroad only permits Marklin equipment to run on it, but both Party Town and Farmdale will be celebrating Halloween in grand style.

Host will provide soft drinks, coffee, beer, wine, snacks. A-G desserts, H-O side dish, P-Z main dish. 503-292-9464, shannon@shannonpratt.com

October 12, 2008, Sunday: RCGRS has recently contacted the Sumpter Valley Railway to arrange an excursion ride scheduled for Sunday, October 12th. See the earlier item in this newsletter for additional information.

October 25, 2008, Saturday, Noon until midnight: Annual Ghost Train Event. Plan now to decorate a car or locomotive (or train) with a ghoulish delight. Make sure your design will pass through a typical bridge or tunnel. The railroad is track powered. Open house at Bill and Jean Dippert's; 2650 NW Robinia Lane, Portland, OR 97229. 503-646-9783, bandjdippert@zcloud.net.

November 8, 2008, Saturday, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.: Annual workshops, luncheon, presentations, and raffle. Kingstad Center, 15450 SW Millikin Way, Beaverton, OR 97006. Steve Cogswell, Chair. 503-650-4682, scogswell@tkw.com

December 2008, Friday: The date will depend on the schedule of the Christmas ship parade. Jan & Rae Zweerts will be hosting an open house on their houseboat at Jantzen Beach, The Christmas ships will be sailing past their house that same evening. Jan's European railroad which is on a floating deck next to the houseboat will be in operation.

Editor's Note: The deadline for the October 2008 newsletter is September 25, 2008.