

Denver Garden Railway Society

Newsletter



The Denver Garden Railway Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the education, promotion and enjoyment of all aspects of garden railroading.

HighBall

The Anatomy of a Break-in-Two

This month I wanted to write about something a little bit different. In this month's newsletter, we cover many varied interests within our hobby, so I thought I would add to the variety with real world railroading. This story is about a break-in-two that recently occurred onboard an 8700-foot, 15000-ton manifest train from Speer, Wyoming, to Denver, Colorado.

Many railroad enthusiasts will recognize this route to be the Greeley Subdivision of the Union Pacific Railroad, a primarily river grade route with a couple of undulating hills and one big hill from Carr, Colorado, to Speer, Wyoming.

The train had a total of six units on the headend, of which three were only allowed to be used on the trip to Denver. Embarking on the train, I prepared the train for use of blended braking to maintain a 20MPH speed limit imposed by railroad regulations down to Carr. The evening was cold and brisk, with such a long train, the brake pipe took forever to recover and recharge the End of Train (EOT) device to the ninety-pound reading.

During this time, I put in all the information required by Positive Train Control (PTC) and programmed the energy management system. The energy management system is a new computer-based program that will control both traction and dynamic braking and will also prompt the engineer to set train air

Volume 37 Number 12

December 2020

Denvergardenrailway.org

Highball

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7.5 Inch World

Auction

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Minutes + More



HOBO BRUNCH

The Hobo Brunch Group meets on the 2nd Saturday of every month at 8:30 a.m. The group gathers at Valley Inn. Just show up, no reservations necessary!

Location: "Valley Inn, 1997 S. Wadsworth Blvd." Please contact Byron & Marta Fenton at (303) 936-0920 with questions.

ANNUAL DUES

Club Dues for 2020 were due by the end of 2019. \$48 for Family, or \$36 for Individual Membership. Make checks payable to "DGRS." Bring your check to the meeting or mail to:

The Denver Garden Railway Society

c/o Al Blount **6038 Iris Way,
Arvada, CO 80004**

NEW MEMBER

T Gordon Ellyson Court

206 856-0424

T.GORDON.COURT@gmail.com

app has address of 4302 13th ave S

Seattle WA 98108

kind of like a cruise control.

From Speer to Greeley, the energy management system had numerous problems trying to control the train causing it to disengage on many attempts. The system could not determine the air to be used, would consistently get the train up to a speed of 50MPH and then disengage and cause me to save it from over speeding. While all of this occurred, I noticed the EOT on the rear-end would never get back up to ninety pounds on the brake pipe. The brake pipe pressure observed on the EOT was within regulation, but I consistently felt a pulling sensation from the rear of the train.

After a three hour stop at Greeley, morning was upon us and the dispatcher said that Denver was ready for our train. Leaving Greeley, I stretched the train out over one hill down into the valley of Evans. While climbing out of Greeley, the train took all the power the three units could muster to make it out of the valley and into the next. Reaching the crest of the grade, I reengaged the energy management system to control the descent into the next valley and into the 20MPH track at LaSalle.

The system controlled the train into LaSalle, but let the train get down to a paltry 11MPH. Union Pacific rules state that I must disengage the energy management at this point and recover the train speed. I was stretching the train out and increasing speed and when I then felt the tug near the end of the train, but everything was alright for now. Approximately one minute later, I watched the brake pipe pressure on the EOT drop to zero and blink red, so I immediately reduced the throttle from notch 6 to idle and then the engine went into emergency. I knew it, a knuckle or worse a drawbar, I could feel a sense of angst come over me.



Forty-five minutes later, with help of management, my conductor had fixed the knuckle and we were on our way to Denver. The train had broken twenty cars from the rear end, and the conductor and manager said it looked a nice clean break, so blame was being placed on my

train handling.

Upon arrival at Denver, my conductor spoke with the carmen at North Yard. He had just got done working the rear-end of the train and found numerous cars with burnt up brake shoes. I was sure I was going to be vindicated regarding discipline with that statement.

Speaking with management the next day, their investigation shed more light on what may have happened and what caused the break in two. The carmen found one car at the rear with a handbrake still tied, and then found the next eleven preceding cars with retainer brake pipe valves applied. A retainer valve is brake pipe assembly that holds a certain amount of brake pipe pressure on a railroad car and they are often used on steep descending grades with heavy tonnage. The retainer valve can only be placed on and off manually and these valves are very rarely used anymore because many heavy trains operate with distributed power units placed within train. This has greater advantages than retainer valves. Operating with retainer valves is now so rare there is no employee qualified in the local region to operate a retainer train. After numerous questions, it became clear to me that I would be cleared of any wrongdoing.

As of now, I have been cleared of any discipline, but this case is far from closed because it has now been referred to the railroad police department for further investigation of potential sabotage. As for me, I will continue my adversarial relationship with big trains, PTC, and energy management and not have another break-in-two for many years to come.

Jeff Lillo



Museum

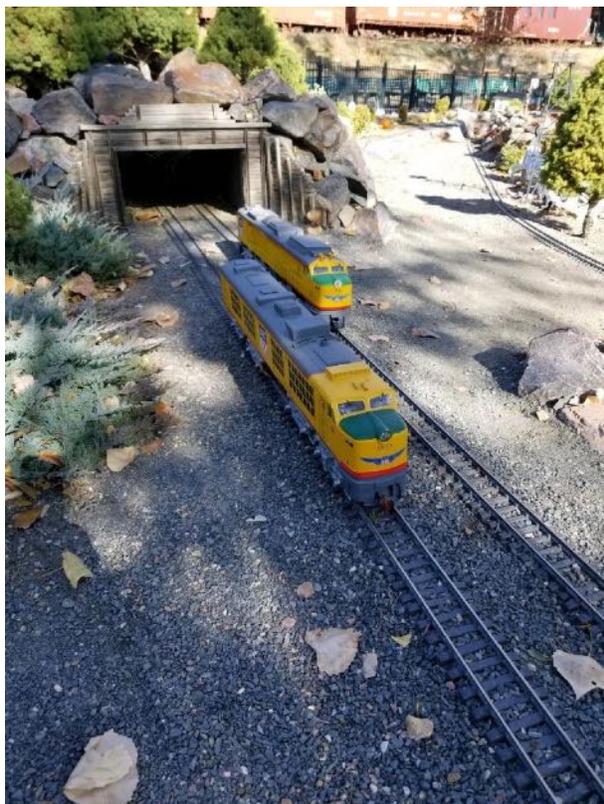
Operations:

Thanks to Rae Ann and Bransford Banks for decorating the garden railway for the Trick or Treat train and for the many visitors during the weekdays to enjoy.

The DGRS garden railway has been battling a heavier than usual leaf, twig and branch infestation which has not been helped by high winds. The LGB track cleaning locomotive with Don McCulloughs' heavy duty rotating brush is really helpful for dealing with leaves and loose ballast.

The CRRM event coordinator and head Polar Express ringmaster Danielle Riebau has requested that the DGRS put some lights inside the garden railway for Polar Express this year. The new path for Polar Express visitors will have them walk along our south side of the garden railway. That area doesn't have much in the way of holiday lighting and is kind of dark. A crew of DGRS members completed the installation. The static decorations will be added soon. A reminder that the DGRS must not run after 3pm during the Polar express event.

A reminder to new members that there are a few requirements that need to be met in order to operate trains at the museum. You must agree to work 8 hours a year to help maintain the railway, pass a short written test, have some orientation and sign a new volunteer document with the CRRM. Call, or e-mail Don McCullough at (303-421-4879) or call, text or e-mail (alanno@comcast.net) Alan Olson for more information.



Alan



Garden Railway Club Newsletters

This section is an opportunity for our members to learn from the efforts, tips, techniques, and news of other garden railway clubs. Please Click on the following link to access from the following clubs: <http://www.denvergardenrailway.org/index.php/links-to-other-clubs/>

Northern Colorado Garden Railroaders



Northern Colorado
Garden Railroaders

Mile High Garden Railway Society

Mile High Garden Railway Society

Rose City Garden Railway Society



Christchurch Garden Railway Group

**The Garden Whistle
New Zealand**

Bay Area Garden Railway Society



Gold Coast Garden Railway Society



Puget Sound Garden Railway Society



Santa Clarita Valley Garden Railway Club



Central California Coast Garden Railroad Society



NGRC Conventions

2021 NGRC -Nashville - May 30/June 5 - <https://ngrc2020.com/>



WEBSITE IS NOW ONLINE: <https://ngrc2021.com/>

NOW MOVED TO JUNE 20-25, 2022!

2022 NGRC Update:

In September 2019, DGRS signed an agreement/contract with the Crowne Plaza Denver Airport Convention Hotel to host the 2021 NGRC in June 2021, six months later in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, DGRS voted to move our convention to June 2022 allowing Nashville, host club for the 2020 NGRC to re-schedule their convention to 2021. The agreement with the Crowne Plaza was re-negotiated to move our convention to June 2022; however, all other terms under the contract would remain in effect. Three of these contractual obligations could adversely impact the club's current financial status: guest room revenue, food and beverage and the convention/vendor hall rental fee. It should be noted that the terms of the contract were negotiated prior to the pandemic and soundly based on our prior experience of hosting financially successful conventions.

Guest Room Revenue: Obligation \$118,900 (820 room nights x \$145). This amount is reduced by \$145 for every room night paid by convention attendees between June 17 and June 26. There is also an option that allows us to reduce the room nights by 20% to 656 rooms.

Food and Beverage: Obligation \$10,000. This amount would include the convention banquet, event related open bars, convention hall deli and snack bar. This figure is less than our obligation for the 2015 NGRC and about half of the actual food and beverage proceeds from that convention.

Convention/Vendor Hall Rental: Obligation \$10,000. This is a new expense for us and an additional revenue source for the hotel. In the past, there was not a charge for the vendor hall or conference rooms, but all the hotels we reviewed for our current convention now factor this into their pricing package. This expense should be covered by vendor booth rentals.

I will be meeting with the Crowne Plaza sales manager this week to review the terms of our contract and try to reduce the potential liability of the three obligations listed above. Also, I've contacted the Colorado Toy Train Foundation, which has become more active with G Scale auctions about getting involved with our convention.

Programs

November General Meeting — November 24th, 2020 7:00 PM via Zoom (6:30PM Log on to Zoom)

November Program

“Adventure Trails on Colorado Rails” by Ron Ruhoff – a Photo-Musical Adventures program featuring Colorado’s Steam Locomotives from the 1950’s through the present. Professionally edited slides are narrated by Ron Ruhoff, accompanied with symphonic music, and will be presented on Zoom. The Zoom meeting ID and passcode will be emailed to members prior to the meeting

December General Meeting — December 29th, 2020 7:00 PM via Zoom (6:30PM Log on to Zoom)

LOG ON TO ZOOM

1. Go to Zoom.com
2. Type in the Meeting ID
3. Type in the Passcode
4. Connect via Computer Audio
5. Start your video and audio
6. When meeting begins mute your audio



Calendar

- **November 21, 2020—Saturday, 9:00-1:00PM CRRM DGRS Auction**
- **November 24, 2020—Tuesday, 7:00PM General Meeting Zoom**
Program—TBD, virtual program
- **December 29, 2020—Tuesday, 7:00PM General Meeting Zoom**

As the Pandemic continues, announcements regarding events will be made!

DGRS Private Bid Auction

The Denver Garden Railway Society is fortunate to have received many donations in the past year. These donations are being housed in storage facilities on the CRRM property. Unfortunately, the storage facilities are overflowing. It's now time for an auction to alleviate the backlog of items the organization has collected, just in time for Christmas. We will have the first of these auctions on **Saturday, November 21st from 9:00AM to 1:00PM** inside the layout of the DGRS at the CRRM. All precautions for social distancing will be followed and CDC temperature checks are required per CRRM rules. Guidelines for onsite temperature checks and an onsite monitor will help administer our membership to comply with CDC guidance.

THE FOLLOWING AUCTION WILL BE FOR 10 LARGE ITEMS:

You may place your bid on any item at the following link starting October 19th:

www.32auctions.com/DGRSNovember



Please include your member name and amount per bid. On the day of the auction the officer will update the in person bid sheets with online bids so the bidder knows the current bid! **All bidders please be present at the end of the auction for payment!**

Due to the everchanging Covid-19 environment, things are subject to change at the CRRM.

Yankee Girl Mine Replica

I decided to build a replica of this historic mine located about 2 miles north of the summit of Red Mountain Pass in Ouray County. It was rebuilt in 1900 after a fire destroyed the original building. The mine shaft is 1050 vertical feet. The Yankee Girl produced 8 million dollars for the investors. Top height of the shaft house is 53 feet (a 5 story building). I contacted the Ouray Historical Museum and they provided me with historical photos. Also a set of plans that were drawn up about 25 years ago for grant money to the Colo Historical Society to stabilize the structure.

So I started building the shaft house, hoist house and carpenters shop as a fall - winter/Covid project. It was a fun project building a replica of one of the famous and most productive mines in Colorado history.



Taken in my back yard. The Silverton Northern RR serviced the mine as shown. The RR would load the high grade ore into box cars from the second floor of the mine and take the ore to Silverton for processing. Hoist house in foreground. Carpenters shop to the right of the hoist house



The original photos showed a lot of cribbing along the RR track because the mine was build on a hillside. So I built the cribbing using paper soda straws glued to a backing.



This shows the low grade ore coming out of the first floor going to the tailings. That is all I have. Carpenters shop in foreground. When we have a real meeting with all - I will bring the Yankee Girl in for show and tell.

Bob Dunlap



News from the World of 7 1/2 " Railroads

Update on Larkspur Consolidated Railroad Track Layout

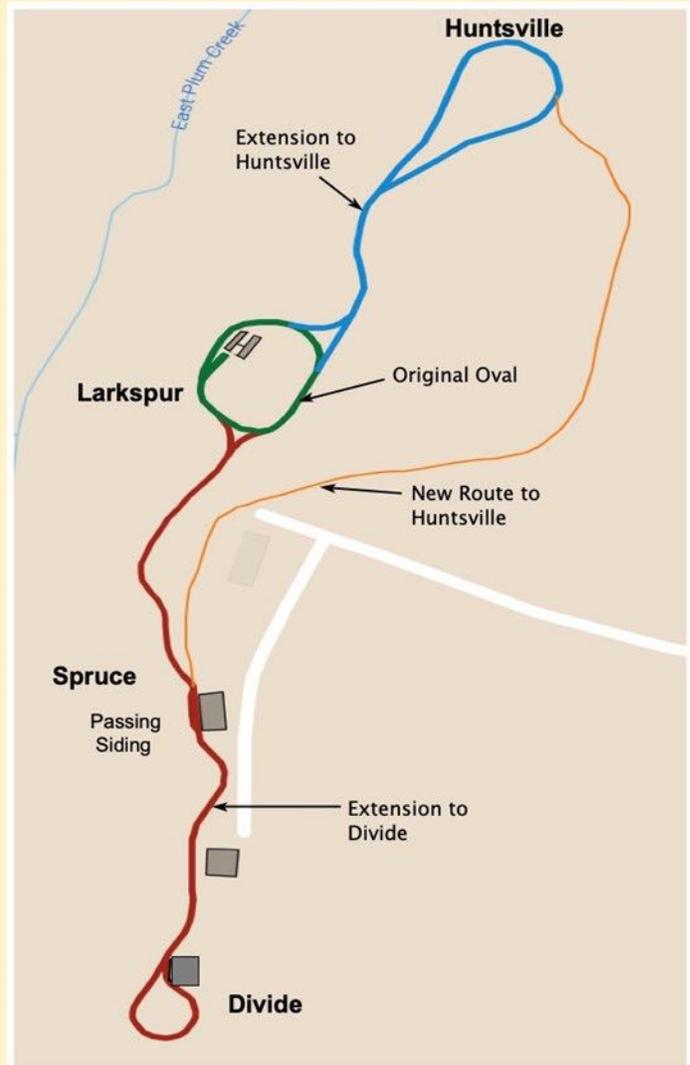
In March of 2018, Bob Leise gave a presentation at a General Business meeting for DGRS about the efforts to build a ride-on train within Bob and Glen's property in Larkspur. Since then, the group known as the Larkspur Consolidated Railroad (LCRR) has expanded the layout once, and is in the middle of a second expansion. This article describes those expansions and addresses some of the challenges we faced and continue to face in those expansions.

In his presentation, Bob described the first phase of building the original oval (see the green design oval in Figure 1). He went on to describe the second phase, expanding the layout to Huntsville (see blue design in Figure 1). But the work to expand did not stop with Phase 2, as we completed Phase 3 to Divide (see red design in Figure 1), and are working on Phase 4 to add another route to travel between Divide and Huntsville (see orange design in Figure 1). Phases 1 and 2 included about 2,000 feet of track, and Phase 3 added another 1,500 feet. We believe Phase 4 will add another 1,500 to 2,000 feet of track, bringing the total layout to around 5,500 feet of track, or just over a mile.

Unless you are lucky enough to enjoy a flat yard, planning and actually laying track outside for our G-Scale layouts is difficult having to conquer hills, accommodate changes in elevation, and maneuver around other obstacles like porches and decks. But in the world of 7½" ride-on trains, that level-of-difficulty increases significantly when planning to lay track over many acres of uneven ground as we must accommodate for drainage as well as adding crossings for cars, trucks, and service equipment used around the railroad.

Conquering Hills

When planning to expand the layout, the first consideration is planning a route that uses the flattest ground available to minimize the amount of dirt to be moved to provide a reasonably flat route for the trains. To do that, we used a surveyor's transit (see photos below) to find the optimum route. This was no easy task as we had to measure numerous options and then choose the route that minimized both the loss of pasture, moving dirt, building bridges, and building switches.



Surveying the Route

After the route was decided, the real work began – moving dirt (*see photo*), preparing the ground for track, and then laying the track.

Moving the Dirt



Laying the Track

After leveling the land using the skid-steer, rakes, and shovels, we laid down plastic sheeting to try and minimize weeds and avoid moisture coming up through the tracks. Next came laying ties on the plastic, inserting rails into grooves cut in the ties at a standard separation of $7\frac{1}{2}$ " , and then covering the rails and ties with ballast ($\frac{1}{2}$ " rock) to stabilize the assembly. While all this may sound simple, it involved a lot of manual labor (*see photo*).



Phase 3, Heading to Divide

In planning the route to reach Divide, we also had to work around trees and deal with sandy, unstable soil. When the optimum route was found, we also had to realize that the route would be a single track with a reversing loop at the end, that needed to accommodate multiple trains at the same time. To accommodate multiple trains, we added a passing siding at Spruce (*see photo*) halfway to Divide, but soon realized we needed a way to communicate between trains to avoid two trains heading in opposite directions along the single-track. To solve that problem, we followed the lead of the prototype railroads and purchased communication devices (walkie-talkies) that each engineer carried, and coordinated with a dispatcher before starting down the single-track.

With the passing siding and the reversing loop, we had two places to stop and request clearance from the dispatcher (*see photo left*) before proceeding to the next stop.

Passing Siding





Dispatcher

While using the walkie-talkies with the dispatcher helped significantly, it was decided we needed to reduce the amount of single-track used by multiple trains. So, the plan for Phase 4 was launched.

Phase 4, Reducing the Amount of Single Track

To reduce the amount of single track used by multiple trains, we decided to find a different way to ride between Divide and Huntsville. After looking at a variety of options, we decided to add about 2,000 feet of track that followed a different path and circumvented the bottleneck between Divide and Larkspur. This route (*shown in orange in Figure 1*) had its drawbacks to include crossing a major artery for real-life vehicles going to the LCRR Service Center, and crossing a large ravine that provided drainage away from Bob and Glen's home. Along the way, we chose to add several sidings near Larkspur to park trains not being used, and charging stations for our locomotives powered by battery (battery-powered locomotives seem to be the path we are all following on the LCRR as they are easier to maintain while still providing many hours of service between recharges). So Phase 4 is a huge undertaking that is in-progress as this article is being written, although work has generally

been suspended until next Spring. But we are all excited about the added capabilities Phase 4 will provide by giving us about a mile of track with only about 100 yards of single track used by multiple trains, plus parking sidings for trains not in use, and re-charging stations for our electric locomotives. Lots of work, but big pay-offs.

Future Additions?

While we never know what the future will hold, there may be more track expansions to the LCRR when we finish Phase 4. Who knows, maybe a future expansion might include a line to the main entrance to the property as a way to welcome guests wanting to ride the rails.

In summary, we in the LCRR still love our G-Scale layouts, but have found another way to satisfy our yearning to ride trains and truly drive trains. Phase 1 gave us a basic oval, and Phase 2 extended our track to Huntsville giving us more variety in riding trains. Then we added Phase 3 to Divide, which added a lot more track on which we can ride, but brought to light the limitation of trying to run multiple trains on single track. So, Phase 4 is in-progress to try and alleviate the limitation of a single track between stops, and give us nearly a mile of track to ride without the worry of two trains meeting face to face on single track.

The Desuatels, Hendels, Leises, McGuires and Underwoods



LCRR Service Center

GARDEN RAILROAD NEWS

<https://grnews.org/get>

**BRINGING NEWS TO GARDEN RAILROADERS
IN THE USA & BEYOND**



OUR MISSION

To build the garden railroading community by connecting people who love the hobby

OUR INITIATIVE

A FREE on-line, Garden Railroading Newsletter/Magazine fueled by Garden Railroading Clubs.

Get our Sample Newsletter here - <https://grnews.org/get>

OUR REACH

In addition to the USA:

Australia

Canada

New Zealand

And growing!

WHO ARE WE?

We are Garden Railroad Clubs

We are Garden Railroaders

We are volunteers

We are the vendors that supply the hobby

We are photographers of garden railroads

GRNEWS.ORG

Virtual, on-line GARDEN RAILROADING NEWS

OUTREACH

- 70 clubs in North America have signed up to distribute GRNews to their members
- Word has gotten out via Face Book and other social media outlets.
- The GR News website has had nearly 2,000 unique visitors from 25 countries with the U.S., Canada, Australia and Germany leading the way
- The GR News Face Book group has more than 400 members in the first six weeks
- The first real issue of the GR News is scheduled to be released prior to Thanksgiving.

RailPro For G-scale

At the “suggestion” of the chapter president, here is my little contribution to the newsletter. A couple of years ago I purchased a DCC system for my railway. Got the package from the dealer, and installed it . Took a bit of work for me to do this as I am not that good with these small parts. But got the job done, and took the engine out to the railway to test it out. The engine ran fine for about four feet, then stopped. Tried it again, and the same result, just a whopping four feet. Not good. So I assumed the that board was bad. Sent it back to the manufacturer, who checked the board and said it was good. I had read an advert from RLD Hobbies that they installed sound boards, Took the engine to the Fedex office and sent it away to get a brain. When it got there Robby suggested a different control system called Rail Pro. I agreed after some web browsing, that it would be OK for him to install the new system for me. Several weeks later, my “new” GP-7 showed up, and I excitedly put the engine on the track, and again it ran for about four feet and stopped. Called RLD and talked to Robby, and he suggested a bigger power supply. I had BridgeWerks 5 amp in the shed, but knew it didn’t put out any power. Found out that Colpar Hobbies were the local dealer for BridgeWerks. Took it to them expecting it to be gone for several weeks. Found another 5 amp on the net, bought it and it worked just wonderfully. The engine would now go around the whole layout!! The next day Colpar called and said that the only thing wrong was the power cord was bad. It now works like a champ after finding that the “forward/back” switch was in the “off” position. (See I told you that I was not good with electronics.) I really like this Rail Pro since I don’t have to know which combination of buttons to press to get the horn or etc. to work. Just have to look at the screen and press the horn or what I want to have happen and it sends the command to the device that I’ve selected. It can do a lot more than I know about. My GP-9 is due to come back soon, so I’ll be able to control both of them. One on the lower and one on the upper track. Come next summer and see it in operation. Lots of fun for everyone that has tried it. I must say though that RLD is not the fastest doing the install. My GP-9 has been there for a couple of months. If you have a DCC system for your layout, great. If you have not purchased one yet, I would certainly suggest your checking out Rail Pro, it is easy to install and easier to run.

Ray Bowman



COVID-19 VIRTUAL TRAVEL



Colorado Railroads, a site for the fans of past and present railroads serving the Centennial State in the USA. **Steve Walden** Website Editor



Video: Alpine Tunnel by Drone

One area of lasting interest by railfans and historians in Colorado is Alpine Tunnel. Built by the Denver, South Park & Pacific Railroad in 1881, it connected Denver and locally Leadville with Gunnison, reaching the station on the west side of town in 1882.1 Crossing beneath the Continental Divide, the tunnel carried traffic in all seasons until the line was abandoned just 28 years later in 1910 by the Colorado & Southern after a partial cave-in. The Denver & Rio Grande, having connected Denver to Leadville and across Marshall Pass to Gunnison, had siphoned away most of the business between these points.



https://youtu.be/fBgAckFO_xo

This video by a YouTube member Searching for the C&S narrow gauge is of such good quality, I had to share it. It has almost a Google Earth-like quality to it, showing the west portal and climbing high to peek over the Continental Divide at the approach to east portal while remaining over the west side. It is a unique and compelling viewpoint that until recently was impossible to get in such detail and resolution. Frankly, I was amazed to see so little vibration or wind for such a high and weather-intense location.

As you can see from the video above and this look at the east portal, the portals have both collapsed long ago, sealing off the tunnel itself from any would-be explorers. Nonetheless, the site attracts visitors from June into September each year. All other times, it is covered in snow, often dozens of feet deep. 🤔

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<http://www.corailroads.com/>

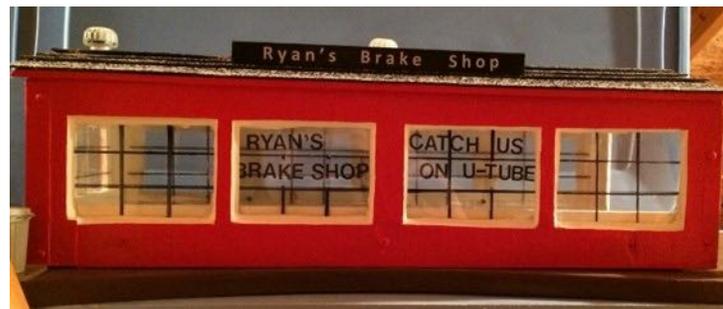
Desautel West Railroad

Update: Maintaining Structures In Our Layout

As with most everything, keeping things we value in good working-order is not a small job. But if you are like me, when it comes to my G-Scale layout, I spend much more time caring for the engines, rolling stock, and track than I do with the maintaining for the structures. Last winter, I paid for my neglect when I decided to spend the winter caring for the buildings. While I worked all winter, I didn't nearly get through all of the buildings. By winter's end, I had finished nine, yes only nine. Granted, those nine needed the most care either due to their deteriorated state, or the importance I placed on preserving them (more on that later in this article). So below is a description of my efforts and how they look today.

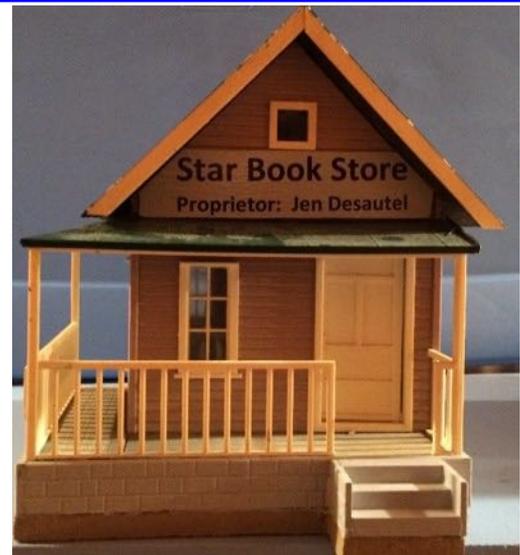
One characteristic that Cindy and I choose to incorporate into our railway is to name structures, locations along the track, and even rolling stock after family members or dear friends. So below, the titles of the structures is shown first, followed by a description of the renovation.

Ryan's Brake Shop. Ryan is our oldest son, and a few years ago, in an effort to try and save some money, he attempted to changing the brakes on his pickup by himself and the aid of U-Tube how-to videos. It was quite an adventure with funny stories, but an overall positive experience for him. Below is a photo of Ryan's Brake Shop after its renovation.



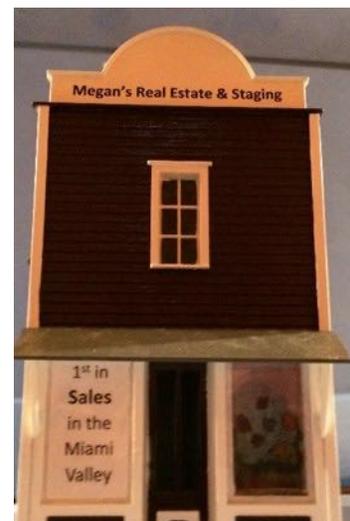
The problem with this building was it was made for use indoors, and I hoped that if I painted it with exterior paint, the building could withstand the elements. Well, it did not work, especially around the windows. The sills around the windows caught the rain, and the material disintegrated after one season being outdoors. To resolve the problem, I cut away the deteriorated material and replaced it with cedar wood, caulked the windows to shed the water, and then repainted everything again with exterior paint. We will see after next season if this approach worked.

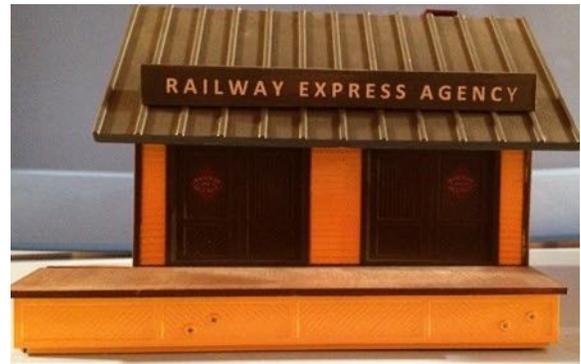
Queenie's Quilts. As many of you know, my beloved Cindy has a nickname, The Queen. Since she loves to sew and quilt, we decided to make a building for her quilt store. Originally, we bought the building, which was a Cracker Barrel cookie jar in its previous life, at one of DGRS' swap meets, and sprayed it with varnish in hopes it would withstand the elements. Well, again, it did not work. So we removed the miniature quilts glued to the building (but left the flag in place), sanded off what spray varnish remained, and painted with exterior paint in the color of her choice.



Star Book Store. Our Daughter-in-law, Jen, loves to read. So, it was only natural for Jen's building to be a book store. While given the name "Star", you might think she is a star in our lives, which she is, but it is actually a reference to her rank in the Department of Defense, as she is the equivalent of a 1-Star (Brigadier) General. Again, we obtained the building used at a DGRS Swap Meet, but needed to paint the roof and repair some parts that had come unglued. So, a little bit of glue, paint, and some epoxy, the Store was repaired.

Buildings for Emily & Megan. Emily and Megan are the daughters of our son's best friend growing up (Todd), who spent a lot of his childhood at our house. While Todd, Megan, and Emily live in Ohio, they visited some G-Scale layouts with us and were enthralled with the buildings. Given their enthusiasm, we decided to add two more buildings to our layout, one for each girl. Emily loves gymnastics and Megan is very interested in real estate. Using a standard Piko building we bought used (again, at a DGRS Swap Meet), we used spray paint to modify the color on the building to Megan's favorite color (purple), and tailored the building to be a real estate office. But Emily's building was a joint venture that Todd and I built using pine lumber, and painted with primer and exterior paint. Within the building are four pieces of gymnastic equipment (Floor Exercise, Pommel Horse, Uneven Parallel Bars, and Balance Beam) that I scratch-built. As you can see in the photo, the front of the building is covered with acrylic so visitors can watch the gymnasts practice the events.





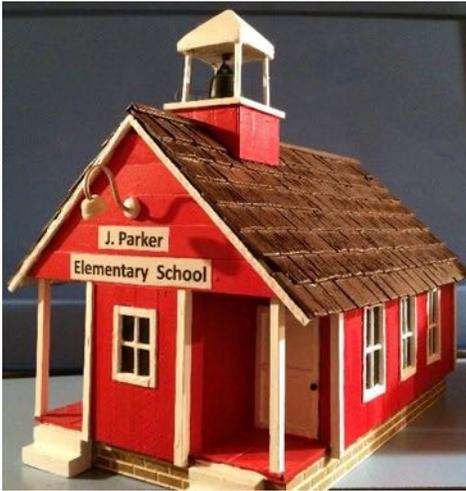
Katy's House. Katy is a family friend and fellow teacher (like Cindy) who is very special to us. Katy's house (below) is a kit we purchased at the 2015 Convention here in Denver, and it has spent 4 summers in our layout exposed to the elements. While it held up pretty good, it was showing its age, so we freshened the exterior with new exterior paint on the roof, sides, and trim. I am hoping this new paint job will give it many more years of life in our layout.

Railway Express Agency. After buying a station freight office at another DGRS Swap Meet, I decided to make it an REA Office at our Railyard Station. So I used spray paint in a can to give it new color and added a sign on the roof. After two summers in our layout, the spray paint was gone and the sign had warped. So I cleaned-off the old paint and repainted the building and roof using exterior paint and brush. Next, I removed the old sign and used scrap wood from a cedar fence picket to make a new sign. Then I needed to stabilize the loading platform, and add new decals. The building now looks better than ever.

Preserving the Work of Others. As club members retire from the hobby for various reasons, we try to attend their sales for several reasons. One is to help them liquidate their holdings while we get reduced prices rather than buying new things. A second reason, especially

for dear friends we've made in DGRS, is to help preserve their work on scratch-built buildings. And a third reason is so our friends become part of our railway. Dave and Joan Parker are two such people, and over the years Cindy and I gained a great deal of respect for them as people, and admired Dave's craftsmanship in the structures he built. Below are two such examples – the School House and Water Mill Dave built by hand. So when Dave and Joan sold the pieces in their layout, Cindy and I were lucky enough to buy the two buildings shown below. But these two buildings called to us – the School House because Cindy is a retired teacher; and the Water Mill because of Dave's ingenuity, creativity, and skill in building the structure. These two buildings are two of the most important structures in our layout, and we are determined to keep them in good repair.

When we first acquired the buildings, I made some initial repairs and gave each a new coat of paint – exterior paint on the School House and spray varnish on the Water Mill. Along the way, we added decals to ensure Joan and Dave's legacy of the buildings was not forgotten. So we called them J Parker Elementary School and Dave Parker Lumber Mill.



While the exterior paint on the School House has held-up very well, the spray varnish on the Water Mill did not. So last winter, I scraped-off the remaining varnish, painted the building with exterior paint, and refreshed the decals. However, I could not figure a way to further preserve Dave's superb craftsmanship on the water wheel itself. So after considerable thought, I removed the water wheel from the operating mechanism, and refreshed the spray varnish to try

and highlight Dave's work. Today, the School House still spends each summer in the layout, but the lumber mill spends very limited time outside to reduce any more deterioration of the water wheel and battery-powered drive mechanism (which still works exceptionally well). I feel very proud of Dave's work on both structures, and it is now my responsibility to keep those buildings in very good condition so every visitor can marvel at Dave's craftsmanship.

In summary, over time and numerous renovations of a variety of buildings, I've concluded three things about keeping our buildings in good repair. First, just like the other things we value, it takes time and effort to keep the buildings in our layout in good repair. Second, paint from spray cans is quick and easy, and is a good temporary solution, but it just doesn't stand up very well to the weather elements (sun, wind, and heat). And third, brush-applied exterior house paint works extremely well to maintain and preserve our buildings that spend the summers outside.

Jim Desautel