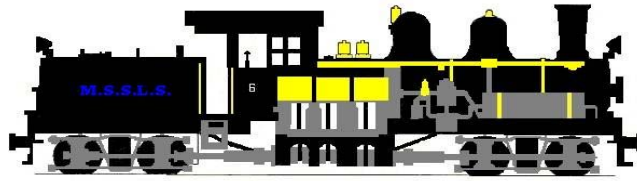


Michigan



Small Scale Live Steamers

MSSLS at the Mid-Michigan Train Show 2011 by Bob Winkel

Sunday March 27, 2011

MSSLS members met at the CMU Field House about 9:30 and proceeded to unload and set up the portable track. We had a great turnout of club members and the work was completed in short order. The track was up by 10:15 and the show opened to the public at 11am.

Several members took the opportunity to preview the flea market but others started heating water immediately. Tom Meyers put his wooden cab 0-4-0 on the track and John Wessels had his logging train out. But we did a double take because it was not John's Shay at work; rather it was his new Climax chugging around the oval. It was the loco's first time running at a club event.

Leroy Patterson made the long drive to join us. He operated his Aster West Maryland 3 cylinder Shay. Tom Toth fired up his Roundhouse Argyll 0-6-2 green tank engine for all to admire.

We had a chance to meet new member Chuck Ott, his wife Betty and son Lonnie. Chuck brought his new Accucraft 0-6-0 and, with a little assistance from Fred Gandolfi, had it chugging around the track pulling a nice train of hopper cars. It ran nearly flawlessly but Lonnie gave his dad a little razz and said he was standing back to avoid the shrapnel in case of operator error.

Rob Devries also made the drive up to the show (actually, pretty much *all* of us had a bit of a drive) and he brought along several locomotives. Early on he ran his 0-4-0 Mamod and later ran his Gordon Watson Argyll 4-4-0, the #3 Ottawa & Spring Haven with several coaches from the same railroad. From the Christmas decorations, we suspect this train had run as a holiday train at some time in the past.

We must dedicate this event the "Climax Run" as we had not only John's new logger but also Leroy's Aster Climax and Bill Hendrick's Accucraft Climax. We saw Leroy's loco setting a blistering pace at one point in the afternoon and later on Bill's Wildhorse Mining loco pulled a train of custom made mine cars from the "Purple People Eater" mine. All three were running well and much appreciated by the crowd.

Will Lindley got the coal fired Annette lit up and you could see a reflection of the glowing embers near the ash pan. It ran so well that Will could barely catch up to it to make throttle adjustments. It was nice to see Fred and Pat Gandolfi, who brought greetings from John and Bev Fuller. Fred got out his Aster Mikado 2-8-2 pulled his beautiful blue livery B&O coaches to the delight of the rail fans.

Jim Bower ran his SR&RL train, when not combing the train show for good deals. Bill Hendrick put his Frank S. on the track pulling a colorful LGB circus train with TWO cars with caged lions. Will ran his Sammy engine with a logging train around this time also.

Both Bob Winkel and Fred Gandolfi ran Aster Grasshoppers at this event. Fred's even had a scale engineer and little people in the passenger coaches. He had a couple of ideas on ways to make the Grasshoppers run better and longer and suggested several extra parts to always have with you, including a fire extinguisher. Your reporter also ran his mogul with a freight consist.

Our thanks to all the members who were able to come and help out at the run!