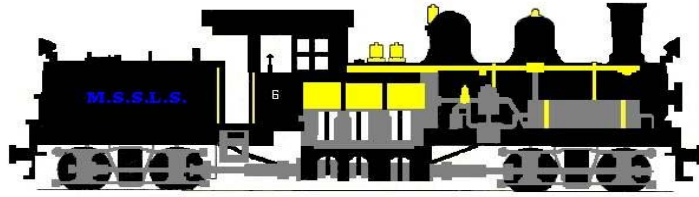


Michigan



Small Scale Live Steamers

MSSLS Steamup at Waterford Log Cabin Days, June 2011 by Bob Winkel

The Michigan Small Scale Live Steamers dedicated this run to our departed friends Bill Kay and Don Reilly. We miss you guys.

The 15th annual Log Cabin Days started out with cloudy skies and temperatures near 60 degrees. But members got the track assembled and leveled in time for the start of the show. We were adjacent to the Clinton River and right across from the 1941 GMC fire truck.

Tom Myers and Will Lindley both got things started with wood cab 0-4-0 locomotives. Tom pulled a log train and Will pulled the 4 wheel cars loaded with slate. The campers across the river were burning campfires all weekend so our trains all seemed to smell like wood burners. (Next year we should give them some coal to burn...).

We had a lot of problems with trees this weekend. Tom Toth fixed one problem – he used a bungee cord to hoist a leaning tree branch out of the way of the inner track of the layout. The other problem was the continual falling of cottonwood pods and branches onto the mainline. It took constant effort to keep the track clear. After Tom got the tree branch fixed we saw him running 0-6-2 Argyle with four green and white C&ML coaches.

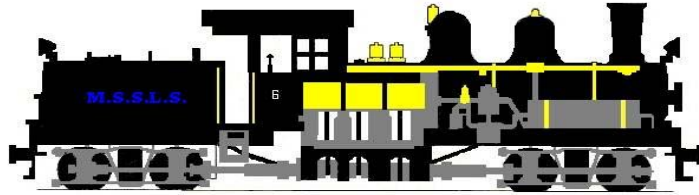
Around noon we heard gunshots and figured that someone had tried to steal a strawberry Sunday – so the military reenactment people shot him. Throughout the weekend Jim Bowers ran his Forney and, in the spirit of the weekend, he hauled a flat car with a log cabin on it. Did you know that Michigan is the only state to have an official Log Cabin Day and that there are currently 100 log cabins in the state? Waterford's log cabin, at the park, is recognized as #58 on the list.

Your reported ran a 1:24 scale train with old time freight loads including a steam powered log skidder. John Wessels operated his 2 cylinder Shay logging engine and we saw Myers running a vertical boiler Regner Willi.

The crowd was pretty steady all day and after lunch the cloudy skies gave way to warmer, partly sunny weather with a nice breeze. The band at the pavilion picked up and it got hard to hear your burner running. For two day runs like this one, we often have a smaller turnout of members each day, so there was lots of track time available and many periods when only two tracks were in use. It was like tag team sports – stay out there until you're replaced!

Saturday afternoon we watched as Myers steamed up his maroon LMS #6233 4-6-2 with eight, nope, make that ten, oops I mean eleven coaches. He also ran his alcoholic Thomas.

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Will brought out his coal fired Sabre and John Wessels ran his Climax. Tom Toth steamed his British Railways 2-6-4 #80007 and pulled three green coach cars.

In the spirit of dedicating the run to Bill and Don, Will Lindley ran two locos formerly owned by Bill, the BAGRS and the Maxwell Hemmins.

Sunday we should have called the run "SHAY DAYS", due to the large number of members that brought logging locomotives. Leroy Patterson made the drive from the west side of the state and brought along a 3 cylinder Accucraft Shay and a Jeoff-built, wood bodied, Shay with a "wiggler" for power. John Wessels also ran his Shay several times. There were a lot of log trains this weekend!

New member John Harris boiled some water with us. He brought two locomotives and showed off his blue Regner "Max" and latter ran his Accucraft Southern Pacific 0-6-0 #1249 pulling a freight train that included a Budweiser tank car. John is now a full-fledged member of the burnt fingers club.

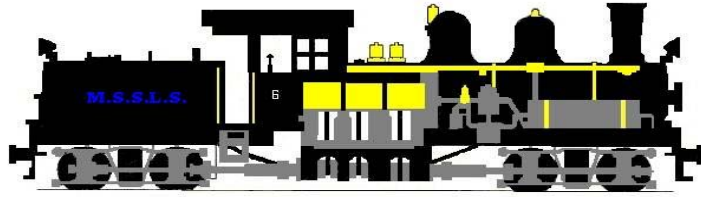
Jim Bowers, when not steaming his 0-4-4T, was taking lots of pictures of the action. Before lunch Bob Winkel ran his red SPC #9 pulling a string of SPC coaches. Leroy put his Regner "Lumber Jack" on the tracks several times on Sunday and found that it ran better in reverse. Not only was it back woods, it was backwards. Wessels fired up his Climax #4 in the afternoon and Tom Myers ran his Ogwen locomotive.

The middle of the afternoon saw the battle of the British 4-6-2 locomotives when Myers brought out his LNER #4472 with its consist of yellow coaches. Lindley then fired up his Southern Spitfire with five green coaches. Each had a good, long run until Tom's handsome train was accidentally derailed by a wayward SPC coach. But they both were appreciated by the crowds that stopped by.

True story: At the end of the day, as the last youngster watched the last train being taken off the track, he threw us a big kiss and the run was over.

This was a good run to dedicate to our lost brothers Don and Bill, especially since Bill particularly enjoyed running at Log Cabin Days. Many thanks go to all the members who made it possible. Special thanks to Jim Bowers for driving halfway across the metro area to get the track there and back.

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