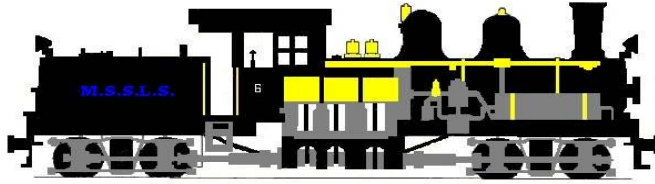


Michigan



Small Scale Live Steamers

Gratiot Valley Train Show Run by Bob Winkel

March 6th, 2011

Five MSSLS members met the day before the show to set up the track. We were lucky with the weather and got the track inside without getting snowed on. It went up pretty fast; with the indoor venues the leveling is not so difficult. The laser batteries were dead but Bob Paternoster had spares.

Sunday was a bit snowy but we had a pretty good turnout of members for the run. Long before the show opened we saw John Wessel's Shay running peacefully around the track with its load of wood headed to the mill. A short time later it was joined by Bob Paternoster's NCNG Mogul and a long freight consist, including his new "Have A Coke" reefer.

Tom Myers displayed his Aster Climax pushing, appropriately enough, a large wedge-shaped railroad snowplow. Will Lindley steamed up his Maxwell-Hemmens Porter, among others. Taylor and Parker Moon got their Forney and a mixed consist on the track several times throughout the day.

The crowds were a little light in the first hour or two of the show, perhaps due to the overnight snow. We certainly did not see the normal 10am crush of patrons. That didn't stop John Ermin from putting on a show with his remote controlled 0-6-0 and slope-backed tender. He showed us pictures of a ¼ scale operation he visited near Frankenmuth.

Adam Barr came up again from Cleveland. He ran his JNRR B-20 and a nice looking train with tankers, a gondola and a couple of tipper cars. Later he fired his Accucraft 0-4-0 steamer. Your reporter ran his #9 South Pacific Coast American, pulling some reefers, a boxcar and a loaded flat car. The rabid raccoon made a brief appearance, also.

Jim Bower brought along an innovative method to get under the track. It's a stool with four wheels and a seat. You merely sit down, roll under the track, and then stand up. It worked well and was quite easy on the back and legs! Jim steamed up one of his remote controlled SRRL #6 Forneys and pulled a couple of coaches, the Presque Isle and the Isle Royale. He wore his new matching SRRL tee shirt too.

Around 1pm there was a British invasion on the track with Will running his green Aster Winchester and Tom operating his maroon Duchess of Sutherland, hauling a 10 car passenger train. Myers also ran his coal fired Shaw converted "Jack" for the crowd.

Later in the afternoon Bob Winkel got out his Aster Grasshopper and newly painted passenger car. It only seems to go one speed - fast. The show closed at 4pm and, since the track was very close to the exit door, we had the trailer loaded up pretty quick.

Thanks to all who came to help. It was another safe and fun run. Our thanks go to Jim Bower for towing the trailer on behalf of the club.