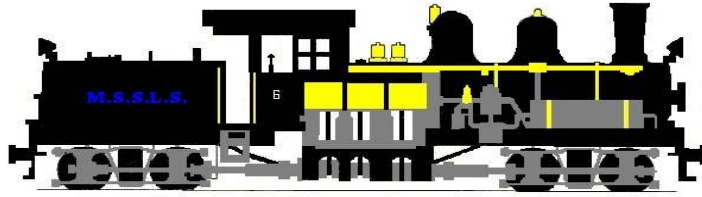


Michigan



Small Scale Live Steamers

MSSLS at Gratiot Valley Model Train Show, November 6,2011 by Bob Winkel

By the time they opened the doors to the public at the Gibraltar Trade Center, MSSLS members had the track up and leveled and had a table set up for sales. And, within a few minutes, there were trains on the track and three steam plumes in the air.

A large number of members had signed up for the run ahead of time but there was plenty of track time for everyone. Leroy Patterson made the long drive and brought enough 1:24 equipment to half fill a roundhouse. He was on the track early with his Accucraft Legend, a 4-4-0 with D&RG markings, pulling a set of appropriately sized coaches. John Ehrmin was also on the track at that time with his RC controlled 0-4-0, with its slope back tender and short freight consist.

Bob Paternoster steamed up his mogul, Nevada County #2, for the crowd and had good run, pulling his billboard reefers and a couple of coaches. Dan Samuels also ran a mogul today with an interesting consist including a “beer whiz” reefer and a nice White Pass gondola.

John Wessels joined us for the day and his Shay was running light on the outside track, no cars in tow this run. Speaking of running light, Jim Bowers didn't put any locomotive on the track, SRRL or otherwise. But we noted that he made good use of his time, scouring for bargains at the show.

A little later we had a surprise visit from our friend Bud Gilbert, who hosted MSSLS at the PH&D facility last year. About that time your reporter had his SPC #9 on the track pulling a local freight with as much period gear as he could muster. Several other acquaintances stopped by at about that same time and, luckily, the hardware was running well.

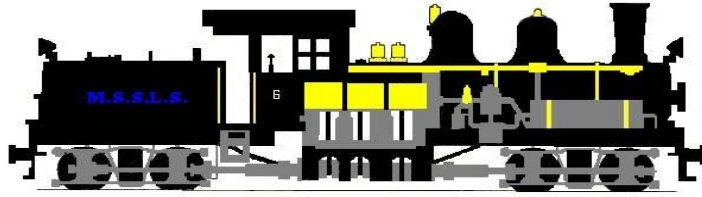
Bob Weltyk came to the run but concentrated on thinning out his stock of LGB gear at the sales table. Parker and Taylor Moon took up the slack, firing their #464 with five freight cars. John Ehrmin put his Aristocraft 2-8-2 Chesapeake and Ohio on the track during the afternoon and these two were the big guns at the run.

The Gratiot Valley club provided MSSLS members with meal vouchers and the food in the main “mall” area turned out to be quite good. There was a choice of beef stew, roast pork or turkey with all the trimmings – much better than normal train show fare.

Tom Toth joined us for the run and we saw his Maxwell-Hemmings Porter in action, pulling a mixed consist including ore cars, a box car and a caboose. This engine is still for sale at the time of this report. After lunch we were joined by a number of members including Adam Barr, who was fired up his Daylight Special. With five red and orange passenger coaches, this is always an enjoyable train to watch.

We had a new member sign up during this run. His name is Jim Linfield and he has equipment of just about every gauge and is thinking of adding 45mm to his collection. Welcome aboard, Jim!

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Alex Azary and Ted Ramsey joined us Sunday afternoon and Alex snuck a Hornby O gauge 0-4-0 on the track with a set of cute passenger cars. We didn't see much steam coming from this locomotive. Ted steamed up his Shay but it was reported that, unfortunately, the locomotive had an off-track excursion. The reason for derailment was unknown.

Leroy got several members salivating over his Paul Huntington 2-6-0 with Boston and Maine markings. This engine is real sweet looking and runs as good as it looks. He said, emphatically, "It is NOT for sale!"

By 3:45 the crowds were thinning and it was starting to cool off a bit. A couple of trains were running right up to the end but at 4:00pm half the lights went out and the show was over. By about 4:30 you could not tell we were ever there, except for the water and oil stains on the concrete.

Jim Bowers had a scare earlier in the day when the trailer lights were not cooperating, but members helped him double check their operation before he left and all was OK. Thanks, Jim.

Your reporter was at this run without a camera but we offer the following picture for your enjoyment.

