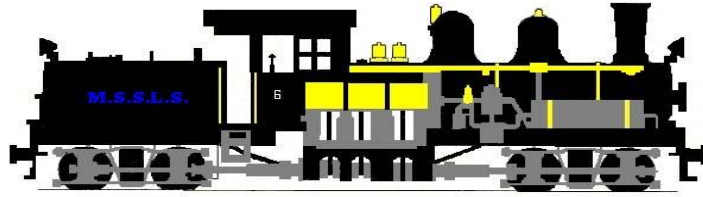


Michigan



Small Scale Live Steamers

MSSLS at Devries' Pine Ridge Railroad June, 2011 by Bob Winkel

Saturday June 18th turned out to be a fun steamup at Rob Devries' track in Jenison, Michigan. The near perfect weather made a nice backdrop for running with current and past MSSLS members at this annual event.

Rob and Cheryl were showing off the new addition to their house and also the new brick paver patio out back. The construction had caused some changes to Rob's garden railroad but it was fully operational for the meet. He also had a single-track portable layout available for guests to run on. When we arrived we saw Rob's brother, Jeff, running a brass-bodied Shay around the back loop of the garden track. The railroad is basically a large dog-bone shaped track along the north property line but the back part of the track can be run as loop, if desired. Unlike the early pictures of the track from 1997, most of the garden layout is surrounded with flowers, trees, a pond and other plantings, making a pleasant environment for the trains.

Jim Bowers brought along a canopy and tables to give us a little extra staging area for the trains. Past member Eric Christianson set up a work area near one of the sidings of the portable track and we saw pretty much continuous steaming on this set of rails for most of the afternoon. Marc Gast also stopped by for the morning and visited with the crew.

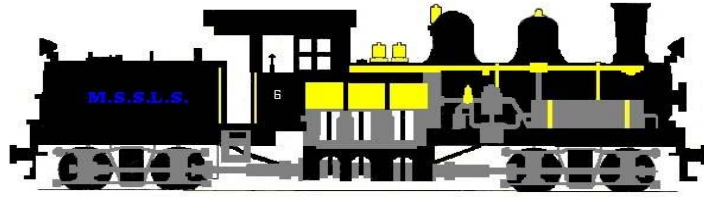
We met steamer Joe Noll at the track, who ran his Shay and his Lady Anne (which looked suspiciously like Tom Toth's engine). Eric ran a Shay and a Ruby at various times. We watched as Jeff Devries took apart a Ruby, right before our eyes, with the intent of putting a coal fired boiler in place of the original.

Around 12:45 Cheryl served up a nice luncheon to the guests, who numbered as many as 18 at one point. Rob showed us around his new shop in the new basement under the addition. He has a 45mm track running around the periphery of the shop for winter running or testing new equipment.

After lunch Jim Bowers ran his Forney #6 with a log train and logging caboose in tow. Your reporter ran his mogul and a short train on the portable track a couple of times. We also met Kevin Meyer, who steamed up his Ruby #2 for a few runs.

Cheryl had a few tables set up on the patio and near the house Rob displayed some of his equipment. He also had a nice picture book history of the track for visitors to look at. Rob usually invites neighbors and church members to stop by his events and this time was no exception. Several groups visited throughout the afternoon and, as Jim Bowers noted, at least one young fellow did NOT want to leave!

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Bill Hendricks arrived with his steamers and ran his Climax on the main line, with mixed success. The sunny weather was very enjoyable, especially during part of the afternoon when there was a nice breeze in the back yard.

Our thanks go to Rob and Cheryl for the invitation to run at this year's annual G Scale steam meet!