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# Puget Sound Garden Railroading

November Issue, 2015

Official Newsletter of the Puget Sound Garden Railway Society



## HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO ALL



*Club VP and module honcho Jerry Madsen (on the right) and David Drake making sure the bridge module is placed correctly.*

Photo by Beth MacLaren.

### The Wheels Keep Turning

*Article and photos By Norm Baullinger, President*

This month my wheels took me back to a little local history. I've always wondered about the Snoqualmie train tunnel. The tunnel was built for the Milwaukee Road Railroad in 1914 and opened for traffic in January 1915. I've never been there in all the years I've lived here so I decided to do a little exploring.

The tunnel was the Milwaukee Road's solution to crossing the Cascade Mountains and was in competition with the Great Northern Railway that had built their (first) tunnel through the Cascades at Stevens Pass in 1900. The Milwaukee Road's rail line, abandoned in 1980, comes up the east side of the mountains from Cle Elem, through Easton, passing on the south side of Keechelus Lake to where it goes under the mountain. The east entrance is easily accessible on the east side of Hyak, near the highway maintenance facilities.

The tunnel took 3 years to build and is 2.3 miles long with a 0.1% ascending grade starting at the east end, transitioning to a 0.4% descending grade 2,000 feet inside.

The summit, inside the tunnel, is at an elevation of 2,556 ft. The tunnel is 24 feet high, 16 feet wide and lined with 12 inches of concrete. Refuge chambers, 6 foot wide x 2 foot deep x 9.5 feet high indentations in the wall, are located about every 300 feet. Electric and telegraph cables were run through the tunnel with conduit boxes located in the top of each refuge station. One-foot-wide gutters are located on each side of the tunnel for water drainage and covered with planks.



*East Entrance Snoqualmie Train Tunnel*

*Continued on page 2.*

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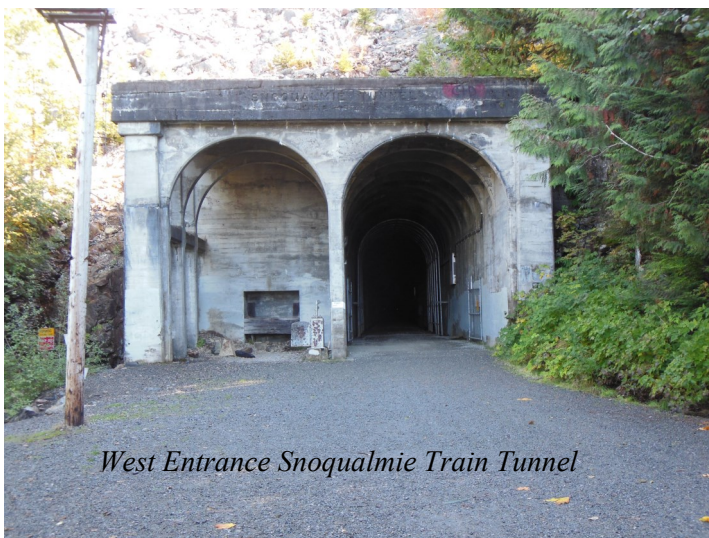
Due to smoke issues in the tunnel from the steam trains, the tunnel was electrified in 1917 for electric powered locomotives, 3000 volt DC, that were then used through the tunnel as well as on both sides leading up to the tunnel.



*Approaching West Entrance*

The Milwaukee Road stopped passenger service in 1961, ceased electric operations in 1971, filed for bankruptcy in 1977, and finally abandoned the line and tunnel in 1980. Later, Washington State acquired the right of way for rails-to-trails use and after a \$700,000 renovation, it was opened in July 2011 for bike and pedestrian use. The trail uses the old rail line and continues down to Rattlesnake Lake, east of North Bend. It is now part of the Iron Horse State Park.

One can easily hike through the tunnel. As part of the renovation, it was relined with 4 inches of concrete and has a flat, well-packed smooth gravel roadbed. A flash light is required to see, as it is almost absolute darkness inside. Entering the tunnel from the east end, one can see what looks like a speck of light ahead.



*West Entrance Snoqualmie Train Tunnel*

This is the exit, the west entrance, 2.3 miles away. There is a cool breeze coming at you, cold enough that you can see your breath in the light of your flashlight so bring a coat and maybe a hat and gloves. Good walking shoes are all that is required for footwear. The walk is easy and should take about 45 minutes to an hour walking at a reasonable pace. There are a few places where water drips from the ceiling but it isn't a problem. At the west entrance, there are some picnic tables and a toilet. It's a good idea to bring a snack and water.

Once outside the west portal, there is a small stream cascading down next to the entrance. A view of the mountains is just a few hundred feet down the trail and you can hear, but not see, I-90 traffic. From here, the trail continues 17 miles down to Rattlesnake Lake. The return trip is like the one you just came on except that the breeze is now at your back and it doesn't seem as cold. Again, once you enter the tunnel, you can see a pinpoint of light way down the tunnel that looks like a reflector. It's the east entrance.

If you are into hiking/walking/ biking, this is a good afternoon trip with a bit of local railroad history. The tunnel is closed November 1 – June 1 due to ice forming inside where the water drips. A Washington State Parks (Discovery Pass) permit is required to park in the parking lot. Driving directions: East on I-90 to Exit 54, right, then left onto highway 906. In about ½ mile, before the highway maintenance facilities, right and right again to the parking lot. It is signed.

That's how my wheels turned last month, how about you?

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## Where to Find It - Aluminum

*By Norm Baullinger*

I needed to bend some track and borrowed the club's dual rail bender to re-bend some curved track that I was relaying. It worked, but it seemed to be a bit cumbersome and expensive to buy and so, liking a challenge, I decided to build my own. The tool would be made out of aluminum so I was on the lookout for aluminum pieces. Marge Curtis directed me to a metal salvage yard on Highway 9, just north of Woodinville, (Whiteside Steel & Salvage, 17706 Highway 9 SE, Snohomish, WA) where I found some, \$4/pound. Then I came across *Metals Supermarket* ([www.metalsupermarket.com](http://www.metalsupermarket.com)) which has a store in Kent (22029 70<sup>th</sup> Ave S, Kent, WA). They should have almost any size you want, and will cut pieces to order while you wait. From my perspective, both are reasonably priced though I would favor the Metals Supermarket as they cut to any size fairly accurately (length + 1/64") whereas Whiteside will rough cut lengths (\$1.25/cut), but not accurate enough for final use.



# The 2015 Lynden Train Show

*Article by Beth MacLaren*

*Show photos also by Beth except where noted otherwise*

Don and I left bright and early Friday, so as to leave time for lunch at our favorite Lynden pie place before it was time for set-up at noon back at the fair grounds. There was a sufficiently good turnout for set-up, but not so many as to get in one another's way. More helpers would have aided the set-up pace. It took a bit longer than usual to get the layout square in the space, but before too long everything was in place and the trains began to come out for test runs. If there were any glitches, they were quickly resolved.

Rae and Mary Mitchell also had a couple of tables of their own in an effort to pare down some of the rolling stock they find they don't use. There were bargains to be had on some pieces, and knowing Rae, there may have been haggling going on during the Saturday and Sunday show days, but I didn't keep track of that. Ron Ball, who regularly sells at shows, was also set up with a couple of tables, so G scale was well represented by the club, as well as multiple vendors. Don and I remember seeing about 16 or 17 club members over the course of the 3 days.

The layout was looking fairly spiff by the time the doors opened on Saturday. Rumor had it that perhaps the show was a bit slower this year than in the past, but there were plenty of folks showing their appreciation for the efforts of all the vendors, including our club. One gentleman specifically stopped me to praise the quality of our exhibit, though

I believe his comments may have leaned toward the quality of consists that were running. Some fine looking trains kept life busy.

The traditional "café" was in place for breakfast and lunch. However, due to an e-coli breakout sometime during the last year, the food service was banished to an adjoining tent, because it is no longer legal to serve food inside a building that has housed animals. The weather was sunny but occasionally quite blustery, and the visual and sound effects in the tent sent me back into the barn with my as-yet-uneaten lunch. They can prevent the sale of food within the barn, but if I choose to take a risk by eating in there anyway, it's on my head.

The traditional puzzle appeared for the entertainment of those not running trains, so at various times there were at least five different folks who contributed to that effort. Judy Briggs brought the puzzle that her grandson Ravid won as a door prize at the Skykomish meet. It was a beauty, but at 1000 pieces, it was a race to complete it before tear down. Thanks to all hands on that team effort.

Jerry Madsen expressed his concerns about recent turn-outs for setup and tear down, and at the Skagit Fair, there were not really enough folks running trains during show days, either. The club is no longer doing the Chilliwack show, due to excessive border crossing problems, but please step up to help in November at the Puyallup show. It's true: many hands do make lighter work. And the camaraderie is fun! Some photos are scattered about the newsletter to give you some of the flavor of the show.

See you in November at the show in Puyallup.



*Tom and Judy Briggs, Ron Ball, and Judy Drake enjoy a well-earned dinner Saturday night.*



*Judy Briggs seems oblivious of the fire being fought behind her.*





*The sawmill was in full production on the layout in Lynden in October.*



*Apparently the Pony Express has decided to make use of the railroad right-of-way through this rugged terrain. Run fast, I think I hear the train coming!*



*Rae and Mary Mitchell showing their wares.  
Photo by Dwight Malott.*



*Tom Briggs, engrossed in setting up? Or taking down ? his consist.*



*A show visitor and Jerry Madsen stand next to the maiden outing of Don MacLaren's Bachman C19 which he bought at the convention in Denver. Don installed an Airwire drop-in receiver, battery, and Phoenix sound system. It ran about 2 hours on a charge.*



## The Watercress Line

By Richard Jarratt

*Photos taken by the husband of Richard's niece.*

I recently visited England for three weeks. During my last week I stayed with my niece and her 70-year-old husband. He is a volunteer for the Mid-Hants Railway, founded in 1972 to restore, save and rebuild old steam engines. He is a qualified mechanic and millwright, and they were more than pleased to get him.

Knowing of my interest in steam engines, he arranged for me to have a ride on one. Expecting to ride in a carriage, I was surprised when he handed me a coverall, gloves and a cap and then informed me that I was riding on the footplate.

When the engineer asked me where I was from, and I replied near Seattle, his reply was "Boeing" because he was a retired flight test engineer with Airbus. The fireman worked at Heathrow before he retired, hence the three of us had a lot in common.

The engine was fired with coal by a learner fireman, and he did a pretty good job. We got steam up, around 200 psi, opened the regulator and traveled in reverse pulling five coaches plus passengers. The fare for passengers was \$27 (around 17 British Pound Sterling), but once boarded, you could stay on for as many trips as you wished.

It was a level track to start, but after a few miles we climbed a 1 in 60 gradient to the top of the Alps (as the engineer called it) for three miles, and then down a 1 in 60 for another three miles. I watched the engineer, as we got close to the up gradient, opening the regulator, then closing it as we neared the top, then coasted down hill. We still had a few miles to our final destination. The engine was then uncoupled and we overtook the carriages to be coupled to the other end ready for our return trip.

Now we were traveling forward, and there was no coal dust blowing into my face! We achieved 25 miles an hour down the grades, the maximum allowed. We stopped at two stations and at each the fireman exchanged a key on a large (about 15") ring with someone on the platform. I was told this was a key to control the signals so that only one train could be on that stretch of line at a time.

Altogether a wonderful journey of 20 miles in about 90 minutes.



*Richard and the regulator.*



*Richard on the footplate.*

## Cruising Along

*By Mark Jennings*

I was on a cruise from 26 September to 14 October from Seattle down the Pacific coast and through the Panama Canal winding up in Fort Lauderdale and then flying home. A couple months before the cruise, just by coincidence, I learned that our former president, Fred Konkell and his lovely wife Bernice would be on the same cruise. Here is a photo of Bernice, Fred and me at one of the ship's Gala (dress-up) dinners. Having Fred, Bernice and some friends of theirs on the ship really added to my enjoyment of the cruise.



## Half Full, but too Empty

*By Mark Jennings, Meeting Scheduler*

The good news: Chris Johnson (May), John Morrison (August) and Joe Sommer (September) responded promptly to my request for meeting hosts for 2016. The bad news: I still need meeting hosts for April, June and July. I would particularly like to have members who have never hosted before or have not hosted in a long while sign up for one of these months. I don't need fancy. If you have a backyard that can hold about 30 members, a restroom and nearby parking, you qualify. A layout would be an added benefit. I can help with some chairs and tables, a large coffee pot, etc. E-mail me at [m.jennings32@gmail.com](mailto:m.jennings32@gmail.com) or call me at 206 218 7008 and make my day.

## Holiday Party

*By Barbara and Glenn Shaddock*

Hopefully everyone has "saved the date" for this year's annual holiday party and auction. Most items are silent auction bids, but live auction bidding will be offered on a few special items. To be a success, we need fabulous donations from all of you. New or nearly new items only please. Train and NON TRAIN items are encouraged. This is the only fund raiser our club is currently doing so it is important to have everyone's support!!! Your participation keeps our dues from increasing and we can maintain the club activities we currently enjoy.

We will once again be celebrating at the Lynnwood Elks on December 19, 2015. Set up at 11. (If you show up early, you get put to work helping set up). Party starts at noon. Silent auction tables will close at various times.

Our club president traditionally provides the ham and the rest of the meal is potluck style. As this will be our 9th year of hosting the Christmas Party at the Lynnwood Elks, most of us know the routine. Reach out to some of our new members and encourage them to join us for some holiday cheer. Personally invite a member we haven't seen in a while.

Joy.

## A Reminder

*By Norm Baullinger*

At the last meeting, at Skykomish, it was noted that there was a close call on having sufficient food. Apparently some people have forgotten what the term "pot luck" means. It does not mean buy a bag of chips or some similar item and call that a "contribution." Please, bring an item that preferably you have prepared and would be suitable for your dinner table to serve several people in addition to yourself *and* family. Also, please do not "heap" your plate with as much as you can fit on it. There are many people behind you that would like to have some food also. If you feel you must have more food, please wait until *all* people have passed through the line, then you may go and have seconds (if anything is left). The next pot luck activity will be our Christmas party (*see above.*)



## Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and Regularly Scheduled Events

### Big Liars Club

Meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at 9:30 AM at Denny's Restaurant on 148th Ave. NE (in the Overlake area – next to Fred Myers and across from Sears) for breakfast and friendship.

### Little Liars Club

Meets at 9:30 AM the 1st, 3rd and 5th Thursday of each month at Ikea, 600 SW 41st St, Renton for breakfast and friendship.

### West Sound Liars Club

Meets at 9:30 the 2nd Thursday of each month at the Family Pancake House, 3900 Kitsap Way, Bremerton for breakfast and friendship.

### Tall Tales Club

Meets at 9:00 AM on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Denny's in Monroe located at 18824 US Rt 2, for breakfast and friendship.

### Live Steam SIG

The Live Steamers meet on the 2nd Saturday of every month at Chris Johnson's. We also meet at a member's home as shown in "Schedules and Stops" below. Contact John Bigelow (206-284-5038) or Peter Comley (253-862-6748) for further information.

### Modules SIG

Constructs and displays the club modular layout at various shows throughout the region. No set schedule, but shows are publicized well in advance. Contact Jerry Madsen (253 307 9055) to join.

### Boating SIG

For PSGRS members who are also interested in model boats. Meets the 1st Sunday after the 1st Thursday of each month at the Bellevue park just south of Bellevue Square mall. Call Dave White at (425 821 3617) for further information.

### Operations SIG—Goodson

First Friday afternoon and evening of each month from 2:00 PM until 9:00 PM at Dave Goodson's home. Scheduling and running trains as would be done on a real railroad. Please call Dave (425 823 3507) for an invitation.

## Schedules and Stops (SIG contact information is above)

Date	Time	Event	Place	Remarks
Nov 7		Steamers Windup	Bigelow's, Seattle	
Nov 14		Steam up	Johnson's, Federal Way	
Nov. 14-15		Great American Train Show	Puyallup	Set up on Nov 13
Dec.19	Noon –4 PM	Christmas Party	Elks Club, Lynnwood	See article on page 6



*A sign of the times. A Halloween scene on Dwight Malott's circus layout.*



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*Items are generally on display and for sale at club meetings.*

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