

A 1930's
Garden Railway
in Portland

September-October 1988

\$3.50

GARDEN RAILWAYS



The Hoop Hole Creek Short Line

Editorials

THE CONVENTION

As I write this, the 4th Annual Garden Railway Convention has just ended, and it was a most enjoyable four days. We were able to renew old associations, establish some new ones, and view the growth of garden variety railroading in America. At this Convention, more than any other, I felt that the hobby was finally establishing itself in the mainstream.

More people than ever before were railroading in the garden. Many of the railways had been established only within the past year—it was pleasing to see people beginning to leave the sanctuary of their armchairs, bravely venturing forth into the wilds of their gardens.

Perhaps the thing that I enjoyed most about the Convention was the Attendees' Slide Show, which was held on the last night. People from around the country brought pictures of their garden railways for all to see. Every railway was built differently, and each was unique. The different climates, terrains, and surrounding conditions were evident in the way each railway was constructed. Not only is an American style of garden railroading evolving, but indigenous styles peculiar to specific areas are beginning to show as well.

An informal (and well attended) meeting of dealers and manufacturers was held to discuss the state of the hobby. Among other things, it was generally agreed that garden railroading is a branch of the large scale train hobby, but by far the most visible branch. It was also agreed that the most important thing we can do to advance the hobby is to educate people—not just the public, but hobby shop owners and others involved in general model railroading, too. Take some slides of local garden railways, and contact your area's chapter of the NMRA (National Model Railroad Association) to see if they'd like a show. You might just find a receptive audience!

Next year the Garden Railway Convention moves out of Denver for the first time. I confess, I almost feel like I'm sending my child out into the world. I'm confident, though, that it is strong enough to make it on its own. The group from the Bay Area Garden Railway Society presented its proposal for the '89 Convention, which looked like a good one. So we'll all be going out to California next summer, and we look forward to seeing you there.

Marc

GOINGS-ON

The workload around here lately has reached what feels like epic proportions. We've been carving away at the production of two issues of *GR* at once, in order for our family to spend the entire month of September in the UK. We'll visit gardens and railways and see some of the makers of products that help give this hobby its immense charm. Our trusty BritRail passes are ready to be validated; these happy pilgrims travel by train! Our American readers will see this issue of the magazine before we will.

A fine Fourth Annual Garden Railway Convention has just come and gone for this year. We have occupied booths, displayed some of our pet projects (no, not the G scale slugs/dachshunds), swapped ideas and showed slides in and out of clinics, toured local railways, and kept on track at another Steam Up. The Convention is always great fun, since it is one sure time of the year when Marc and I get an opportunity to meet some more of our readers, writers, and advertisers. It's a delight to put faces with names we've read in print, with voices from conversations we've enjoyed over the phone. The marvelous color slides shown of maturing railways—some known and some completely new to us all—provided inspiration for us to go home and get digging.

The great strides our family had hoped to make this summer toward closing the Ogden Botanical Railway's "simple" loop turned out to be small strides. We ran point-to-point again on tour day. But there has been such wonderful therapy in our (all-too-infrequent) work sessions—that is the greatest beauty of creating this unusual feature that dominates the back garden.

Construction projects have a way of patiently waiting for us; and the champagne we've saved for the golden spike ceremony will toast just as well later, even if we have to attend the do wearing parkas and mittens and drink the champagne from mugs that will be quickly filled with something hot. Much work to do, much for us to look forward to.

Barb

GARDEN RAILWAYS

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Cover Photo

The station on Evan Roderick's Hoop Hole Creek Short Line. Read all about it starting on page 26. —Photo: E. Roderick

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