

RIDING RAILWAYS NEWSLETTER



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What a great time we had at Train Mountain! It was wonderful to see so many friends and to make new friends as well. It is truly the people that make this hobby so enjoyable.
Thanks again for your continued support of both *GSQ* and the *7+RAILROADER*. Our family thanks you.

Susan

TRAIN MOUNTAIN TRIENNIAL




There will be plenty of things written about the Train Mountain 2006 Triennial in an upcoming issue of the *7+RAILROADER*. For now, I just thought I would share some photos.

The photo above gives a nice example of the variety of engines that ran at Train Mountain. No matter what

they were running, the engineers sported big grins.

Below left is the beautiful blue streamliner that was brought by an Australian crew. It looked sharp as it ran through the railroad.

Below are a few engines that were lining up for the engine parade on Saturday. Plenty of steamers and diesels made the journey. 



RAILWAYS IN THE NEWS



(C) The Grand Scales Quarterly

Sonoma Train Town, 15" gauge, was recently included on a segment of Inside Bay Area. The segment was titled *No Whining Allowed on Wine Country Excursions*. Mary Babbitt said "Speaking of blowing steam, for young children it's hard to beat riding a steam train around Train Town in Sonoma. You'll wind around 1 1/4 miles of track, over five bridges and trestles. There are also vintage carnival rides and a petting zoo."

Conneaut Lake Park

According to the Meadville Tribune "The brick by brick campaign to pay for repairs to the Conneaut Lake Park miniature train has reached more than \$57,700, surpassing its goal.

The funds were raised through the sale of \$100 or \$200 bricks.

Conneaut Lake Institute Treasurer Carol West said the bricks will be ordered this week and she expects them to be laid by the end of August.

All the funds were raised through the sale of bricks and private donations of \$100 or less — no major corporate sponsors or state grants, West said

The repairs to the train have been made and it is in operation again at the park. The original goal for the fund drive was \$56,000." Congratulations to Conneaut Lake Park for their successful fund raising efforts.

Galey's Cornmaze N' Market

Rob Galey has added a CP Huntington train to his British Columbia farm in an effort to boost agritourism. According to the Saanich News "The Galeys incorporated agritourism into their farm in 2000 with a small corn maze. From there the attraction grew to include the Nile River complete with a sphinx. A ghost town, pirate ship and other animated scenes are currently in the works.



The new *Saanich Centennial Railroad* covers almost a mile of track and is regulated by federal railway laws. Galey is a certified conductor and is currently training staff so he can get back into the fields."

Redwood Valley Railway

Jackie Burrell, Contra Costa Times staff writer, wrote a nice article on the 15" gauge Redwood Valley Rwy. She wrote: "Why it's cool: The Redwood Valley Railway line that steams atmospherically through Berkeley's Tilden Park is a pint-sized blast from the past. Add with a suitably dressed train engineer and that awesome steam whistle, it's a little slice of railroad heaven, particularly for Thomas the Tank Engine enthusiasts.

But this small, narrow-gauge railway, which attracts thousands of visitors a month, represents more than just a cool outing. It actually began more than half a century ago as the passionate hobby of a Western Pacific

Railway engineer.

Dismayed by the demise of steam railroads in the 1940s, mechanical engineer Erich Thomsen joined a preservationist group that was trying to save locomotives from the scrap heap. (Some of those locomotives are in the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento today.)

But Thomsen wanted to preserve more than engines. He wanted to preserve the railway experience. So he built a vintage, small-scale replica, his very own Redwood Valley Railway, to take passengers of all ages on a 12-minute, 1.25-mile jaunt through the Berkeley hills, steam whistle a-blowing."

What kids like: Model trains are all well and good, but you can actually ride these. And the sights, smells and tooting whistle add up to a sweet little adventure for even the smallest kids.

What parents like: This narrow-gauge railway has been taking families on mini-excursions for more than half a century. If you grew up in the Bay Area, chances are you rode these trains when you were a tot, too.

(Reprinted from the July 6, 2006 issue of Contra Costa Times newspaper.)

Been in the news?

If you or your railroad / club have been mentioned in the news media, please send a note to us. Much of the time you can send a link directly from the media's web site.

When these articles appear, we encourage you to take a moment to write the editor and thank them for writing about the hobby. It lets others know that this is a strong, growing hobby and can help bring others in.

The Bamboo Train in Battambang Cambodia



By Joe Ehrlich
Courtesy of Boots'nAll Travel
(<http://www.bootsnall.com>)

Nin was not in school the day that I met him; he was busy working as the engineer on the "Bamboo Train" from Battambang. When I asked him just exactly what he had been up to, he said that he had been spending his day hauling lumber from a trackside mill, but that was now finished and he would be just as happy hauling me, too. Would I be interested in taking a ride on the Bamboo Train?

Whether a 13-year-old Cambodian kid was reliable enough to ensure my safety was not just a passing concern. I was also interested in the very real possibility that a real train may choose to occupy the same train tracks that we were to share.

The "Bamboo Train" (the Khmers call it a 'Norry') is part Khmer ingenuity, part Khmer necessity. It is pure Cambodian and one of the coolest rides that I have ever been on.

Cobbled together with a wooden frame, bamboo planking, a four-stroke, upright engine and (I kid you not) reused military tank wheels and axles, the Bamboo Trains haul passengers and freight between Battambang and the spur lines of Phnom Penh.

They use the spur lines in Phnom Penh because, as you might imagine, Bamboo Trains are quite illegal. Not only that, they wreak havoc whenever they cross roadways. Normally, the 'real' train only uses the track once a day. Up to Battambang one

day, back down to Phnom Penh the next; meanwhile, the tracks are practically begging to be used.

And used they are, with an uncountable number of these only-in-Cambodia contraptions putt-putting up and down the track. Did I say tracks? Oh no, there is only one track. And therein lays the problem: what to do when another Bamboo Train comes along in the other direction.

The agreed-upon custom is that the Bamboo Train with the least amount of passengers must give way to the one carrying more. Furthermore, the conductor of the winning Bamboo Train must help the losing train disassemble their train and remove it from the tracks so that the other may pass.

Fortunately, the Bamboo Trains can be disassembled in a jiffy.



Off comes the frame (two persons are required for this), then remove the Honda motorcycle engine (it's equipped with a standard auto V-belt and pulley) and then remove the two axles and wheels. It can be done in seconds. The importance of urgent Bamboo Train removal might be of interest should a real train come your way.

I chatted with Nin for a while, negotiating price while discussing scorpions, (one of which had just crawled up the pant leg of my Motodop (Mototaxi driver). The unlucky arachnid was retrieved and dispatched. While we were busy discussing scorpions, Bamboo Trains clattered on by loaded high with groups of Khmer passengers, white sacks of freshly harvested rice

and stacks of rough-cut, illegally-harvested teak lumber. Load capacity of one of these contraptions is alleged to be approximately one metric ton.

Rather than just be an observer, I decided to throw caution to the wind and rent the whole damn train.

Nin and his conductor (helper? pal? - he wore no visible identification) assembled a train, loaded my Motodop, his motorcycle and myself aboard and then pulled the rope to start the motor, which was sort of like starting a lawnmower. Well, actually it was exactly like starting a lawnmower. Then, using a well-chosen stick as a lever, Nin applied pressure to the V-belt and we were off!

The tracks that we were on were reputed to have been constructed in the 1930s by the French. Not a whole lot of track maintenance had been done since then, as they appeared (to my untrained eye) to be warped and supremely out of kilter. We clickety-clacked along very nicely, slowing down occasionally only to shoo stray cattle out of the way. Along the way, two trains had to move out of our way, since with a compliment of four aboard we ruled the rails. It was a splendid way to see the countryside.

About 10 kilometers down the track, we came to a recognized (but not at all official) Bamboo Train "station," which was also the place where I got off. I thanked Nin, hopped off the bamboo platform and paid him for the one-hour charter. My Motodop then took me back to town on the back of his Honda 100. It wasn't nearly as much fun. ~~and that~~



VENDOR NEWS



New West Live Steam

Ernie Beskowiney of New West Live Steam brought his beautiful new Mikado to the Train Mountain Triennial. The engine is a thing of beauty. To learn more about it and NWLS, visit their web site at <http://www.newwestlivesteam.com> They also have a Shay on the drawing board.

D&S Custom Promotions

brought an array of t-shirts, mugs, and what not to Train Mountain with the TM logo. By far the nicest item was this limited edition medalion. It is a stunning souvenir. For



more information on D&S Custom Promotions, visit www.dandscustompromo.com

Hartford Shops

Tom & Sandy Artzberger are moving to Colorado and have put their Wisconsin House and Shop up for sale. If you know of someone who might be interested, have them visit their web site at http://www.pleshops.com/house_for_sale.html. The house comes complete with 1500 foot 7 1/2 gauge railroad track in place. 38 foot minimum radius. 2 bridges, 60 and 20 foot. Reversing loop to reverse direction. Spurs into shop and storage building. Loading dock for loading equipment into pickups and trailers. Shop equipment and railroad equipment is negotiable with sale.

Scale Products Company

When the full size

Aberdeen Carolina Western Railway company needed a set of drop arm signals for a golf cart crossing at the Pinehurst Country Club, home of the 2005 US Open, they had a problem. Not wanting to put a set of full sized signals on such a narrow crossing for aesthetic and safety purposes, they called Scale Products Company to see if they might be able to help.

According to Dennis "Bones" Evers, owner, "we simply built a set of our standard commercial drop arms that we have located at major theme parks, zoos, railroad parks and estate railroads the world over and made a few very minor modifications. According to Bill Bartosh, general manager of the ACWR, "They work great and they look great. I took a lot of ribbing for even proposing scale signals, and I had to change our standards, but full scale signals would have been cluttered and the lights too high to be effective. After pressing forward and installing the signals, a lot of people within the industry had to eat their words. The signals are safe, clean, neat and sensitive to the area." ~~██████████~~

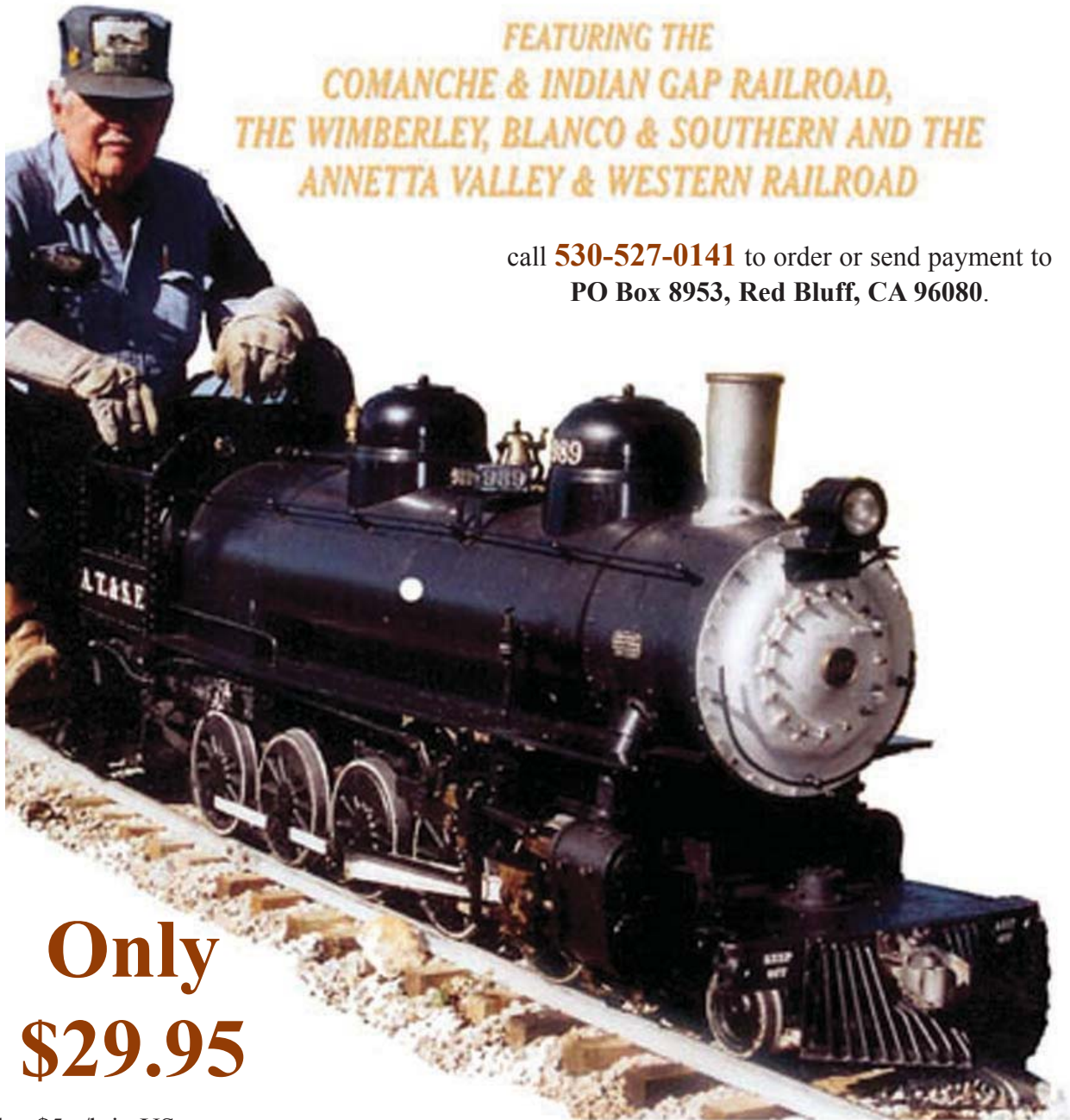


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Peter Jones of England sent in this photo that was shown in the pages of the the latest edition of *Die Gartenbahn*, a German railroad magazine. He says his German isn't very impressive but from what he can work out, "it comes from a 750mm gauge line, serving a quartzite mine, midway between Leipzig and Dresden. Feldbahn-Schauanlage". Peter is an excellent model builder and said "if you tried to build a model of this, no one would believe you". Thanks for sharing Peter.



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