

POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL



Revised May 4, 2024



For an electronic or most current version of this booklet, or to provide input for inclusion, correction, or updating, please contact:

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1 - GGRS Organization

(Revised May 7, 2024)

1.1 Introduction

This booklet has been compiled as a guide to members of the Georgia Garden Railway Society (GGRS) to provide them a reference source on the various programs and activities of the organization. While the GGRS Constitution and Bylaws (as outlined in the “Contact Us” section of the GGRS website and in Section 7 of this booklet) provide general guidance on a variety of program areas, this Policies and Procedures Manual (PPM) provides more in-depth information on many areas that would not normally be addressed in bylaws. **Members are encouraged to report suggested improvements and additions to the guidance provided herein to the Policies and Procedures Coordinator, Terry Manning, at temanning@aol.com.**

A date following each section title indicates the last date that the information in that section was revised.

To update information or ask additional questions about the programs addressed, contact a member of the GGRS Executive Board.

1.2 Promotional Materials

Three types of promotional material are typically used at membership tables at shows or meetings or in membership displays at train supply vendors to encourage new membership. These may be membership pamphlets, business cards providing our website address, and bulletin board or plastic sleeve signs. Members living near train vendors or coordinating society events are encouraged to work with the Executive Board to stock such promotional material.

There are about a dozen sites where promotional material may generally be located. A listing can be obtained from the Membership Coordinator.

1.3 New Members

New members of GGRS should be contacted with a letter of welcome confirming receipt of their membership application. The webmaster will contact them through Go-Daddy to invite them to create a password to the members-only section of the website.

Membership cards can be used with some vendors to receive a discount. A member desiring a membership card for the current calendar year should contact the GGRS President or Membership Coordinator.

See Section 2.3 regarding inclusion in the GGRS Member Layout Directory.



1.4 Executive Board

The organization of the Executive Board was revised in 2019 under changes to the GGRS Constitution and Bylaws. The 7-member Board includes 3 administrative officers and 4 Members-at-Large. The Board members are elected and installed at the annual business meeting usually held in January. The Board members typically serve as coordinators for many of the various programs operated by the Society, but a Board member is not required to serve as a program coordinator in any specific area and members not on the Board can serve as a program coordinator.



1.5 Administrative Officers

The three Administrative Officers serving on the Executive Board are the President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Their duties and responsibilities are those typical of such positions. Contact information for them in 2024 is:

- President	Terry Manning	770-564-8822	temanning@aol.com
- Secretary	Pam Williamson	706-684-0132 H 770-851-9462 C	pspan@msn.com
- Treasurer	Dennis Bass	770-972-1365 H 404-312-7942 C	email4bassde@gmail.com

1.6 Members-at-Large

The four Members-at-Large serving on the Executive Board join the Administrative Officers in planning the programs and activities of GGRS. The Members-at-Large typically serve in the positions of many of the Program Coordinators. They are in alphabetical order Emil Decker, John Lank, Ginny Manning, and Dan Steidle in 2024.

1.7 Program and Event Coordinators

Program Coordinators are designated to supervise major program areas. A Program Coordinator may supervise a program area by themselves or they may utilize one or two members or a committee to assist them.

Similarly, Event Coordinators are designated to supervise specific events such as train show layouts, excursions, or exhibits. The Event Coordinators' titles include a reference to the specific event they supervise. An Event Coordinator may utilize a large number of members to assist them in managing an event.

As such, there are many program areas or events in which members may be interested in participating on a recurring, short term, or one-time basis as a volunteer.

There are usually Program Coordinators for the following areas. Please contact one of the Administrative Officers or go to the website for contact information for these positions.

Hosted Member Meetings Coordinator (Terry Manning). The Hosted Member Meetings Coordinator shall schedule members to host meetings at their homes or businesses at which the general membership are invited to attend to tour railway layouts, share a potluck luncheon, attend clinics or lectures, and participate in business meetings.

Exhibits Coordinator (Pam Williamson). The Exhibits Coordinator (also known as the Train Show Coordinator) or their designee shall coordinate with appropriate managers of regional train shows the scheduling of GGRS participation at regional events.

Membership Coordinator (Ginny Manning). The Membership Coordinator shall maintain a current membership list of the GGRS in conjunction with the Treasurer and ensure the Website Coordinator is provided the list (or additions to the last list) at the end of each quarter for updating the GGRS website. The Membership Coordinator shall direct a program for recruitment of new members and advise appropriate Board members and Program Coordinators of the addition of new members and pertinent new member information. The Membership Coordinator may chair a Membership Committee to assist him/her to fulfill his/her duties.

Newsletter Coordinator (Emil Decker). The Newsletter Coordinator (also referred to as the Editor or Newsletter Editor) shall solicit material for and publish a regularly occurring membership newsletter to be distributed electronically as directed by the Board. The Editor may chair a Publications Committee to assist him/her to fulfill his/her duties.



Website Coordinator (Peter Thomas). The Website Coordinator (also referred to as the Webmaster) shall maintain the GGRS website and solicit material for the website according to policies adopted by the Board. He or she shall ensure that at least one other member of GGRS (not a family member) has full access to the website to assist in maintaining each area of the site in a current status (Dennis Bass in 2024). The GGRS newsletter shall be posted to the site within 2 weeks of release by the Newsletter Coordinator. The Website Coordinator shall chair a Website Committee to assist him/her to fulfill his/her duties.

Audit Coordinator (Peter Thomas). The Audit Coordinator shall with one other member assigned by the Board (neither being a Board member) conduct an audit of the Treasurer's records of a sample of income, expenses, and records of the GGRS covering the first 6 months of the calendar year (January to June) to ensure adherence to budget guidelines and compliance with generally accepted financial practices. The Audit Coordinator shall report the results of such audit to the Board no later than July 31.



A second audit shall be conducted between December 1 to December 31 to assess records for the last half of the calendar year and the results shall be reported to the Board prior to the annual business meeting usually held in January. The summary results of audits shall be reported to the membership.

Communications Coordinator (Pam Williamson). The Communications Coordinator shall work with Board members and Program Coordinators to maintain a database of emails for members and other interested parties outlined by the Board and to distribute information as directed by the same such as invitations, newsletters, schedules, and similar correspondence of benefit to the general membership.



Policies and Procedures Coordinator (Terry Manning). The Policies and Procedures Coordinator shall be responsible for updating and making recommendations for the enhancement and maintenance of the GGRS Policies and Procedures Manual at the direction of the Board and to be kept current on the GGRS website.

Workshops/Clinics Coordinator (Terry Manning). The Workshops/Clinics Coordinator shall arrange short workshops, clinics, lectures, programs, or demonstrations for inclusion on the agenda of Hosted Member Meetings, as winter get-togethers, and/or for train shows.



An Event Coordinator shall be assigned to each exhibit scheduled by the Exhibits Coordinator or by the Board and to any scheduled special event or excursion. An Event Coordinator for an exhibit shall supervise the staffing, building, maintenance, storing, and displaying of exhibits to which the Event Coordinator is assigned. An Event Coordinator for a special event or excursion shall supervise the reservations, promotion, transportation, and onsite activity of events to which the Event Coordinator is assigned. Please contact one of the Administrative Officers or go to the website for contact information for these positions.

1.8 National Society

A "National" Garden Railway Society does not exist as there are no national officers, no national dues or finances, nor an Internet presence other than the websites used to promote the next national convention. In effect, the state society hosting an event serves as the national society for that year.

2 – Meetings

(Revised May 7, 2024)

2.1 Hosted Member Meetings

During the 5 or 6 warm-weather months of the year during which garden railways are operating outdoors by many members (April through September), members are encouraged to volunteer their layouts for one of the monthly tours scheduled usually on second Saturdays of the month. Those interested in volunteering their sites for tour should contact the Hosted Members Meeting Coordinator or the GGRS President to confirm a date either during the current or upcoming year.

The host member is provided \$150 toward the expense of providing an entrée, drinks, and table settings for the potluck luncheon held at the layout site. In addition to allowing members and guests to tour the layout of the host member, a short business meeting is also held. Monthly meetings may also include the opportunity for members to sell or swap garden plants and G-scale materials or to host a short workshop or lecture related to railroad history or garden railroading.

Monthly meetings usually start between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. and end between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. as planned by the host.

Indoor layouts may also be on tour, or can be used to schedule additional meetings during the year in cooler weather months. Hosted monthly meetings are also occasionally replaced by an excursion to a regional tourist train site or some other special railroading event.

2.2 Member Business Meetings

Member business meetings, except for the annual business meeting (see Section 2.4), are usually of short duration as part of hosted member meetings (see Section 2.1). At the meetings, the Board discusses details of upcoming events and seeks input from the membership. At the last meeting of the calendar year (usually September), membership approval of the budget and dues (if not addressed in August) for the next year take place.

2.3 Executive Board Meetings

Executive Board meetings are held regularly but not on a specific schedule. Meetings at the beginning of the year tend to address exhibits at train shows in January through April. When hosted member meetings begin in April, the Board tends to meet briefly before or after the monthly meetings. Efforts are made to announce the date, time, and place of Board meetings to the membership in the newsletter or on the website so that members that wish to attend may do so.

2.4 Annual Business Meeting

An annual business meeting is usually held in January at a centralized restaurant site. This meeting includes the election of new members to the Executive Board and an optional holiday gift exchange of train related gifts valued at \$35 or more.



The **GGRS Garden Railroader of the Year** is also announced. The person (sometimes persons) selected is chosen for their contributions to garden railroading. The recipient should be selected for their unique and particular contributions of time, energy, and/or resources to state society events and activities during the previous 12 months. A nominee should have had an operating G-scale railway during the year.

Any member may nominate another member for consideration of receipt of this award. Nominations should be made to the President of the Executive Board prior to November 1st with a brief justification for the nomination. The Executive Board shall review the nominations received and determine by majority vote the GGRS Garden Railroader of the Year. A certificate of award will be presented at the annual business meeting in January, as may be additional means of recognition. The year listed is the month received for the previous year. Recipients of the award since 2011 have been as follows:



2011 Ted Yarbrough

2012 Richard Garlinghouse

2013 Alan Mole & Dan Michel

2014 Chris Haon & Ra Barr

2015 James Robinson

2016 Dave Bennett

2017 Cullen Reid & Russ Bundy

2018 Dennis Bass

2019 Ted & Deborah Yarbrough

2020 Pam Williamson

2021 Terry Manning

2022 Emil Decker

2023 Roy Williamson

2024 James Bando

2.5 Member Layout Directory



In 2018, three directories of the layouts on tour for the national convention in Georgia were created using a photo of each yard on tour and listing the owner's name, address, and contact information and giving driving directions. Directories were created separately for pre-convention tours (full-page entries), convention tours (quarter-page entries), and post-convention tours (full page entries). They also gave a brief layout description. Some of the types of details for the full-page entries were not included in quarter-page entries.

In early 2019, the photos and data bases used to compile the directories were compiled into one member layout directory with a full page dedicated to each entry. A second page of photographs is being collected for each member to better document the types of layouts and equipment, themes, and gardening in use by them. The Member Layout Directory will be on display at hosted member meetings and used to promote garden railroading to our members and guests.

An example of a 2-page entry follows on the next 2 pages. New members are encouraged to contact the GGRS President to provide information for inclusion in the current directory.

Sanders Layout

Serengeti Railroad

Owner's Name:

Jerry & Linda Sanders

Phone Number:

770-999-9999

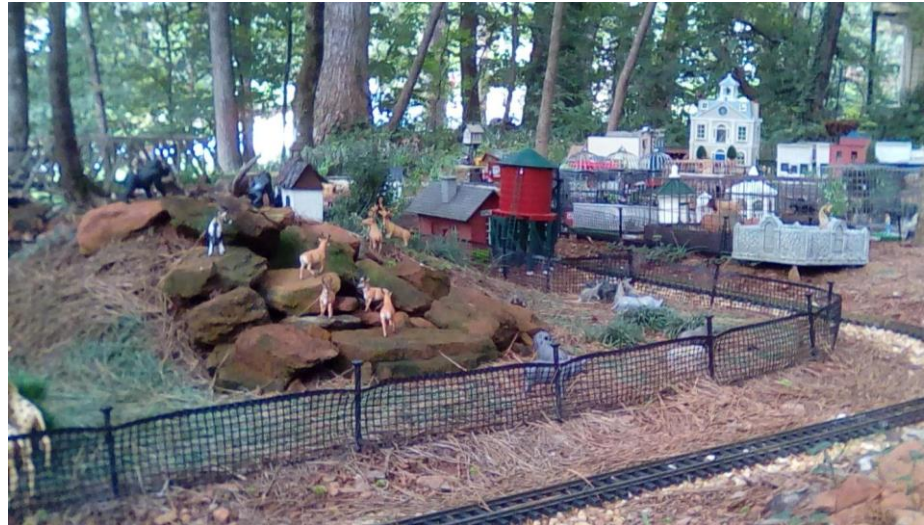
Physical Address:

1201 Limber Lane
Atlanta, GA 39999

Driving Directions:

From northeast I-285
go north on Interstate

I-85 to Exit 106 (Trabue Road). From the exit turn right and go south 6.8 miles to the traffic light at Five Guys Road. Turn right onto Five Guys and go one block and turn left onto Hasty Court. Go 1 block on Hasty Court and turn left onto Whiton Drive. When Whiton dead ends (about 8 blocks), turn right onto Deerskin Way. Go half a block and turn right onto Limber Lane. The house is the first brick house on the left. (Total distance from I-85 is about 8.7 miles.)



Layout Description:

Two railroads serve the community of Mount Africa with over 150 buildings and 132 feet of track. The 32-foot Serengeti Railway encircles a “Busch Gardens” style animal preserve and has a typical caged zoo adjacent to it. The 100-foot Serengeti Railroad encircles the Serengeti Railway, animal preserve, and zoo and traverses through a rural farming area. The SOR crosses an 8-foot bridge over a pond with a waterfall feature, crosses two other bridges, and transits a 4-foot tunnel. The rural area includes a dozen homes/farms, a Boy Scout camp, airport, fishing pond, and church/cemetery. The SRR also serves the nearby town of Mount Africa which is in place with about 40 buildings (bank, diner, courthouse, jail, school, church/cemetery, hardware, lumber yard, gas station, etc.). The buildings are each highlighted with a variety of figurines, vehicles, and accessories (dog houses, garages, outhouses, sidewalks, driveways, shrubbery, yard furniture, etc.).

Water Features: A pond

Bridges/Trestles: 3 bridges & 1 tunnel

Structures: Yes

Scale Plants: Yes

Power Source: Track

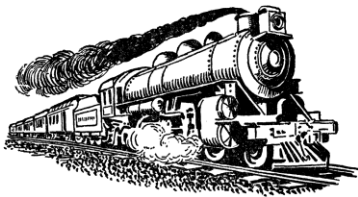
Sanders Layout



3 - Excursions and Train Shows

(3.1 Revised September 9, 2023 – 3.2-3.8 Revised May 7, 2024)

3.1 Train Excursions and Scenic Train Rides¹



There are a variety of regional 1:1 or large scale train excursions within a half-day drive of the Atlanta area in which members may be interested in visiting. On occasion, GGRS schedules group outings to such tourist trains (see Section 9.2 for a history of such excursions). Some of the more popular sites are described here.

3.1.1 Short Rides

North Georgia Live Steamers – Conyers & Hightower Trail Railroad – This non-profit club operates a small scale group of trains at 1632 Centennial Olympic Parkway NE in Conyers, GA 30013. A train car typically carries an adult and two children. Trains run four or five times a year. For example, in 2024 the dates were Saturday April 13, May 18, October 5, and November 9 from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. Each ride costs \$2 (cash only). Their website is at www.nglsrr.org.

Pine Mountain Gold Museum Scenic Train – This site is located at 1881 Stockmar Road, Villa Rica, Georgia 30180. Villa Rica is located on Interstate 20 just 35 miles west of downtown Atlanta. In addition to the scenic train ride, visitors can go to the 4,800 square foot Gold Museum and the 1858 gold stamp mill, pan for gemstones, and visit live animal exhibits. They can be contacted at 678-840-1445 and www.facebook.com/pinemountaingoldmuseum.

Spencer Shops at the North Carolina Transportation Museum - There is a restored roundhouse, lots of rolling stock on display and a short ride around the property, usually pulled by a diesel locomotive. They occasionally offer longer excursions. Museum admission was \$12.00 (\$10 for seniors, \$8 for kids) including the train ride in 2024. <https://www.nctrans.org/> is where you can find more info.

3.1.2 Dinner Rides

Tennessee Valley Railroad – This railroad operates out of Grand Junction Station at 4119 Cromwell Road, Chattanooga, TN 37421 (about 2 hours from Atlanta). A variety of trains operate on various schedules throughout the year. Their website at www.tvrail.com provides photos, videos, and details on their fares, schedules, and scenic ride routes. Dinner rides (from \$95) were offered on Saturday nights during the summer (March – October) and around various holidays in 2024.

Great Smokey Mountain Railroad – GSM offers a dining experience on their regular daytime trips. This railroad is about three hours away from Atlanta. First class ride behind the steam

¹ Information originally compiled by Ted Yarbrough, and updated in 2024

powered train with meal was from \$124.00 per person for a 4.5 hour ride in 2024. See <https://www.gsmr.com/train-excursion/Nantahala#classes>.

My Old Kentucky Dinner Train – It offers lunch and evening meal trains. This is the most distant of the dinner trains being about five or six hours from the Metro Atlanta area. Lunch cost was \$89 and dinner was \$108 on a diesel powered 2.5 hour train ride in 2024. See <https://www.kydinnertrain.com/index.html> for details.

3.1.3 Scenic Trips

Tennessee Valley Railroad – It offers an all-day diesel-powered trip from Etowah, Tennessee, to Copperhill, Tennessee. This ride features regular coach cars with a first-class dome car available. Costs for the 8.5 hour trip range from \$70.00 to \$120.00 per adult in 2024. See <https://www.tvrail.com/events-exhibits/rides/copperhill-special> for more info.

Great Smokey Mountains Railroad – Their scenic trip is basically the same as their dinner train (see Section 3.1.2). This may be the most scenic trip in the southeast. Adult prices for the steam excursion ran \$69.00 to \$135.00 per ticket in 2024. Caboose charter is available for groups of 12 and first-class service as well as open gondola choices are offered. See https://www.gsmr.com/steam#.Xbm_dV7nIU for details.

Big South Fork Scenic Railroad – Located in Stearns, Kentucky, this is a unique ride as the train takes you to a semi restored ghost mining town of Blue Heron to view the town and hear stories of the people that once lived there. The actual ride is about 30 minutes to the town and 30 minutes back to the depot, with about an hour and a half to explore the town. Driving distance from Atlanta would be approximately 5 and one-half hours. Tickets were \$23.00-\$26.00 for the diesel train ride in 2024. A Coal Miner's Lunch was \$14. **Veterans ride free!** Details can be found at <https://www.bsfsry.com/>.

Tweetsie Railroad – Located in Boone, North Carolina, it offers a Railfan weekend with historical rail equipment operating on Saturday and double header steam on Sunday. It is a small theme park with a narrow-gauge railroad operating a White Pass steam loco and Tweetsie steam loco #12, the loco used to get the original dimensions for Bachmann's Big Hauler. <https://tweetsie.com/special-events/railroad-heritage-weekend> will get you all the details. Tickets for park, including train ride, were from \$60.00 in 2024.

3.2 Atlanta Model Train Show – January

In mid-January, Golden Spike Enterprises hosts the Atlanta Model Train Show. In 2024, as in most years, the Atlanta Model Train Show was at the convention center in Gwinnett County at 6400 Sugarloaf Parkway in Duluth, Georgia (30097), from 9:00 to 4:00. The 1-day show features several dozen vendors with over 300 tables of model trains and railroad collectibles and train layout in various scales by a variety of model train enthusiasts.

Georgia Garden Railway Society does not create a G-scale layout for this event. However, since about 2013 one of its family members, Joe and Debbie Fotschky, hosts a large personally owned layout as shown here.



GGRS sponsors a 1-table booth at this event to promote membership. Charles Miller of Virginia has been the contact point for this arrangement and provides us the space at a nominal fee or free. This typically serves to recruit several new members as a result. Locating the booth adjacent to G-scale vendor (and GGRS member) Roy Williamson in 2022-4 proved even more beneficial to recruiting members.



Increasingly, more of the vendors carry G-scale rolling stock, but typically very few other G-scale accessories are found for sale at this event. The smaller, indoor scales of model trains are more predominantly displayed. However, several vendors sell such train related items as T-shirts, jewelry, railroad collectibles, and books on the history of trains.

3.3 Trains, Trains, Trains Show – January

In late January, the Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History at 2829 Cherokee Street in downtown Kennesaw, Georgia, hosts the 2-day “Trains, Trains, Trains Show.” This museum displays both artifacts related to railroad history and civil war history. Vendors do not attend this event, although the museum has a souvenir shop that sells a variety of train related toys, books, knickknacks, etc. Attendance in recent years runs 4,000 to 5,000 persons.

The highlight of this show (9:30 to 5:00 both days) is that a variety of model train enthusiast groups are invited to set up model train layouts and the show is highly publicized as a kid-friendly event. The GGRS participates in this event using a freestyle track layout (see Section 5.5). GGRS members have provided buildings and accessories to create various themes for the layout. GGRS members also host a display table adjacent to the layout. The tenth anniversary of this event was in 2020 and GGRS has participated using the same enlarged space used in 2019 through 2024.

Other layout participants and their scale have been as follows: Eastern Carolinians (O), Athens Bend (N), Georgia Tinsplate Trackers (O), North Atlanta O-Gauge, Lego, Southern Museum 8x8 (O), Chattanooga Modular (N), Southern Museum G-Scale, and Museum Winter Layout.

Because it’s a 2-day event in addition to a half-day set-up on Friday, more members than usual are called upon to assist in overseeing our layout. There are usually 3 or 4 members who supervise the activities all day except for break periods. Perhaps “Trainmasters” for the day would be a good title for them. Most “volunteers” other than the Trainmasters are members who sit at the edges of the layout to keep small children from entering the train operating area; to restock the membership table; to promote and answer questions about garden railroading, the G-scale, and membership to adult visitors; and to assist the Trainmasters as needed (such as uprighting derailed cars).

Starting in 2020, an effort was initiated to rely less on members providing items to create a display and to start creating a display made entirely of GGRS-owned equipment, starting with the

acquisition of track for the layout in 2020 and repairing those buildings already owned by the society.

The museum usually provides a set of long-sleeve T-shirts with a “Trains, Trains, Trains” logo on them in a variety of sizes to distribute among our volunteer members as long as the supply lasts for day-long volunteers. The sizes are based on an advance request by the museum in November or December asking the sizes for the planned volunteers.

Volunteers usually enter the building from the side entrance (usually marked with a “Volunteers Enter Here” sign). Volunteers working through lunch are also provided free admission, a continental breakfast (bagels, pastries, & coffee), and free lunch (such as BBQ, baked beans, and soda, water, or coffee) on both days. General admission for the event has been about \$7.50 for adults, \$6.50 for seniors, \$5.50 for children ages 4-12, and children under 3 free.

In 2018, the space provided to GGRS for a layout was enlarged from previous years (see page 8). The following pages show our trains used and the layout of four tracks with a Wild West theme in one area and a circus theme in the other area in 2018. Themes may vary from year-to-year. In 2019 a Wild West theme with 3 oval tracks was used as shown below.



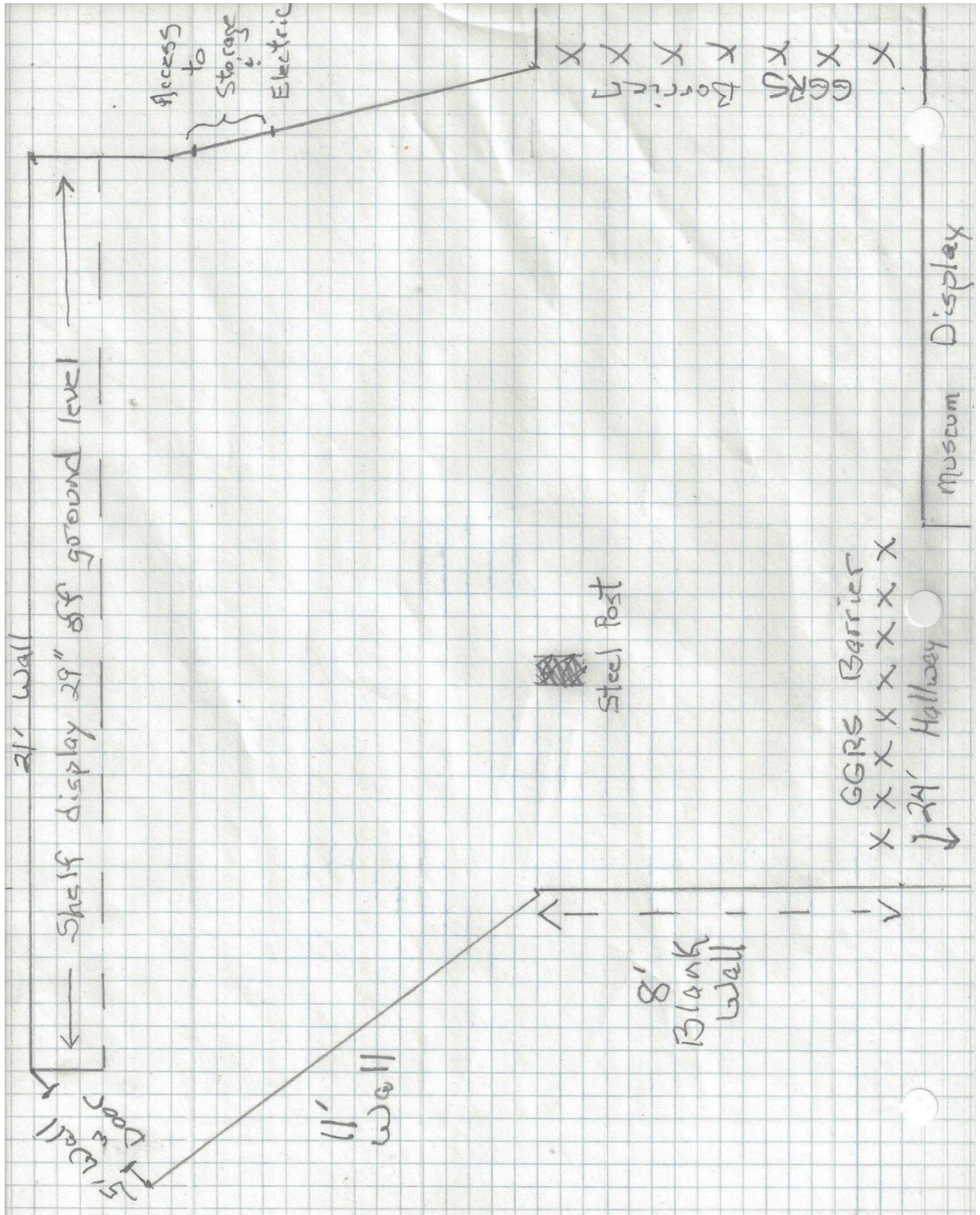
2019



2018







A square represents 1/2 foot in length.

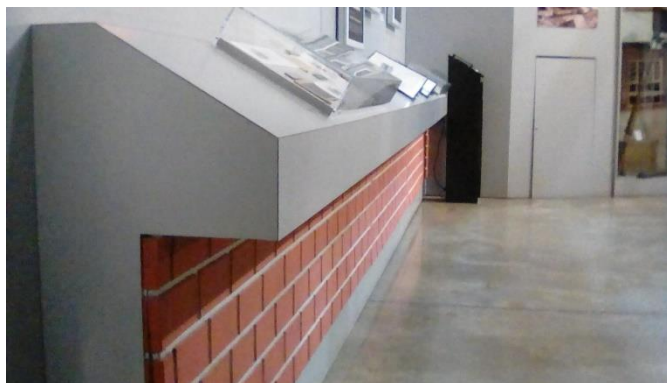
Photos of the area shown on previous page:



Overview of main layout area and the 21-foot wall with brick facing. The door to the left is usually blocked to traffic. Track has to maneuver around the black steel support beam.



This wall and path to the left of above area are used for access to view the layout and to place a GGRS information booth on the far left blank wall.



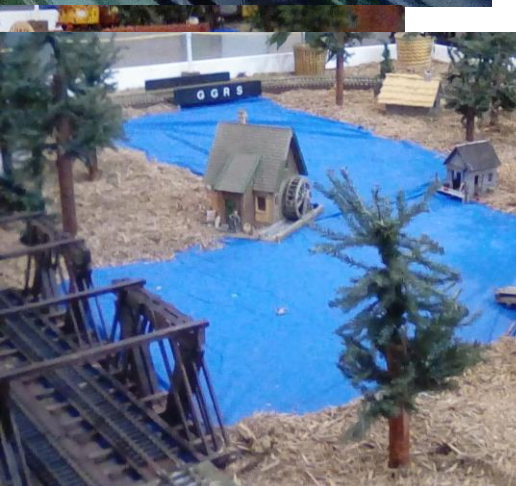
Side view of the 21-foot shelf which allows use of the floor area below it. The small gray door to the right provides access to storing our empty containers and electric outlets.

3.4 National Model Railroad Association Train Show - March

In mid-March, the Piedmont Division of the National Model Railroad Association hosts a show called “The Model Train Show – Southeast’s Premier Train Show”. The show includes about six operating model railroads and a large number of vendors (250+ tables mostly catering to the smaller scale train collectors). Admission is about \$10 for adults and operating hours are usually 10 to 5 on Saturday and 10 to 4 on Sunday.

GGRS does a layout at this event and is reimbursed \$100 to \$400 for its participation. In 2019, our members were assigned a 4:00 p.m. time on Friday to gain access to the convention hall to set up our layout. We were allotted a 40’ x 20’ layout area with 2 tables. It took about 10 volunteers 3 hours to set up the layout and about 2 hours to break it down.

The show in 2020 was cancelled because of the coronavirus pandemic. Following are photos of the layout used in 2019.



3.5 Chatsworth Depot Model Train Expo - April



Usually from 10:00 to 5:00 the second Saturday in April, the Whitfield-Murray Historical Society hosts an annual “Second Saturday” event to celebrate the history of the Chatsworth Depot and the Wright Hotel. A free model train expo at the depot highlights live steam model trains, an outdoor layout by GGRS members (weather permitting), a few other model trains, and a few model train vendors. The Depot is located at 500 N. First Avenue in Chatsworth, Georgia 30705 (northwest corner of Georgia near the Tennessee border). The hotel is also open for tours. The event was cancelled in April 2020 because of the coronavirus pandemic and rescheduled for September 2020. In 2024, the GGRS display moved from the grass to indoors.



Pictured is an example of the simple display set up by GGRS in a previous year. Bad weather resulted in limiting the use of buildings and other accessories. Starting in 2024, we were allotted indoor space.

3.6 Atlanta Model Train Show – August

In late August, Golden Spike Enterprises hosts the Atlanta Model Train Show, the second such show in the Atlanta area by this group during the year (see Section 3.2). The show has been at the convention center in Gwinnett County for many years at 6400 Sugarloaf Parkway in Duluth, Georgia (30097), from 9:00 to 4:00. The 1-day show features several dozen vendors with over 300 tables of model trains and railroad collectibles and train layout in various scales by a variety of model train enthusiasts. Georgia Garden Railway Society does not create a G-scale layout for this event.

3.7 Annual National Garden Railway Society Convention - Summer

A national convention is usually held annually in a selected metropolitan area each summer. Tulsa, Oklahoma, was the site in 2017. Atlanta was the host site for the national convention in 2018. The 2019 location in late August was in Portland, Oregon, and the 2020 site was scheduled for June in Nashville, Tennessee, but was rescheduled to 2021 because of the national pandemic. In 2022, the convention was in Denver, Colorado, and was in California in 2023. None was scheduled in 2024.

The conventions typically provide several days during which area garden railways can be toured. A variety of lectures are also provided as well as several social events (dinners, ice cream socials, etc.). One or two full scale tourist train rides are usually featured. One of the biggest benefits of attending a convention is the opportunity to visit the convention hall where G-scale vendors exhibit their wares. All variety of garden railway accessories are available.



The National Convention has always been popular with members of the Georgia Garden Railway Society. Members attend every convention. Twenty members visited the convention in Denver for the 2004 convention, which was a record for us (other than our hosting the 2018 convention). Often our group will get together for a lunch at some point during the convention to compare notes and highlights. At the convention some members tour the garden railroads together, either in their own cars or by the charter bus that is available. The convention is the highlight of the garden railroading year.

3.8 TVRA Railfest - September

In early September, the Tennessee Valley Railway Museum's Railfest takes place in Chattanooga. There is a kick-off concert on Friday night with varying train rides (some include meals on the train cars) and exhibitors on Saturday and Sunday. There are children's activities and demonstrations such as blacksmithing and sheep shawling. Antique autos and tractors are also on display. Adult tickets several years ago ran from \$25 to \$65.

4 - Website

(Revised May 4, 2024)

The website for Georgia Garden Railway Society is <http://ggrs.info>. It became outdated in 2018 when only one person had access to updating it. In 2019 a new webmaster was found and the site was transferred to a new host and revised, the new format completed in February 2020. The site has been organized into the following sections.

4.1 Home

This section welcomes site visitors to the website with a brief outline about us and provides links to the other sections. It also provides a link to a Facebook page operated by the Webmaster which notes upcoming events and photo contributions of past activity.

4.2 Member Documents

As a paid member of the Society you are authorized to create a password to the Member Documents section on invitation of the webmaster. This section provides the following files:

- **Member Layouts** – Photos and information about some past and current members' layouts
- **GGRS Bylaws** – The current GGRS Constitution and Bylaws
- **Policies and Procedures Manual** – Information on a variety of GGRS programs and activities (indexed). It addresses GGRS organization, meetings, excursions & train shows, the website, asset management, G-scale vendors, and miscellaneous train related activities
- **Member Photo Directory** – Contact information and photos of current year members updated quarterly

4.3 Prospective Member Information

- **Q & A Handout** – Answers to commonly asked questions about garden railroading
- **Application Form** – The current year membership application form

5 - GGRS Asset Management

(Revised May 7, 2024)

5.1 Budget

A budget is required annually to be drafted by the Executive Board and approved by the membership. The budget is usually presented for the next year at the last business meeting of the prior year under Bylaws changes made in 2019.

The Treasurer is authorized to reimburse costs by members that are in line with the budget. The Treasurer may also authorize unbudgeted claims or costs excess to their budgeted level at the Treasurer's discretion not to exceed \$100.



5.2 Reimbursement Claims

Claims for reimbursement of budgeted expenditures should be made to the Treasurer by the Board member or Program Coordinator responsible for expenses under that budget category. They should provide original copies of paid costs if possible for audit purposes.

Any costs expected to exceed budgeted amounts should be approved in advance by the Board, but must be approved by the Board prior to payment.

5.3 Banking

The Society will maintain its cash assets in a checking account that is assessable to both the Treasurer and President. A minimum amount (such as \$500 – depending on the bank used) should remain on deposit that avoids having to pay a monthly banking fee. The Treasurer will keep the Board apprised of the status of funds on at least a quarterly basis and usually at each Board meeting.

5.4 Audits



The financial records of the Society will be audited twice a year by an Audit Committee as outlined in the Bylaws. The audits will be conducted at mid-year to ensure records are being maintained according to generally accepted accounting practices and at end-of-year for the same purpose and to ensure a smooth transition from the outgoing Treasurer to the incoming Treasurer.

5.5 Society Assets - Traveling Exhibit



Since 2024, GGRS has only maintained equipment for a Freestyle Track Exhibit, eliminating a Fixed Track Modular Exhibit previously in use. The equipment includes a small variety of locomotives, rolling stock, buildings, figures, landscaping, and other accessories selectively used depending upon the theme for an event. The track layout for the Freestyle Track Exhibit was replaced in 2020.

The exhibit when not in use is housed in a covered trailer owned by GGRS that is kept at a designated member's home (James Bando starting in 2019) as pictured above and in Section 5.8. Three sets of keys exist for access to the trailer and are assigned to the member housing the trailer, the President, and another member designated by the President (Russ Bundy since 2020).

This exhibit can be used indoors or outdoors and in unusual space assignments because the track is not limited to a specific configure. We have variations of 4-foot, 5-foot, and 8-foot curved layouts. The track pieces are laid out as needed to accommodate the space assigned. Section 3.3 pictures an example of a freestyle track layout.

5.6 Society Assets - Donated Equipment

Members, ex-members, members' families, and others occasionally donate their excess or no longer needed G-scale equipment to GGRS. Such equipment may be used to supplement the traveling exhibits, to raise funds, or to assist members in expanding their layouts.

To ensure that when donated items are used to raise funds, all members have an equal opportunity to purchase the items, certain guidelines should be followed. The item or items should be described in the next issue of the *GGRS Gazette* (including a photo if possible) with a suggested donation price and contact point for the sale. If more than one member offers the suggested price on any item, they should be offered the chance to bid a higher amount and the highest bid will win the item(s). If the newsletter generates no purchase of any item or items, the item(s) will be displayed at the next member meeting at a reduced price. This process will

continue until the items are sold. Each reduced price will also be distributed to the members via the next newsletter.

5.7 (Reserved)

5.8 (Reserved)

5.9 Operation of the 32-Inch Dynex Flat Screen TV and DVD Player

When electric outlets are available at no charge that are in the vicinity of the society's membership booth or information table at public events, a 32" flat screen TV and DVD player are available (usually stored in the traveling trailer) to play DVDs that highlight garden railways. Several DVDs produced by the society or members in the past are located with the TV for viewing. The TV's front view is as shown in this photo. When the set is plugged in there is a small red light indicator in the bottom left corner of the TV. When the set is operating the light changes to blue as shown in the photo.

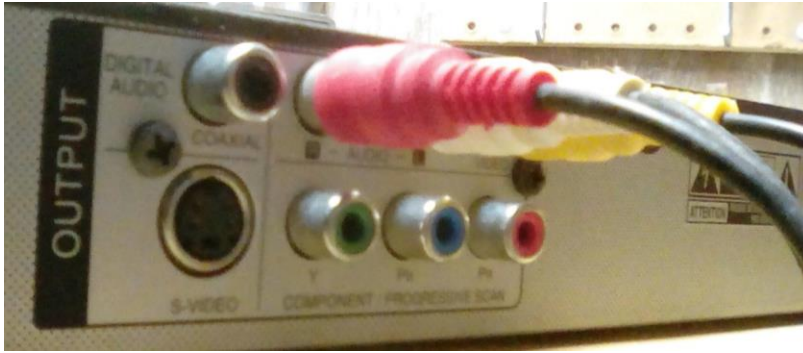
The back of the TV appears as shown. The operating buttons are located on the far left side (see below left photo) and the connections to the DVD player are on the right side (see below right photo).





The red, white, and yellow connection plugs should be attached to the TV back from top to bottom as pictured on the previous page. The correspondingly colored red, white, and yellow connection plugs leading from the back of the TV to the DVD player should be inserted at the middle of the back of the DVD player as shown below. The on/off button for the player is at the front under the “JVC” logo (as pictured below right).





Once both appliances are plugged in and powered “on” a DVD may start playing if one is already in the player. Otherwise use the button where the DVD holder opens to receive a DVD, to open the holder and insert a DVD. If the DVD does not begin to play you may have to press the “Input” button on the back of the TV (second button from the bottom) and select the “AV2” choice to gain input from the player to the TV.

There are remote controls for both appliances. However, batteries may not be fresh. Either appliance can be operated manually as described previously.

The three DVDs (dates created unknown) stored with the DVD player are:

- GGRS 1
 - o Garden Railway at Atlanta Botanical Garden
 - o Mole Valley 2
 - o Lizard Mountain Railroad
 - o LP&CL Railroad
 - o Lizard Mountain (Stills)
 - o Mole Valley Railway
- Mole Valley
 - o Mole Valley (Start)
 - o Mole Valley 1
 - o Mole Valley 2
- Layouts of the Georgia Garden Railway Society
 - o Kimball Garden Railway
 - o Mole Valley Railway
 - o Atlanta Botanical Garden

6 – Georgia G-Scale Vendors

(Revised May 7, 2024)

As a service to members, Georgia vendors of G-scale merchandise and services may have their businesses listed in various venues of GGRS, such as this P&P Manual, the website, and/or the newsletter at the discretion of the Executive Board. Following is information on some of the sources found among Georgia vendors and their in-store collections. Of course, any of them may have a website that offers a larger variety of items than is carried on their shelves.

6.1 Legacy Station – This hobby shop is located at the rear of a strip mall at 4153 Lawrenceville Highway (Suite 12) in Lilburn 30047. Phone 770-339-7780. Their website is www.legacystation.com. This site has the largest on-site selection in Georgia of G-scale buildings by PIKO. Most are kits. They also sell some track and have a selection of about a dozen or two G-scale railroad cars/engines and a few starter sets. All merchandise is new. No used items are typically available. There is no special discount to GGRS or other train club members, but they generally cite a 10% discount off manufactures' suggested retail prices. Items for several other scales of railroading are also for sale. Their website outlines the following information related to buying track from them which may be helpful to our members:

G Scale Curved Track

We carry two major types of G Scale Track: LGB and Piko. They are very similar in look - both have brown ties with Brass rails. They can be used together. Piko track is made in Germany and LGB track is made in Hungary. They are compatible with most G Scale track brands including Aristo Craft and USA Trains. Piko/LGB track curved sections are named according to their radius (R1, R2, R3, R5) and arc in degrees

- **11000 Curved Track, R1, 30° - 4 Ft Diameter:** This basic LGB curved section is included in LGB starter sets. **Twelve** 11000 sections make a complete circle (**12 sections x 30° = 360°**).
- **11020 Curved Track, R1, 15°:** This section is 1/2 the arc of an 11000 curved section.
- **11040 Curved Track, R1, 7.5°:** This section is 1/4 the arc of an 11000 curved section.
- **15000 Curved Track, R2, 30° - 5 Ft Diameter:** This is a medium-radius curve. **Twelve** 15000 sections make a complete circle (12 sections x 30° = 360°).
- **16000 Curved Track, R3, 22.5° - 8 Ft Diameter:** This is a large-radius curve. **Sixteen** 16000 sections make a complete circle (16 sections x 22.5° = 360°).
- **18000 Curved Track, R5, 15° - 15 Ft Diameter:** This is the largest radius curve. **Twenty four** 18000 sections make a complete (24 section x 15° = 360°)
- **18020 Curved Track, R5, 7.5°** This section is 1/4 the arc of an 18000 curved section.

6.2 Lindy's Trains – This vendor has booths at various regional antique malls (previously at 15 sites but as few as 5 now) at which they feature used model train accessories (often “roughly” used), usually at very good prices. You may find no G-scale items or you may find a real treasure piece. This vendor often has a display at area train shows. Check their website at www.lindystrains.com for current locations.

6.3 Trainmasters – This vendor is completely oriented toward model trains and railroading collections and publications for all scales and is probably the largest such vendor in Georgia. It relocated from Buford to 1359 4th Avenue, Auburn, 30011, in November 2020. Phone 678-546-3600. Their website is www.trainmastermodels.com. This vendor often carries used G-scale buildings, rolling stock, and accessories at good prices and usually carries used G-scale track. They offer a 5% discount to veterans (with one-time proof of service), a 10% discount to GGRS members (with a current membership card) or members of other train clubs, and occasionally special sales of 25% off used items and 10% off new items. Such discounts can be combined. A monthly sales notice is emailed to those signing up for their newsletter. This vendor usually has a large display at area train shows but doesn't usually bring used G-scale items.

6.4 CatzPaw Innovations, LLC – This was a Georgia business located in Locust Grove, Georgia, but other than attending a few area train shows, it only operated through its website at www.catzpaw.com. It sold 3D printed scenic details, animals, figures, structures, and vehicles in most scales, including G-scale. If you find an item you like in another scale, they will often produce it in G-scale for you. Their items can be purchased unpainted or painted (at a higher price). Whether they remain in business currently is not determined.

6.5 HobbyTownUSA – Kennesaw – This branch of this chain of hobby shops carries a small collection of G-scale trains and accessories. It is located at 840 Barrett Lakes Blvd., Kennesaw, GA 30144. The phone number is 770-426-8800 and the chain's website is www.hobbytown.com. Related hobby items include close to scale vehicle models, farm animals, and figurines in other sections of the building.

6.6 Roy's Trains – Braselton – GGRS members Roy and Pam Williamson carry a wide collection of mostly used locomotive, rolling stock, track, figurines, buildings, and other G-scale accessories at reasonable prices out of their basement. Roy also keeps an eye out for pieces you are interested in that he may not have available. They often host a vendor table at train shows in metro-Atlanta and host displays of items for sale at many GGRS monthly meetings.

6.7 Train Installations LLC – Not generally a source of train merchandise, but often stocked with used items, this vendor is a long-time GGRS member and installs (and un-installs) indoor and outdoor G-scale layouts (and other scales), as well as consults on plans for layouts and repairs layouts. Bridges and tunnels are also a specialty. Call 770-597-0038. Website information can be found at www.dave@traininstallations.com.

6.8 Georgia Train Vendors with Little or No G-Scale, In-Store Merchandise – Some Georgia vendors dealing in train collections of various scales have been found to stock little, if any, G-scale items in-store as follows, although they may support an on-line supply of such merchandise:

B&B Hobby Shop	Grayson, Georgia
Blue Ox Trains	Roswell, Georgia
HobbyTownUSA – Duluth	Duluth, Georgia
Memory Station	Watkinsville, Georgia
Riverdale Station	Riverdale, Georgia

6.9 On-Line Consign, Inc. – Machine embroiders railroad designs & themes on shirts and gifts (towels, bags, bibs, etc.). Call 770-928-2135 or visit sbandogeorgia@comcast.net. Sally Bando owns the business and is a long-time GGRS member.

7 – GGRS Constitution and Bylaws

(Revised April 24, 2019)

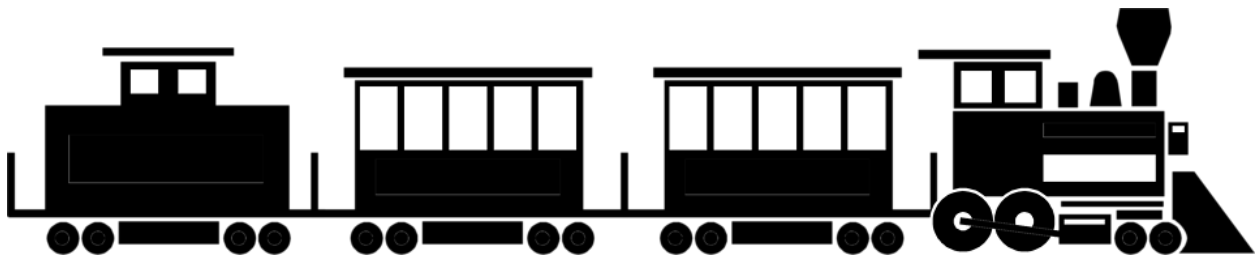
This section has been listed separately on the website under
“Member Documents.”

8 – Miscellaneous Train Related Activities

(Revised May 7, 2024)

8.1 Southeastern Railway Museum Photography Competition

This annual contest allows photographers to submit up to five photos taken at the museum for exhibit in a gallery at the museum and online. Guidelines may change from year to year, so check their website at www.train-museum.org or www.southeasternrailwaymuseum.org for current year details. Entries are accepted January 1 to February 15 and are on display from the end of February through March. Photos are judged in three categories: equipment (especially trains of course), people, and macro (extreme close-ups). The museum is located in Duluth.



8.2 Train Museums

The metro-Atlanta area hosts two large train museums:

- The Southeastern Railway Museum is located at 3595 Buford Highway, Duluth, Georgia, and serves as Georgia’s Official Transportation History Museum with over 80 pieces of retired railway equipment on display. While trains dominate the displays and activity, there are also tractor and bus display areas for example. Contact information is www.southeasternrailwaymuseum.org or 770-476-2013. In addition to full-size trains to tour and ride, there are a variety of exhibits and a train-themed gift shop (jewelry, T-shirts, books, videos, etc.). Railcars can also be rented for birthday parties. The museum also seeks volunteers in a variety of positions.
- The Southern Museum of Civil War & Locomotive History is located at 2829 Cherokee Street, Kennesaw, Georgia 30144. In addition to a kids’ area, gift shop, archives, and library, there are displays on the Glover Machine Works, the role of railroads in the Civil War, and “The General” (full size) of Civil War fame. Various workshops and events are held throughout the year (see Section 3.3 regarding their annual “Trains, Trains, Trains” show). Contact information is www.southernmuseum.org or 770-427-2117.

8.3 Non-GGRS G-Scale Model Railroad Tours

“Piedmont Pilgrimage” Model Railroad Tour - The Piedmont Division of the National Model Railroad Association hosts an annual tour of about 90 model train layouts of all scales in the metro-Atlanta area on weekends from mid-October to mid-November. A half dozen or so G-scale layouts are usually on tour. Check the schedule at www.piedmontpilgrimage.com. A 50-page or so booklet describing each layout and including area vendor information (sometimes with useful coupons) is usually available just prior to the tour at many area train stores.



Vines Botanical Garden Railroad – The wedding venue of Vines Botanical Garden is operated by Gwinnett County and includes a G-scale Vines Garden Railroad of 1,000 feet of rail open to the public daily, although the railway is only operated by volunteers a couple of days a month (usually first and third Saturdays). The layout includes the towns of Vines and Dogwood City. The park is located at 3500 Oak Grove Road, Loganville, Georgia 30052 a couple of miles north of Highway 78. To confirm an operating date contact Dennis Bass (a long-time GGRS member) at email4bassde@gmail.com. The railway operates mid-May to about mid-October.

8.4 Sites for Train Watching

Dalton Freight Depot – Train watch from the Freight Depot Platform where the Norfolk Southern and CSX rails intersect. Visit www.visitdaltonga.com.

Locust Grove Train Watching Platform – Enjoy the 40+ trains that pass daily through historic Locust Grove, Georgia. Located at 3840 Highway 42. Visit visitlocustgrove.com.

9 – History of GGRS

(Revised May 7, 2024)

9.1 General History

The history of GGRS is not well documented. Official records other than some past issues of the *GGRS Gazette* are basically non-existent. There were a couple of paragraphs written about early history distributed at the 2017 national society's convention hosted in Atlanta. Otherwise a few long-time members provide most of the details on its history as follows unless otherwise noted.

Some cite our founding in the late 1980s² and some cite the early 1990s. In its early years it started setting up traveling exhibits at four regional train shows (two sponsored by Golden Spike and two hosted by Greenberg). Such shows paid participation fees (\$250 per event) to GGRS that were helpful in early funding and covering the costs of printing and mailing a recurring newsletter.

Since the mid to late 1990s, GGRS members have actively attended the National Garden Railway conventions with perhaps the highest out-of-state participation. At the Denver-hosted convention in 2005 we had 20 member families attending³.

In the late 1990s, member Lee Werner created a traveling layout housed in a trailer so that a track layout could be folded out into a raised 2-level display. To make the display more youth friendly and garden oriented, member Charlie Rice developed a fixed-track floor layout for use at the four train shows. The fixed-track layout was housed when not in use in a trailer still in use today.

Subsequently, the membership discontinued participation in the 1-day Golden Spike shows, but continued the 2-day Greenberg events (one in the spring and one in the fall). When Greenberg sold out to Great American Train Shows, the new sponsors dropped to only one 2-day show in the fall which was also eventually discontinued.

A 2-day spring train show was started by the National Model Railroad Society which GGRS has participated in irregularly since started.

In more recent years, a traveling exhibit for 1-day shows has been in use using a freestyle track layout that permits setting up in smaller spaces and allows variations in the track arrangement that a Fixed Track Modular layout could not accommodate. The freestyle layout when not in use had been stored in plastic crates at a members' home. The freestyle layout was developed and expanded from items donated to the society and was often supplemented with items from the personal collections of members. To some extent, the intermingling of society owned and member owned pieces in the collection made it difficult to inventory the specific ownership of

² Convention Handout, 2017.

³ Convention Handout, 2017.

the many pieces. Starting in 2019 an effort was initiated to create a new freestyle exhibit completely owned by the society.

The freestyle exhibit has been in use for GGRS participation in events and has also been made available to members that sometimes personally commit to participation in regional events. Loaning the collection to members has been considered beneficial to the society for the purpose of promoting G-scale railroading and society membership at train shows.

In addition to recurring area train shows, GGRS has hosted or participated in a variety of specialty events over the years including the 2001 LGB Convention in Atlanta, 3 Southeast Large Scale Train Shows in Perry from 2006 to 2008 sponsored by Aristocracy, the World's Greatest Hobby Show, three Dalton large scale shows from 2009 to 2011 sponsored by David Roberts, the Train Collectors of America national convention in Atlanta, the NMRA National Convention in Atlanta, and the 2018 National Garden Railway Convention. In 2024, we hosted the G-Scale Southeast Regional Get-Together and were planning to host the Big Train Operators Club national convention in 2025.

Some outdated records of the society cite itself as an associate club of the Piedmont Division of the National Model Railroad Association; however, at least as late as 2019 that nomenclature was not in use by NMRA and an association was not in effect.

9.2 – History of Excursionsⁱ

Several Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum trips have been taken in the past and all are excellent and worth repeating. One was the roundtrip to Summerville, Georgia, from Chattanooga, Tennessee, in October 2019. GGRS did the Hiwassee River/Copperhill trip in 2018, and rode the dinner train a few years back.

We have taken trips with the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad that included coach on a photo special and chartering a caboose. The Great Smoky Mountains Railroad is one of the most scenic in the southeast and has these options plus others available.

Our group has visited the Tweetsie Railroad for their Railfan Weekend generally held in September in conjunction with their historical society meeting. We ventured up to Cass Scenic Railroad for their ride as well. We also rode on the Blue Ridge Scenic once, and according to some, was the least interesting ride we have taken. We also have taken a couple of trips on the Three Rivers Rambler in Knoxville.

ⁱ Submitted by Ted Yarbrough, GGRS Past President