

RIDING RAILWAYS

NEWSLETTER



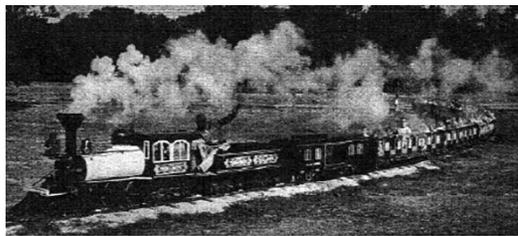
Grand Scales
Quarterly

JANUARY 2008

Hello everyone! Welcome to the first newsletter of 2008! We have a great historical article below that will be of huge interest to MTC fans. Hope you enjoy it. Also a few letters that you might enjoy. Please keep your letters and articles coming.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Susan'.



Miniature Reflections

by **Theo Gammel** (©Gammel Associates - Reprinted with permission from <http://www.fpmt.us/min1.htm>)

In 1955, at the urging of his son Gene Hames, W. H. "Bill" Hames decided to add a miniature railroad to the already existing rides in Forest Park even though a train, running on a quarter-mile circular track, already existed as part of the amusement rides operating in park. A proposal was given to the Fort Worth Park Board at its regular Thursday meeting on 28 June 1956 to build such a train through Forest and Trinity Parks from the Fort Worth Zoo parking lot just off University Drive (now the Fort Worth Zoo employee parking lot) to the West Seventh Street entrance of Trinity Park and around the Fort Worth Botanic Garden after passing through a tunnel under University Drive covering a route of between four and five miles.

Hamm Hittson, director of the Fort Worth Park Department, was directed by the park board to make a feasibility study of this proposal. Hittson delivered the feasibility study to the park board a year later.

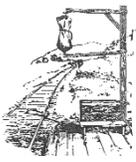


This photo appeared in the **Fort Worth Press** (17 April 1959) with the caption: "Tracks for a miniature railroad that will carry passengers between the Trinity Park duck pond and Forest Park Zoo are being put down across a park road--which will then get a flashing warning signal to warn motorists. The miniature railroad will be opened this summer." The individual with the carpenter's apron is Theo Ledel; the person on his knees is Lloyd Sherwood, a long time employee of Bill Hames Shows, Inc. Photo ©Fort Worth Press 1959

Unfortunately, Bill Hames became ill at this time from complications relating to his diabetes, and installation of the Forest Park Miniature Railroad was delayed for over a year. Hames recovered, and the Park Board eventually announced its approval for a miniature railroad to run from the parking lot of the Fort Worth Zoo to the Botanic Garden vista just east of University Drive to the Duck Pond in Trinity Park at its Thursday meeting on 1 November 1959. Going to the West Seventh Street entrance of Trinity Park and to the Fort Worth Botanic Garden through a tunnel under University Drive was not considered feasible.

Although the announced approval for a miniature railroad in Forest and Trinity Parks was made on 1 November 1959, approval had been made earlier with the proposed signing of a four-way right-of-way agreement with the **Texas and Pacific Railway Company**, Grace Montague (to cross the land she leased

Continued on page 3



MAIL BAG

I would like to say how enjoyable and informative I find this newsletter. As a member of the live diesel group and the narrow gauge group it excites me to find someone who writes information that helps everyone out. I am a "mid level" owner with restricted money for my hobby. I am happy to find the info you offer in your newsletter. Being that I am a veteran (older) "teacher" of vocational/industrial arts classes I find it hard to offer much to your newsletter that you don't already know or have most likely seen before. I teach woodworking design and construction as well as basic welding both Oxy-Acetylene and Mig at the high school level.

I have built my own "wood/steel" trucks to begin my journey into this hobby and a scratch built replica "flat car" of an early vintage design as my first car. My most recent build (the last three months) is a new garage/shop 24' x 44' that was a result of needing larger space to hold my increasing collection of locomotives (3) and cars (7) and all the tools to build with.

So, all I want to say is thank you in advance for the offer to place me on the list for the RRN.

Thanks, Larry McCarthy

Wow, Larry. Thanks for the nice letter. I have happily placed you on the list. Now, how 'bout some photos and a "how to" on building that flat car?

Greetings all,
Phillipsburg Railroad Historians held its annual Santa Train event Sunday, December 2, 2007. The weatherman frowned upon us, sending a mixed bag of precipitation and temperatures cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey. Volunteers took turns thawing out in the heated board room in the museum. Despite the weather quite a few people did come for a ride and some hot chocolate.



On the verge of frostbite, the volunteers pose for a quick



group photo prior to putting the train away for this year.



And the NS presented a nice diversion from the cold by sending several trains between 1 and 4 pm.

Thanks,
Keith Muldowney

Thanks for the photos Keith. Sounds like everyone had a great time. And the snow looks like it was a lot of fun.

Hello,

The estate of my late father has a steam fired 3-1/2" gauge 4-4-3 (perhaps Atlantic class) Locomotive and tender for sale. The actual train had an art deco influence from the 1940's and the "shark fin" style. The model is about 85% complete with all remaining parts included. My father suffered several strokes after he purchased this which left him unable to complete the model. We believe he bought this around 1995 from the son of the original builder after he passed.

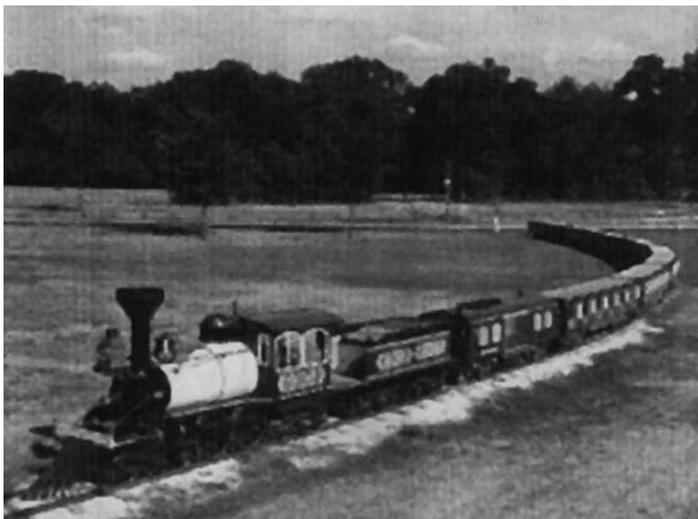
The engine is 3'-2" long, 8" wide and 11" high. The oil tender is 2' long, 8" wide and 11" high. This is a live steam engine with the proper mechanicals. The engine and tender are not completed, needing paint and trim. There is also a wooden base with ballast and track on top of the ballast on which to display the two.

I have photos which I can email upon request. It is available for inspection in the Detroit, Michigan area. If you know of someone or a model train group which might be interested, please pass this email along. We would be most appreciative.

Bob Curran
313-885-6692

rwcurrenjr@sbcglobal.net

Keep your letters and news coming! ❄️



The 1865 *Eagle* parked on the approach to the Truss Bridge in June 1959. The road in the background would eventually be paved and become an extension of Colonial Parkway. The baggage car behind the tender is the B unit. This part of the route of the Forest Park Miniature Railroad no longer exists since the Clear Fork of the Trinity River was re-channeled by the US Corps of Engineers in 1972. Photo ©W. D. Smith-Commercial Photographer 1959

Continued from page 1

from the T&P), the City of Fort Worth, and W. H. Hames, Inc. on 1 September 1958, which all parties save the City of Fort Worth signed. The City of Fort Worth did not sign this version of the right-of-way agreement because the City Council preferred a concession contract signed with an individual rather than a corporation. This delayed the signing of this rewritten agreement until 28 November 1958 when the four parties (the Texas and Pacific Railway Company, Grace Montague, the City of Fort Worth, and W. H. Hames, as an individual) signed on that day. Thomas McCann, then mayor of Fort Worth, signed this agreement as the representative of the City of Fort Worth, Texas.

At the time of this agreement, the Texas and Pacific Railway owned that part of Trinity Park between the Trinity Park Creek and the Lancaster Street Bridge where the Fort Worth and Western trestle now crosses Trinity Park. The City of Fort Worth acquired this section of what is now Trinity Park at the time the US Corps of Engineers re-channeled the Clear Fork of the Trinity River through Fort Worth in 1972.

Official notification of approval for the proposed Forest Park Miniature Railroad came in a letter from Ham Hittson, Fort Worth Director of Parks, to W. H. Hames (Hittson, 5 November 1958). In his notification letter, Hittson stated that

both the “Park Board and the public are very anxious for this installation to be completed by you at the earliest date – by next Easter Sunday if at all possible.” This letter also set the price of a Forest Park Miniature Railroad ticket at \$0.35 per person, round-trip, for passengers of any age. If anything, Hittson underestimated the interest in this train.

The planning stage of the Forest Park Miniature Railroad went into operation when unofficial word of approval for the miniature train was received with the signing of the first four-way right-of-way agreement on 1 September 1959. Theo Ledel, W. H. Hames son-in-law contacted the **Miniature Train Company** of Rensselaer, Indiana, for information on the G-16 trains they built and sold as well as various vendors concerning bids on rail, spikes, ties, ballast, etc. While this was taking place, the **Allen Herschell Company**, Inc. of North Tonawanda, New York, bought the Miniature Train Company so the first order for engines, rolling stock, rail, and equipment was made on 6 November 1958 to the Allan Herschell Company, Inc. and the Miniature Train Division (the name of the combined company) for a G-16 “diesel” train. This order was for two “diesel” A units, seven center coaches, one observation coach, five 12lb. track switches, with controls, and eight crossing signals complete with automatic controls.

The engines and coaches were to be painted in Texas and Pacific colors (blue and silver) and have left hand openings; that is, they were to be entered on the left side of the train when passengers boarded. The number of coaches ordered allowed a capacity of ninety-six passengers. The delivery date for this order was 15 January 1959 via railroad freight (appropriately carried by the Texas and Pacific Railway).

On 18 December 1958, an 1865 “steam” train (with an S-16 locomotive) was ordered with Texas and Pacific Railway markings although it was painted to resemble wooden passenger coaches. This train consisted of an 1865 engine with tender, a B unit disguised as a mail and baggage car, five center coaches, one observation coach, and

1865 Train and Coaches		
Bill Hames Special	Bill Hames	1865 Engine
Frank Special	Frank Hames	Son of Bill Hames
Gene Special	Gene Hames	Son of Bill Hames
Junior Special	Gene Ledel	Grandson of Bill Hames
Mary Helen Special	Mary Helen Hames Brown	Daughter of Bill Hames
Pearl Special	Pearl Hames Ledel	Daughter of Bill Hames
Theo Special	Theo Ledel	Son-in-Law of Bill Hames

two switches with controls. With the coaches ordered, the 1865 Eagle had a capacity of seventy-two passengers.

The switches were for a double track at the Forest Park Depot at its original location next to the Fort Worth Zoo parking lot so more than one train could be loaded at the same time and three trains could be run simultaneously if so desired. The delivery date for this order was 3 March 1959.

In the same order, the left-hand openings were changed to right-hand openings by Duncan Finlayson, service manager of the Allan Herschell Company, for this train and the "diesel" train ordered on 6 November 1958. Theo Ledel changed this back to left-hand openings before the orders for the Texas Eagle and the 1865 Eagle were confirmed on 8 April 1959. The delivery date had already been changed to early June 1959 at the request of Forest Park Rides, Inc. The Easter completion date for the train was not met.

Each of the S-16 coaches was named for an older member of the Hames family and bore a plaque on the right-hand side with the name. The 1865 engine itself was named for Bill Hames and bore a plaque to that effect.

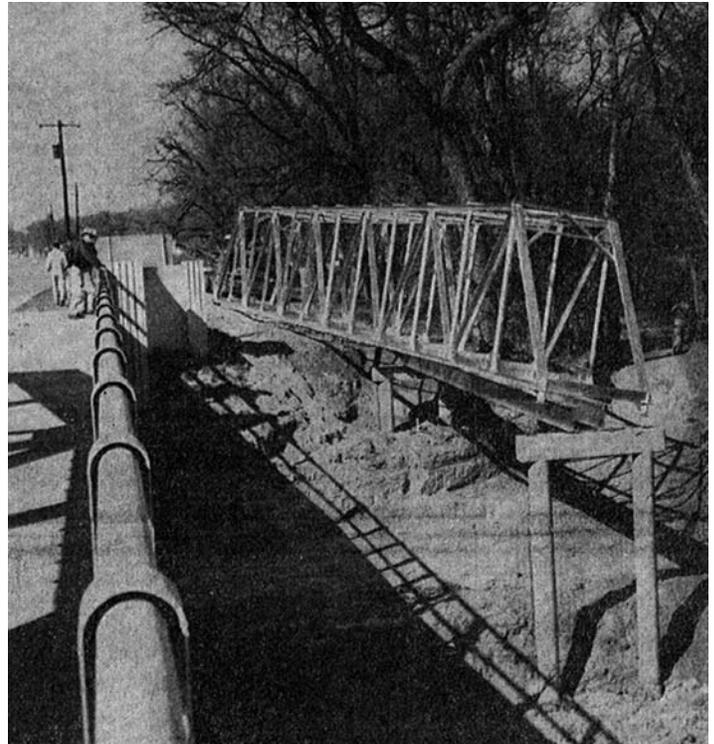
Although Gene Ledel's coach was named Junior, he was not really a junior. His initials were T. G., the same as his father, Theo Ledel. In the case of Gene Ledel, the initials stood for Theodore Gene; in the case of his father, the initials stood for Theodor Gammel. Theo Ledel's first name retained the Swedish spelling of his Father's name, Theodor Julius Ledel. Everyone assumed that Gene Ledel was named for his father because of the identical initials, and many of his family members referred to him as Junior because of them.

The G-16 coaches were named for the younger members of the Hames family, and each also bore a plaque on the right-hand side with its name on it. Bill Hames and Theo Ledel chose the names for all the Forest Park Miniature Railroad coaches.

On 8 December 1958, Theo Ledel ordered fifty-six tons of 12 lb. rail (250 feet per ton), 1120 splice bars, twenty kegs of spikes (3/8" X 2 1/2") and 4200 nuts and bolts for the splice plates (four nuts and bolts per plate) from the **Colorado Iron and Steel Company**; these were to be delivered to the Lancaster Shop Team Track by the Texas and Pacific Railway. The first order for ties (8400 of them) also went in on 8 December 1958 to E. F. Gray of The Mill in Ada, Oklahoma. These ties were 4" X 4" X 30" in size. An additional order to The Mill for 1500 ties was made on 18 December 1958.

After Gene Ledel had walked several potential routes for the Forest Park Miniature Railroad through Forest and Trinity Parks, Theo Ledel made the official survey of the original route for this railroad throughout December 1958 from the information gathered by Gene

Ledel. The route was laid so that only one tree had to be removed in order to complete the route which is why it zig-zags in and out of trees every now and then along the right-of-way. Only one tree, at the Trinity Park Duck Pond turnaround, could not be avoided no matter how that circle was routed. Missing one tree put the right-of-way through a different tree. Whatever right-of-way was used for the Trinity Park turnaround, at least one tree was always in the way so one tree had to be cut down to make room for the turnaround at the Duck Pond. From survey to construction took from December 1958 to May 1959 with every bridge being built in place save for the truss bridge across the Clear Fork



This photo appeared in the **Fort Worth Star-Telegram** on 4 March 1959 with the caption "A BIG PROBLEM IN MINIATURE-Workmen sweated out for several hours Tuesday the job of getting this miniature span across the Trinity River at University Dr. It's the river bridge for the new miniature railroad being installed in Forest and Trinity Parks. The tiny railroad is believed to be the longest of its kind in America." Photo ©Fort Worth Star-Telegram 1959.

of the Trinity River beside the University Drive Bridge.

The truss Bridge across the Clear Fork of the Trinity River was built (and built very well) by the **Thornton Steel Corporation** of Fort Worth, Texas, from parts forged by **Jones and Laughlin** of Pennsylvania and the **Inland Steel Corporation** of Delaware in early 1959. The imbroglios of both companies can be seen on the struts of this bridge. On 3 March 1959, the Truss Bridge was loaded onto a semi-trailer and driven from the Thornton Steel Corporation to its original location next to the University Drive Bridge across the Clear Fork of the Trinity

River. The only trouble experienced during the installation of this bridge was moving it beneath the University Drive Bridge down the south bank of the Clear Fork. The Truss bridge lacked one-half inch clearing the bottom of the University Drive Bridge. The clearance problem was solved by partially deflating the truck tires so it would fit under the University Drive Bridge. Once it was as close as possible to its support piers, it was lifted onto those piers over the Clear Fork of the Trinity River on the after-noon of 3 March 1959 by a large crane. From end to end, the Truss Bridge is ninety feet long, not counting the approaches; with the north and south approaches, this bridge was 175 feet in length, south abutment to north abutment.

The Truss Bridge is still in use on the current Forest Park Miniature Railroad right-of-way. It is the first bridge crossed by the train as it leaves the Forest Park Depot heading north to Trinity Park and covers its original span of ninety feet plus an additional span of forty-one feet on the south approach and a span of forty-four feet on the north approach. The truss portion of this bridge covers only the Clear Fork Oxbow water-edge to water-edge. The total length of this bridge is still 175 feet, south abutment to north abutment, as it was when it was originally installed next to the University Drive Bridge.

There were four more bridges on the original right-of-way—a short concrete span over a culvert before what is now Colonial Parkway, the North Bridge (sixteen feet one inch), the South Bridge (fifteen feet eleven inches), and the Draw Bridge (sixty feet). The North and South Bridges were named for being north and south of the playground in Trinity Park. The Draw Bridge crosses the Trinity Park Creek before the Forest Park Miniature Railroad right-of-way passes under the Fort Worth and Western Railroad trestle in far Trinity Park. Theo Ledel built the culvert span, the North Bridge, and the South Bridge during installation of the Forest Park Miniature Railroad. The South Bridge was finished 27 February 1959. The North Bridge was finished on 28 February 1959. The Draw Bridge was built during late March and early April 1959 from parts fabricated by the Thornton Steel Corporation and was finished (track laid across the bridge) on 10 April 1959.

Like the transcontinental railroad, the Forest Park Miniature Railroad also set a record for the most track laid in one day. Unlike the transcontinental railroad, it was not ten miles of track; rather, it was the most track laid in one day on the Forest Park Miniature Railroad—210 feet on 2 April 1959. That may not sound like a long distance, but I have done road work on the right-of-way of the Forest Park Miniature Railroad (replacing ties, driving spikes, gauging track) in the heat of a Texas summer, and that is a great deal of track. I have come to appreciate those iron men who laid ten miles of track on the Central Pacific Railroad in one day (28 April 1869 at Promontory Mountain in Utah). Working sunup to sunset through hot desert summers and cold

mountain winters was a remarkable feat. Doing roadwork on the Forest Park Miniature Railroad, summer or winter, has been enough for me.

With the last of the track laid on 28 May 1959, a small ceremony occurred at the Duck Pond in Trinity Park where gold and silver spikes were driven to commemorate the right-of-way's completion as was done at the completion of the transcontinental railroad. These were not true gold and silver spikes, but spikes painted gold and silver. Present at this ceremony was Bill Hames, Theo Ledel, Pearl Hames Ledel (daughter of Bill Hames), Gene Ledel (grandson of Bill Hames), David Ledel (great-grandson of Bill Hames), Kathy Ledel Henley (great-granddaughter of Bill Hames). David Ledel and Kathy Henley drove the spikes at the ceremony with some help from the adults present. Unfortunately, these spikes were lost when the right-of-way was re-laid in 1973 to accommodate the wider gauge of the C. P. Huntington trains the Forest Park Miniature Railroad has used since 1973. G-16s and S-16s were sixteen-inch gauge while the C. P. Huntingtons are twenty-four inch gauge.

The G-16 ordered in November 1958 and the S-16 ordered in December 1958 arrived at the Lancaster Shop Team Track and was trucked to the Forest Park Depot on the afternoon of 6 June 1959. A three-foot by six-foot piece of plywood was used as a chute between the truck and the track to unload the S-16 engine, one "diesel" engine, and one modern coach with three men on each side to control the descent to the track and to rail each piece as it left the plywood for the right-of-way. Unfortunately, this turned out not to be a day to unload anything with heavy rain starting around 4:00 pm. The pieces already on the rail were pushed



This photo appeared in the Fort Worth Press on 14 June 1959 with the caption: "Rail Traffic On Upswing--in Forest Park! It looked like the peak period at Grand Central Station--the way young and old were rushing for trains! But it was the rush hour yesterday afternoon in Forest Park, where Bill Hames has just begun operating streamlined and old-fashioned trains over what is believed to be the longest miniature train track--2 1/2 miles--in the world. This streamliner carries 100 kids; the old-fashioned model, 60. Passengers lined up for a block yesterday. --Press Staff Photo by Bob Bogen." The engineer is Lloyd Sherwood. Photo ©Fort Worth Press 1959.



This photo appeared in the article "The Tiny T&P" in *Texas & Pacific Railway Topics* (September-October 1959) with the caption: "Tiny T&P owner, W. H. (Bill) Hames (L), checks on operations of the line's streamliner with his operating head and son-in-law, T. G. (Theo) Ledel, while engineer R. R. (Bob) Davis sits ready and waiting to pull out for another 5-miles and 30-minutes trip."

into the storage shed, and operations were called off until 7 June 1959 when the remainder of the engines and rolling stock were unloaded and put on the rail.

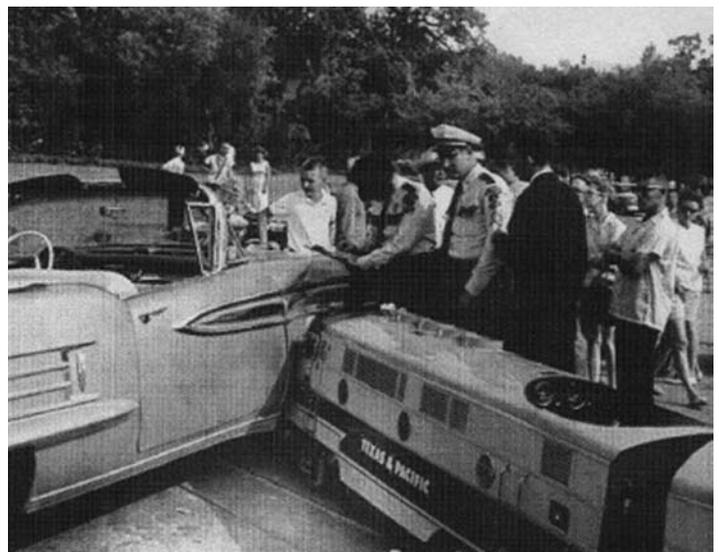
Although the right-of-way was finished and all railroad equipment was on the rail and ready, the Forest Park Miniature Railroad did not open to the public until Friday, 12 June 1959. The first train run on the Forest Park Miniature Railroad right-of-way was engineered by Duncan Finlayson (sent to Fort Worth, Texas by the Allan Herschell Company to aid in the installation of the Forest Park Miniature Railroad) with Theo Ledel, manager of the Forest Park Miniature Railroad, and Lloyd Sherwood, an engineer of the Forest Park Miniature Railroad, as passengers on 10 June 1959. This train consisted of two "diesel" A units and one modern coach. After this test run, the rest of the modern coaches were coupled to the test train. Both the G-16 and the S-16 were then filled with sandbags to simulate passenger weight and run for the rest of the day. That continued through Thursday, 11 June 1959 to test the equipment and the right-of-way. Both were found to be in excellent condition.

When the Forest Park Miniature Railroad opened to the public on Friday, 12 June 1959, it was the beginning of a human deluge. On Friday (opening day), 1500 passengers rode the Texas Eagle and the 1865 Eagle; on Saturday, 13 June 1959, 4000 passengers rode the Texas Eagle and the 1865 Eagle; on Sunday, 14 June 1959, 5000 passengers rode the Texas Eagle and 1865 Eagle with 3000 passengers having their tickets refunded because there was no room for them on the trains from 9:00 a. m. to late afternoon[11]. There was even a major traffic jam in Forest Park so many people wished to ride on one of the trains. Those wishing to

board the train in Trinity Park could find no seats available from 9 a. m. to late afternoon. The five-mile round trip took thirty minutes at twelve miles per hour with both the Texas Eagle and the 1865 Eagle running simultaneously.

Along the right-of-way through Forest and Trinity Parks were twenty-five crossbuck signs to warn drivers of grade crossings with four being bell-ringing, flasher-light signals marking the busiest crossings. When the Forest Park Miniature Railroad opened, only three sets of the bell ringing, flasher-light signals were installed. The fourth grade crossing (the road that would become an extension of Colonial Parkway) had a flagman until the crossing signals could be completely installed. This had unfortunate consequences on 21 June 1959 when a driver mistook the flagman's signal as permission to come ahead instead of stopping for an oncoming train. He stalled his car on the grade crossing just as the Texas Eagle reached the street. The right front fender of the car was damaged. The front end of the first "diesel" was bent; both engines and two passenger coaches jumped the rail as a result of the collision, and the couplings on all the coaches were bent. The Texas Eagle was put back on the rail and removed from service until repairs could be made. This did not take long as replacement parts were flown by air express from Buffalo, New York on Monday morning (22 June 1959). Repairs were made the same morning, and the Texas Eagle returned to service that afternoon.

Only two other difficulties came about in the early weeks of operation for the Forest Park Miniature Railroad. The first was that batteries in the engines were cracking and melting and had to be replaced. Duncan Finlayson was puzzled by this as no Herschell train had this problem anywhere else. When asked where the other Herschell trains operated, Finlayson replied New England. The difference



The unfortunate occurrence of 21 June 1959 was caught on film by W. D. Smith. The gentleman in the dark suit with the pained expression is the eighteen-year-old driver of the car. The police did not issue any tickets. *Photo ©W. D. Smith-Commercial Photographer 1959*

between New England summers and Texas summers was pointed out to him. The solution was moving the battery in each engine to the opposite end of the engine from the motor and putting much longer leads between the battery and the motor. That ended the problem with the batteries. The second difficulty was more easily fixed. Two more Modern Eagles (each with a capacity of ninety-six passengers) were ordered from Allan Herschell to accommodate the number of passengers faced by the Forest Park Miniature Railroad. These came with the relocation of the

battery already installed.

The only other changes in the early operation of the Forest Park Miniature Railroad was changing the direction the trains went around the Duck Pond Turnaround. Instead of going straight through the Duck Pond turnout along the straightaway then around the down grade curve, the trains were routed to the left on to the down grade curve then went upgrade to the straightaway through the Duck Pond turnout. This was easier on the engines and coaches when trains ran full.

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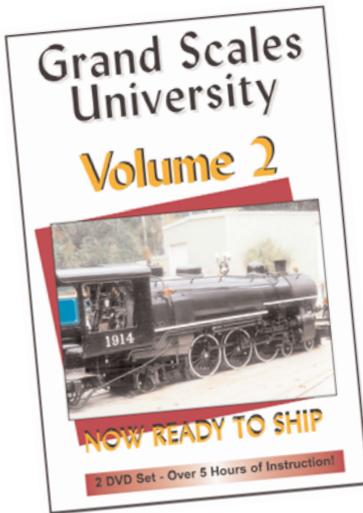
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Grand Scales University

Vol 2



PACKED WITH VALUABLE INFORMATION!

Paul Boschan, owner of Boschan Boilers and Restorations, holds a question and answer discussion on **BOILERS** and boiler safety.

The ASME stamp - what does it mean if a company has one?

What steps are involved in building a boiler to receive a stamp?

Should the tubes be welded or rolled in?

What is the best way to maintain your boiler?

What water elements can damage a boiler?

Robert Frank, owner of the world-famous Sonoma Traintown, shares his ideas on **MAKING YOUR COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS PROFITABLE**.

How to drastically cut track maintenance needs

What materials work best for wheels?

Do you need to pre-bend rail?

How can amusement rides complement a railroad?

How do structures add to the experience?

How can animals add to your bottom line?

Sean Bautista of the Hillcrest Shops teaches you **HOW TO BUILD A SWITCH** from the ground up.

How much room do you need to leave on either end of the switch?

What can you do to prevent your pointes from rolling?

Why don't you want to put heat in the rail?

Why would you want your rail to be able to move?

Should you gauge the switch wider in a curve?

How do you build a switch? Where do you begin?

Plus Ed Carnegie gives a humorous history of the **SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD** and the Overfair RR equipment. The late Fred Kiesel, a founding member of the **WABASH FRISCO & PACIFIC**, also gives a brief history of that railway.

As you can see, this 2 DVD set is loaded with practical and helpful information. Only \$50 plus shipping and handling. California residents need to add 7.25% sales tax. Order on-line (www.grandscales.com), by phone (530-527-0141) or through the mail.

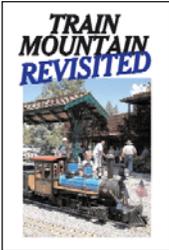
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ABC's of Tender Building –Don Orr
Proposed North American Safety Standards –Quentin Breen



Stability Problems &

Solutions –Bill Donovan

The Sum of Parts –Paul Lavacot

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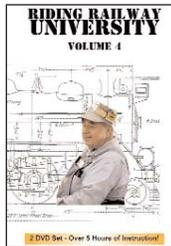
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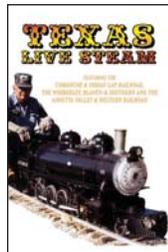
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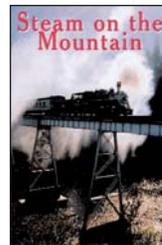
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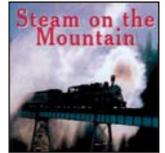
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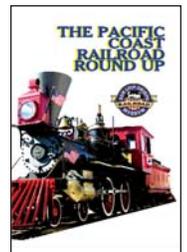


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