

Garden Railroad - Plan and Report

Paradise Valley Railroad, Powell River BC

As of Apr 15, 2024

We'd like to add a garden railroad as part of our ride-on railroad for several reasons:

- There are people in Powell River with an interest, including several of our current members,
- We'd love to get new people involved in our club,
- The public would enjoy seeing the display,
- We set one up for several Santa Trains before Covid and they were very popular,
- Kiwanis donated us some funding towards a Garden Railroad.



Initial thoughts are to install one in the rafters of our station, for these reasons

- ground maintenance is a large chore. A covered display avoids that.
- It would entertain people waiting in line.
- It could be limited to a simple oval with 4' radius track, perhaps 8' x 20'.
 - (we'd find a new location if interest was there, such as the grove of trees to the southwest of the new shed)
 - The station is 20' x 32' and inside the pillars 14' x 28'
 - using plexiglas sides would prevent trains falling, and plexiglass bottoms would increase visibility.
- Several members have trains to run on the club-provided track, including Dan's steam train.

FIRST TASK: We need a leader for this project, our current members are over-committed.

(Supporting members identified so far: Leif Bjornson, Dan Parsons, Geoff Stubbs, Bruce Macleod, Dave Florence.)

Old correspondence

- From Rowwie Mckeown, I briefly spoke with Dave at the PRFAI AGM and since the season is ramping up I'd love to put you guys in touch with my Dad. ... He doesn't have a lot of energy for projects, but he has a ton of knowledge and experience with model railroad, specifically G gauge as well as O gauge. Dave mentioned that the Paradise Valley Railroad wants to set up a garden railroad. These trains have been a lifelong passion for my Dad so I'm sure he'd enjoy helping out where he can. ... If there's space for him to assist please let me know how he can get in touch with you. ... Thanks! .. Cheers, Rowwie McKeown
- from Dave: Hi guys ... I was thinking about an 8 foot by 20 foot oval track supported entirely by plexiglass for max visibility. .. Bottom 8 inch wide strip using 1/4 inch plexiglas with 4 inch high sides made from 1/8 inch plexiglas, glued and pinned. ... It would be like looking up at a train on a high trestle from below. ... It would take one 4x8 sheet of each thickness, about \$600
- From Geoff: Dave ... Straight track is available for \$10.00 a foot from Burnaby. This LGB track - good quality. May be used. Also, on my walk in the woods this afternoon I got thinking about the layout. I think it would be a good idea on the long straight away at the back, to have a siding connected with a switch at both ends to the main track. This way we could leave a train or two ready to go and also on display. I have two bridges I can donate. I'll bring them on Saturday to show them to you.
- From Leif: Hi all, A bit of an update from some recent conversations, maybe something to keep the interest up. ... I have this Howe truss bridge I built a bit ago for the society (see picture

although not all components are present), all it needs is rail and then can be used. I could just remove the ties from some pre-fab track but would prefer if someone has any rail or scrap G gauge track they can spare. Length of bridge is 41in (82 linear inches), I can also splice together several pieces if necessary too. Let me know. I was going to bring this to our work session this weekend with a couple 2x 2 supports so we could see how it looked but got tied up with a few other things, I thought this could go in one of the 4 foot sections along the side. .. Dan mentioned it would be nice to get the G gauge train going for Santa train, not sure of funds but we may have a bit available to purchase some equipment either new or used:- loop of track preferably with 8 ft diameter (or extra flex track)- powerpack (run off battery or extension cord)- loco and several cars (although members could run their own, would be nice for the society to have our own so something is always available). Even a four-wheel loco with whatever cars we can pick up cheap, does not have to be logging-related and then could expand later- at least 36 feet of straight track (I have usually seen flex track sold in 6-foot lengths but others may know better), shipping costs could be problem depending on lengths...

Base/supports:- 2x2 wood or angle iron, bolted onto the bottom of the existing joists, either would be quick and easy. My preference is wood as I mainly work with wood but angle iron would be less visible and probably more secure; I am not sure of the price difference.- plywood or 1-by material for a base and then screwed/bolted to supports. Corners may take a bit of extra planning or work, once we know the curve diameter I can work on this- plexiglass along front to hold derailments- in my plan I put the track centreline 6" away from the joists but we could go closer, min 5" width is needed for clearance for trains so we could use 1x6s and depending on the gap maybe a 1x4 along the back to prevent trains falling the other way.- even though it is covered we may want to paint/seal/varnish any wood to help prevent warping.... I am more than willing to help out or do a lot of the work related to installation. My main limitation is I am not being aware of suppliers, my G gauge equipment came from Art Knapp in Surrey or from train shows. It has been ten years since I was last at Art Knapp, not sure if they still sell trains, could not see any reference online. And unfortunately my favourite hobby shop (Central Hobbies) recently closed, there is a group that has started a new store at a new location (Inter-City Hobbies and Trains), still waiting for the online store to open but will need to see what they stock. Although I would like to, I am not planning to attend any of the train shows this fall/winter, not sure if anyone has friends/contacts that could help us out with train supplies or spread the word?The roof of the station will help protect the track from the elements, my biggest concern would be squirrels or birds using the base for a nest. Is this something we need to worry about or maybe deal with it if something occurs?.... Not sure if we want to come up with a budget to give us something to work with?... Will also see what I come up with as I scratch build some cars