

A Brief History

When garden railroading began to gain momentum in the early 1980s, it was only natural that clubs and societies would form across the United States. Shortly after the publication of a magazine called *Garden Railways*, (which had grown from a local newsletter in Denver, CO), hobbyists in the Washington, Virginia, and Maryland area began to band together. Many of these founding members met each other through attending small conventions devoted to the new hobby.

During the 1980s, the Washington Virginia Maryland Garden Railway Society (WVMGRS) was a loosely formed group who had the common interest of gardening and Large Scale trains. As the years progressed, the WVMGRS formed a more formal organization with a constitution and bylaws, and in the December 1987 edition of *Garden Railways* magazine, the initial seven Garden Railway Societies were listed, including the WVMGRS.

The years that followed for the hobby and the Society moved at a fast and furious pace. Manufacturers were jumping into the large scale outdoor railway business as news of this fun and exciting family oriented hobby spread.

Large Scale is also called "G" Gauge or Gauge 1. The track is designed to enable it to be left permanently in the garden — year 'round.

In 1992, the Society was officially incorporated as a Non-profit Organization in the State of Maryland. The membership now stands at approximately 120 individual or family memberships.

Creating Public Displays

During the formative years of the Society, public displays at nurseries and train shows were the basic tool for recruiting new members. The WVMGRS won awards for garden railroading

displays and continued to grow. The Society started putting on displays at other venues.

In 1990, the club became involved with the Fairfax Station Museum through a longtime member who is both a board member of the museum and as well as the show chairman for WVMGRS. The museum hosts an "all scales" train show the first weekend in December every year, now in its 17th year. This show is a major fund raiser for the Fairfax museum.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Society put together displays at US Botanical Garden in Washington, DC. The last display created by WVMGRS at the Botanical Gardens was in 2003.

Beginning in 2005, the WVMGRS joined with Brookside Gardens to annually put on a holiday garden and railroad display. This display has quickly become a favorite of several thousand visitors each year, who also go to the gardens to see the "Garden of Lights."

The display at Brookside Gardens takes the Society approximately one week to create. It is the combined effort of dozens of its members. Brookside adds the trees, shrubs, and flowers to make this display a great place to visit. Last year, when a wedding was held at Brookside, the bride and groom chose the bridge overlooking the garden railroad display for some photo shoots.

Other Society Activities

To foster club camaraderie, the WVMGRS regularly schedules field trips. Recent travels have included a weekend in Strasburg, PA, joining the Shenandoah and Potomac Valley Garden Railway Club as guests at their annual picnic, and a ride on the Walkersville Southern Railroad.

Membership

Membership in the Society is open to everyone. There is a nice balance between members who

are gardeners (a few of which are professionally active in gardening), and those members that are railroad enthusiasts first and foremost. Many husband and wife teams are members.

The Society's monthly meetings are held at members' homes during good weather and at public meeting halls during the cold weather months. Meetings generally alternate between Virginia and Maryland, and also alternate between Saturday and Sunday.

The Society is a great way to learn more about gardening for railroads as well as railroads for gardens. At each meeting there is at least one demonstration for members to enjoy and take away something that could benefit their own interests. Recent topics have ranged from the types of plantings that work best with a garden railroad in our climate to "Rockery 101" to radio-controlled battery operated locomotives.

Through the years, the Society has developed many traditions. The Society puts on approximately a dozen shows each year open to the general public. Many members look forward to participating in the construction of these layouts. The layout coordinators change from show to show resulting in no two layouts being identical. Most of the demonstration layouts include a variety plantings, one or more mountains, ponds, and working waterfalls.

WVMGRS is one of the largest and oldest Garden Railway Societies. If you are interested in checking out one of our meetings, please contact the Membership Chair, at membership@wvmgrs.org.

Visit us on the Internet
www.wvmgrs.org

Check one box and circle amount enclosed:

- Individual: \$20 \$15 \$10 \$25
 Family: \$30 \$22 \$15 \$37

Name _____

Spouse _____

Children _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Telephone Home () _____

Work () _____

Can you access the web to view our newsletters
and other information? Y N

Newsletters are posted on the members' only link
on our web. Please provide email address so you
can be notified when they are posted:

Your interests: _____

Are you a model railroader? Y N

If Yes, What Scale(s) Do You Model?

Do you have a garden railway? Y N
What is the name of your railroad?

Are you willing to help with any of these?

Club Displays	Y	N
Hosting a Meeting	Y	N
Giving a Workshop	Y	N

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WVMGRS MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership in the Society is open to everyone. The Society's monthly meetings are held at members' homes during good weather, and at public meeting halls during the cold weather months. It is the Society's intent to alternate meeting places between Virginia and Maryland areas. Meetings also alternate between Saturday and Sunday, allowing for the varied schedules of our members.

All are invited to bring trains, track, and rolling stock to all General Membership meetings. Ideas for the hobby are presented at the meetings via demonstrations, slide shows, videotapes, and workshops. The interests of our members are diverse and include live steam, scratch building, track laying, and all forms of gardening. Most members operate on Gauge 1 track but all gauges and scales are welcome in the society. Business meetings are also held and all voting members are welcome to attend these meetings.

Membership dues are \$20 per individual membership per calendar year, or \$30 per family membership per calendar year. A family membership includes 2 adult voting members and / or 2 children over the age of 18. The renewal of dues should be paid by December 31 of each year. Dues are prorated depending on the month of the year you join.

Membership	Jan/Mar	Apr/Jun	Jul/Sep	Oct/Dec
Individual:	\$20	\$15	\$10	\$25
Family:	\$30	\$22	\$15	\$37

Note: Oct/Dec dues cover following year's membership. Checks may be made payable to: WVMGRS, and sent to the Membership Chair's address. Dues pay for the club newsletter and other functional expenses. If members are unable to receive the newsletter via email in full color, a black and white copy will be sent via regular mail.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Sue Schmaltz
7601 Bear Forest Road
Hanover, MD 21076
Email: membership@wvmgrs.org



*An
Invitation
To
Join*

**The Washington,
Virginia & Maryland
Garden Railway Society**

Incorporated May 29, 1991
501(C) (3) Tax Exempt Status July 2, 1992