

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a garden railroad?

A garden railroad may be a railroad running through a landscape that emphasizes the plants, or it may be a simulation of a place with the emphasis on buildings, people, etc. It can authentically display a given place or period of time in railroad history, it could be whimsical demonstrating your imagination or a combination of both. Individuals may “scratch build” items, assemble kits, “kit-bash” them (take a commercial product and modify it to suit your own needs) or purchase items and use them “as is.”

Layouts can be powered by track power, battery power, radio control, or live steam. Because we live in the desert, TGRS stresses low water usage.

How much space do I need?

You can build a garden railroad in a townhouse courtyard or on a large lot. Some members have also built a layout suspended from the ceiling in a room of their house.

How much do the models cost?

A starter set may be purchased for as little as \$170.00. From there, the costs go up to as much as you want to spend. The largest investments are in track and locomotives. Costs of buildings and landscaping are largely dictated by personal tastes.

Where can I find the supplies that I need?

Hobby Shops that carry Garden Railway supplies are hard to find in Tucson. The Ace Hardware Store on 22nd St. at Kolb Rd. has a section called The Hobby Place which carries some Garden Railway supplies.

Many of our members obtain supplies from mail order businesses (you will find a comprehensive list of them in the Garden Railways Magazine). Our own web site also offers links to several manufacturers and suppliers of all types of products.

What is the Tucson Garden Railway Society?

TGRS is a club dedicated to modeling large scale railroads. We have about 70 family members, not all of whom have garden railroads. TGRS is a 501(C)(3) nonprofit corporation.

What is it's purpose?

The purpose of TGRS is to educate the public about large scale model railroading. This includes, but is not limited to demonstrating,, building and operating large scale layouts. It also includes conducting classes or seminars and provides displays at non TGRS functions such as Home shows and the Pima County Fair. Each spring we hold the Rails in the Garden Tour of eight of our members' layouts.

How much does it cost to join?

Annual dues are \$30.00, include 2 name badges and are due on July 1 each year. New members joining July thru December are charged prorated dues (\$2.50/month) thru the end of the fiscal year (June 30). New members joining January thru May are charged prorated dues (\$2.50/month) thru the end of the fiscal year (June 30) plus the full annual membership dues for the following year.

When and where do we meet?

The club meets monthly on Saturdays at members homes, except for December when we have our annual holiday luncheon. Other exceptions are months, such as April when we have a large display during the Pima County Fair and in June and January when we display at the Home show.

What's in it for me?

The question should be, "What's in it for us?" Garden railroading is a family hobby. Active in our club are whole families - Husbands and wives and their children. Because a garden railroad involves gardening, a railroad, buildings, scenes, people, etc. more than one person can contribute. Garden Railroading can involve many different facets.

Where do I find information about garden railroading?

Here are a few sources . . .

BOOKS

Beginner's guide to Large Scale Model Railroading

Mark Horovitz and Russell Larson

Greenberg Books

Kalmbach Publishing Co.

21027 Crossroads Circle

Waukesha, WI 53187-0986

The Large Scale Model Railroading Handbook

Robert Schleicher

Chilton Book Co.

Radnor, PA

MAGAZINES

Finescale Railroader

Published semiannually by Westlake Publishing Co.

Westlake Village, CA 91361

Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette

Published bimonthly by Benchmark Publications, Inc.

800 W. El Camino Real, Suite 180

Mountain View, CA 94040