

ALL ABOARD!

Peninsula gathers steam for railroad event

BY PATRICK WEBB

Trains don't run on the Long Beach Peninsula anymore — except for tiny ones, that is.

On Saturday and Sunday, train enthusiasts will celebrate Clamshell Railroad Days, an annual event highlighting model trains and local railroad history.

The event takes place at the Columbia Pacific Heritage Museum, which reopened earlier this month.

'A hobby'

The weekend event is pleasurable work for members of the Peninsula Model Railroad Club, who relax around miniature railroad layouts in their homes year-round. Members carefully pack up their modular designs to share with similar enthusiasts at shows in Puyallup, Washington, and Monroe, Washington.

All the club's members channel their love for real trains into a devotion to model versions.

Mark Clemmens of Oysterville is the group's secretary-treasurer.

"I had HO-gauge trains when I was in junior high, like a lot of kids," he said. "We would have a piece of 4' by 8' plywood with a track in a circle."

The hobby was put on hold during his 31-year career sailboat racing in Seattle. When he moved to the peninsula, he worked with volunteers in Astoria restoring a real locomotive, then joined the model club.

"It's a hobby," he said. "Some people

If You Go

Clamshell Railroad Days

10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday and Sunday

Columbia Pacific Heritage Museum, 115 S.E. Lake St., Ilwaco, Washington

Admission costs \$5 and is valid both days; children under 12 get in free

enjoy the modeling. I enjoy the electrics, the wiring, and a little bit of the scenery and laying track."

Model train enthusiasts divide into groups who prefer differently sized railroad lines (called gauges, usually with a letter like

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Photos by Patrick Webb

Model railroad enthusiasts share similar enthusiasm for their hobby, but they split into different groups who favor a certain gauge rail. This determines the size of the trains, carriages and buildings.



Meticulous detail is required to determine the scale and appearance of buildings, including train stations, depots and foliage surrounding the railroad lines.

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