



2020 National Garden Railway Convention

Nashville, Tennessee

May 31 to June 6, 2020

Welcome to the third 2020 NGRC newsletter. In less than six months the Nashville Garden Railway Society will be welcoming our friends and guests to the 36th National Garden Railway Convention. The committee is working hard to finalize plans for the convention.

In this newsletter we are providing updates on registrations and announcing two special guests performing at the Convention banquet on Friday June 5th. Many people who registered early have purchased tickets for some of the optional activities we have lined up for you and your family to enjoy during the afternoons and evenings. Additional information about these activities are included in this newsletter. In the second newsletter we presented historical information about the Kentucky Railroad Museum we will visit on Monday June 1st. In this newsletter we will present information about a special stop on the Wednesday tour, the Tennessee Central Railroad Museum where the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis steam locomotive 576 is being restored into full working order by the Nashville Steam Preservation Society.

Registration

Nearly 40% of the block of rooms being held for the National Garden Railroad Convention at the Opryland Hotel and Resort have been booked as of December 1st. The first 200 individuals or families that book and stay five nights at the Opryland Hotel will receive absolutely free one (1) official convention hopper car being produced for the convention by PIKO. The graphics on this car is simply amazing. The cars are now in production in Germany and we anticipate they will arrive in the US in late January or early February 2020. A picture of the actual car will be published shortly after we receive the shipment. There are still about 100 free cars available, so book your hotel rooms early and join us at the 36th Garden Railways Convention. On-line registration can be entered at the official convention website: www.NGRC2020.com or via Facebook at: 2020 National Garden Railway Convention – Nashville. **Registration fees increase on February 1, 2020 to \$100 for individuals and \$145 for families. Save yourself a little**

money by registering before February 1st. For those driving to the convention and staying at the Opryland Hotel and Resort, we have negotiated a reduced parking fee of \$10 per day.

BBQ at Wild Horse Saloon

Many people have registered for the June 4th Convention BBQ at the Wild Horse Saloon in downtown Nashville. Seating capacity is limited to 275 people due to fire codes for the venue. BBQ tickets are selling fast, so don't delay in purchasing your tickets. Once 275 tickets are sold, we will close the registrations for the BBQ. The shuttle bus going from the Opryland Hotel to the Wild Horse Saloon will not be able to stop directly in front of the Wild Horse as we intended due to several streets in downtown Nashville being closed for CMA Fest which starts on June 4th. The shuttle buses will drop off and pick up guests at Bridgestone Area which is about a four block walk to the Wild Horse. During the walk to the Wild Horse you might see and hear a famous country music star performing on one of the many stages set up on lower Broadway Street.

Banquet

The Nashville Garden Railway Society is pleased to announce that Ms. Irlene Mandrell will be performing during the banquet on Friday June 5th. Ms. Mandrell and her husband also are planning on joining us on the train excursion on Monday June 1st. In addition, another special guest performing at the banquet is the renowned 12 South Band. They perform across the country for many big events. The 12 South Band variety show will include many songs and dances. This will be a special opportunity to enjoy what Nashville is famous for country music.

Each individual or family that stays a minimum of five nights at the Oryland Hotel and Resort and attends the banquet will receive one (1) ticket for an opportunity to win one of three USA Trains SD70 MAC diesel locomotives that have been custom painted in the CSX "Spirit of Nashville" livery. In addition, there will be a fourth USA Trains SD70MAC "Spirit of Nashville" CSX diesel given to a lucky person attending the banquet. Tickets for the raffle for the fourth "Spirit of Nashville" locomotive can be purchased at the Convention Store in the Vendor Hall.

Clinics

The clinics and featured speakers are nearly finalized. Many of the speakers are well recognized names in the hobby with a wealth of knowledge and experience in their area of expertise. The clinic topics and schedule are available on the Convention website: www.NGRC2020.com.

Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Steam Locomotive 576



One of the stops on the layout tour on Wednesday June 3rd is at the Tennessee Central Railroad Museum in Nashville. The museum is a volunteer, non-profit organization with a mission to preserve, restore, interpret and operate historic railroad equipment and to inform visitors about the contribution railroads made to the growth of the United States. On display are F7A, F7B, and E8 locomotives which are often used to pull scheduled excursion trains. Other locomotives on static display include a GP7, GP10, SW1, and SW8. There are numerous passenger cars in the yards along with boxcars, a flatcar and seven cabooses.

The Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis (NC&StL) 576 locomotive was built by American Locomotive Company and was delivered to the NC&StL Railroad in August 1942. The locomotive is a 4-8-4 standard gauge J-3 class locomotive used for hauling heavy freight loads and pull express trains during the World War II years. The NC&StL railroad owned 11 of these J-3 class locomotives all of which have been scrapped except for 576. The locomotive was donated to the City of Nashville on September 2nd, 1953, where the locomotive was on static display at Centennial Park in Nashville for 66 years. By October 2018 the Nashville Steam Preservation Society had raised \$500,000 to transport the locomotive out of Centennial Park to a nearby facility to start a restoration project. On January 13, 2019, NC&StL 576 was moved from its location in Centennial Park, through downtown Nashville on Charlotte Ave. to the Tennessee Central Railroad Museum, where it will be fully restored into working order for future use pulling excursion trains. The budget for restoring the locomotive is \$2 million. This link explains more about the restoration project and shows footage of moving the locomotive through the streets of downtown Nashville: <http://www.nashvillesteam.org/>.

Grand Ole Opry and Back Stage Opry Tour

When one thinks of Nashville, TN one thinks of country music and the world-famous Grand Ole Opry. The Grand Ole Opry started on November 28, 1925 as a one-hour radio “barn dance” on radio station WSM AM. The history of the Grand Ole Opry is rich with many legends in country music having performed on the shows over the years. Today, the Grand Opry Show is the longest continuous running radio show in history. Even when downtown Nashville and the Opry House were flooded in May 2010, the members of the Grand Ole Opry decided the streak of continuous

performances would not end. Weekly shows were performed at the Ryman Auditorium, Nashville Municipal Auditorium, Allen Arena at Lipscomb University and even Two Rivers Baptist Church. Much of the first-floor seating, the entire stage and backstage areas were totally under water. It took most of the summer to clean up the damage and restore the Opry House. On September 28, 2010 the Grand Ole Opry returned to its home.

The Convention Organizing Committee has negotiated at a reduced ticket price, a block of 250 seats on the main floor and a 100-seat block in the balcony for the Tuesday night June 2nd performance of the Grand Ole Opry. Nearly 100 tickets for the main floor seating already have been sold. If you enjoy country music and attending a performance at the Grand Ole Opry is on your bucket list, you don't want to miss this opportunity. You won't be disappointed. The names of the performers scheduled for the show will be announced on the Opry website (www.opry.com) about 7 to 10 days in advance of the performance. Any unused tickets in our blocks will be released to the Opry for general sales to the public in early May. If you want to attend a performance at the Grand Ole Opry, register early because once the tickets in our block are gone, they are gone.

Due to circumstances beyond our control, the backstage tour of the Grand Ole Opry House has been rescheduled from Wednesday June 3rd to 1:00 PM on Friday June 5th, and 10:30 AM or 1:30 PM on Saturday June 6th. A block of 100 tickets are reserved for the 1:00 PM tour on Friday June 5th and two 50 ticket blocks reserved for the June 6th tours. This is your opportunity for an exclusive look at what happens behind the scenes during a live performance of the Grand Ole Opry. The tour guides will share stories about the history of the Opry and the country music greats who have performed on that famous stage. You may get to stand on the famous wood circle at the center of the stage that was brought over from the stage at the Ryman Auditorium when the current Opry House was built. Tickets for both of these optional activities may be purchased on the National Garden Railway Convention website (www.NGRC2020.com) when you register for the convention.

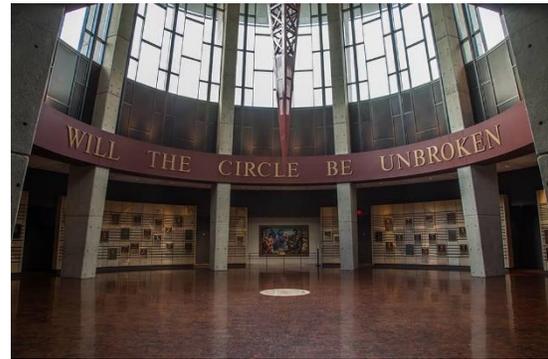
General Jackson Showboat



Another famous Nashville attraction is a trip along the Cumberland River from the Opryland Hotel and Resort to downtown Nashville on the General Jackson riverboat. During the 2.5-hour

trip, at a cruise speed of 5 to 8 miles per hour, you will enjoy a lunch during the daytime trip or dinner during the evening trip along with live entertainment. The riverboat is 274 feet long and stands 55 feet in height. The paddlewheel on the boat is 36 feet in length and 24 feet in diameter. There are four decks and a large theater. Capacity of the boat is 1035 people and a staff of 135. The riverboat trips are available as a daytime trip on Tuesday June 2nd and a daytime or evening trip on Wednesday June 3rd. We have a block of 20 tickets reserved for the daytime trip on June 2nd, a 50-ticket block for the daytime trip on June 3rd and a 150-ticket block reserved for the evening trip on June 3rd. A word of caution, **if you plan on riding the buses to the tours on Tuesday or Wednesday, the buses will not return to the Opryland Hotel and Resort in time to board the riverboat for the daytime trips on either day**, so plan accordingly.

Country Music Hall of Fame



On Friday June 5th, there are four opportunities to catch a shuttle bus from the Opryland Hotel and Resort to downtown Nashville to visit the Country Music Hall of Fame. Departure times are 9:00 am, 10:30 am, 12:30 pm and 1:45 pm. Each trip will allow you about 3 ¼ hours to tour the Country Music Hall of Fame. The museum has in its collection over 800 stage costumes worn by some of country music's biggest stars and over 600 instruments, including a harmonica used by country music's first African-American star, DeFord Baily, Jimmie Rodger's 1928 Weymann guitar, the autoharp played by Sara Carter at the Carter Family's first recording session in 1927, Les Paul's 1941 experimental log electric guitar, and the four-necked steel guitar played on stage by Barbara Mandrell when she was a little girl. The stock car Marty Robbins drove on the race track at the Nashville Fairgrounds is also on display. For any country music fan, this is a must see visit while in "Music City".

Jack Daniels Distillery Tour



A tour of the Jack Daniels distillery has been arranged for Friday June 5th. The distillery can only accommodate 110 people on the tour. Once 110 tickets are sold, registrations for this activity will be closed. There is about a 1.5-hour bus ride from the Opryland Hotel and Resort to Lynchburg, TN. The tour guide will lead you through the distillery and explain the old-time Tennessee whiskey making process. At the end of the tour there will be a stop at the historic Barrel House 1-14. Here there will be a flight of five different Jack Daniels whiskeys to sample. Must be 18+ years old to take the tour and 21+ years old to sample the Jack Daniels products. A valid photo id is required.

