



BULLETIN BOARD

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ABOVE: It is a busy time at the East Staging yard on Scott Calvert's second CPR Boundary Subdivision HO layout in this RMMBC 2019 photo. 7th Division Superintendent, John M (right), coaches Denise T on the nuances of the CVP throttles, while Rick C (centre) verifies his orders before departing. Left of Rick, yardmaster Rob H is getting ready to receive an inbound train. Scott's article on the 20th anniversary of Operating Sessions associated with TRAINS, RMMBC and VanRail starts on page 5.

Photo by Scott Calvert

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From the Editor's Desk

I hope that all of you have had an enjoyable holiday season and are now getting back to railway modelling. To help with that, have a browse through the articles in this issue.

The lead article is Scott Calvert's review of the twenty years of operating sessions held at 7th Division meets. As many of you will know, Scott has been heavily involved in organizing those sessions and is very well qualified to write about them. He has also provided a great selection of photos showing modellers enjoying the sessions.

We also have a light-hearted article from John Geddes on his experiences as a railway modeller, containing numerous items we can all identify with. As well as John Martin's regular Superintendent's column, there is a message from Lori Sebelley on the 2024 PNR convention that the 7th Division is responsible for, an update on the upcoming Railway Modellers Meet of BC (RMMBC) meet that will be happening in May, and an obituary for Bob Flegel, a long-time modeller from the Kootenays.

Finally, I want to make my usual plea for articles and other input from you, the reader.

- Do you have a modelling project you are proud of, or a modelling technique you could share with others?
- Have you gathered some prototype information that may interest others, or been on an interesting railfanning trip lately?
- Would you like to show others your layout or maybe your buddy's layout?

All of these things can make excellent articles. How about sharing with your fellow modellers? Don't worry about producing something beautiful or elaborate. I can help you make your writing, or even just your notes, into something that will work in the Bulletin Board. Give it a try.

Enjoy the issue!

Superintendent's Message

By John Martin, 7th Division Superintendent

On behalf of all of us in the 7th Division, I wish you and your family a very Happy New Year in 2021. We hope Santa brought you some toys for your layout and that you've been able to translate the COVID-19 restrictions into some extra time for model railroading.

The dismal past year has been summarized by writers far more competent than I. During my 40 years of being a pin-cushion in the military and the airline business, I would never have imagined in my wildest dreams that I would be looking forward so desperately to getting yet another vaccination. These are strange times indeed.

We are all looking forward to much better days ahead, although we've apparently got a few more months to endure – so why not tackle a model railroading project this month? There is an enormous amount of expertise and assistance available to you as an NMRA member and you should take advantage of it.

The year end is a good time to mention all the people who help keep things running within our organization. Their names are posted on our website at <http://7divpnr.ca/node/543>. They work without fanfare, but a word of thanks from you is always appreciated. They are a wonderful group!

Despite the coronavirus and its restrictions, dedicated volunteers have been meeting regularly to plan the next Railway Modellers Meet of BC (RMMBC). Major announcements regarding the event and a guest speaker are coming soon. It would be terrific if every one of our 320+ members found time to take part in what will be another excellent “virtual” presentation.

The upside to recent events has been our exposure to the marvellous new platforms that will enable us to involve every one of you in future Modellers Meets. Long range plans include ways to deliver a video

streaming component to conventional “in-person” events, so that all members can attend and participate either physically or virtually. Long trips from the Island or the Interior are no longer the only way for you to enjoy a “Meet”.

On a similar topic, we are pleased to announce that Lori Sebelley has kindly offered to serve as “Chair” for our hosting of the 2024 Pacific Northwest Region (PNR) Convention. It seems a long way off, but she has already begun assessing venues and recruiting volunteers. Please give her a hand if she happens to call you. The task is monumental but it’s also surprisingly enjoyable when enough enthusiastic volunteers step up.

Finally, I hope you will occasionally peek at our website at <http://7divpnr.ca/>. Upcoming events are featured, and past issues of the Bulletin Board are available, plus lots more. Inspiration for your own layout is just a mouse click away.

Happy New Year,

John Martin
Superintendent

PNR 2024 Convention

by Lori Sebelley

Hello all, I would like to introduce myself as some of you may not know me. For those of you that do, I hope you will still take a couple minutes to read this.

My name is Lori Sebelley, and yes, I am the better half of Larry. I have been asked to be the Chairperson for the 7th Division’s turn hosting the Pacific Northwest Region Convention in 2024. Thank you, John Martin, for putting your trust in me to execute another successful event. I hope to do you proud.

Now some of you may be thinking, what does she know about heading a Convention. I was on the PNR Convention committee in 2008 Chilliwack and again in 2016 Salmon Arm when the Division was host. I was a committee member on the 6th Division in 2019 where the Convention was held in Cranbrook. I am also PNR Registrar to assist any Division that may wish help.

For me, Model Railroading truly started in 2000 when Larry came home one day and asked if I would like to go to a Spring meet hosted by the Salmon Arm Model Railway Club. From the moment we walked in the door, we were welcomed and made to feel like long lost friends. I thought “wow, this is special, and I would not mind being a part of this camaraderie.” Hence when we returned home, we bought a Woodland Scenics Learning Scenery kit and built the small diorama. Well, that went well, maybe we should tackle something bigger and the CP Water Stop diorama idea was planned. Helping with the concept, story and scenery was fun, but the best part was getting my hands mucky in the plaster.

From there, we joined the Chilliwack Model Railway Club, built two N scale modules, and attended train shows with the club layout. What a blast talking to people and sharing how things were built. A layout that goes round and round was a great way to get our feet wet, but Free-mo had an interesting concept, and to be able to join modules with others from wherever, well that needed to be researched further. An HO scale Free-mo division of the club was born and modules began to be built. In 2011 Coldsnap Free-mo was born with 10 members branching off. I am a member and enjoy attending public shows and talking with visitors. I love coming up with module story ideas.

Over the next three years members of the 7th Division will be planning this Convention. The location of the Convention is yet to be determined but will likely be somewhere in the Lower Mainland. I hope to begin getting the committee in place early in 2021 so we can get started with preliminary ideas. There are members that I know would be great to fill lead positions and I hope that when I call on them, they agree. If any of you reading

this would love to come onboard and assist, please feel free to contact me, we need volunteers.

PNR2024Chair@outlook.com

RMMBC Update

by Marc Simpson, RMMBC Promotions

Planning for the Railway Modellers Meet of British Columbia (RMMBC) 2021 is well underway. While we are hopeful that we will be able to resume the in-person meet, the committee is also aware that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may prevent the in-person portion of the meet from happening. But we won't let something like that keep us from enjoying everything the hobby has to offer us.

As such we are working on a two pronged approach: keeping the door open to an in-person meet but also planning for an online meet similar to the May 2020 event. The 2020 online RMMBC was a resounding success and was very well received by the virtual registrants. We hope to continue and expand the success of the previous online meet.

The 2021 online event will have many of the things you enjoy from the RMMBC: a keynote presentation, numerous clinics on a wide range of subjects and the heart of the event; the model display and "Meet the Modeller". We are also looking at ways to present other aspects of the in person meet, but these are still in the early stages. Stay tuned for more developments on this front in the New Year.

The 2021 RMMBC will be a "must see" event. We'll keep everyone updated as things progress; there is much more to come! We'll "see" you at the meet!



Photo by Marc Simpson



Twenty Years of Operating Sessions at 7th Division Meets

By Scott Calvert

Twenty years ago a small group of 7th division PNR and Canadian Pacific Historical Association members decided, for the first time ever, to offer some operating sessions to registered attendees as part of a local Greater Vancouver area divisional meet. It was at the **Trains** meet in November 2001, which was a larger than normal meet including the CP and CN Special Interest Groups. These initial sessions were only hosted by a couple of layouts.

Since 2001, guest sessions have been included as part of almost every lower mainland **Trains/RMMBC** show. Operating sessions in recent 7th Division meets typically “sell out” regularly with wait lists, and are often attended by folks from all over the Pacific Northwest. We also offered a special set of operations sessions as part of a special excursion trip to Vancouver by attendees of the 2004 NMRA National Convention held in Seattle.

In addition, the local **VanRail** biennial operations weekend began in 2007 and was hosted by many of the same group of layout owners. Since its inaugural meet, **VanRail** has grown into the largest model railroad operations event in Canada and is attended by enthusiasts from all over North America.

Who would have thought that these initial efforts would grow into such a substantial and dedicated model railroad operations host group here in the 7th Division? Credit is due to these hosts and their respective helper crews for creating operating sessions that are inclusive, enjoyable and not intimidating to folks with little or no experience. We have even hosted Time Table & Train Order (TT&TO) learning sessions where participants had the opportunity to learn from actual railroad experts on how this method of prototype operations actually worked.

Model railroad operations are one of the most popular aspects of the hobby, and have been growing constantly over many decades. Operations events are hosted all across North America, and are typically included with all NMRA National conventions and many Regional and Divisional meets as well. Often local members of the Operations Special Interest Group organize these sessions in conjunction with the organizing committees. The 7th Division has one of the most extensive and successful layout operating session offerings in Canada.

Although the majority of model railroad operating layouts were located in the lower mainland in the early years, operations based layouts now exist throughout British Columbia in communities such as: Okanagan, Vancouver Island, Kootenays and the Sunshine Coast. As the group continues to be active and grow, new layouts are being developed and will get included in future offerings.

Attendees who participate in these sessions gain an opportunity to see model railroads close up and meet their owners in small and personal gatherings. This affords them the chance to ask questions, seek advice, or simply have a good time operating a well-crafted model railroad layout. The feedback we receive every year tells us that the camaraderie at these sessions is often the #1 benefit folks feel they offer.

For those that love statistics, here are a few related to the years that **Trains/RMMBC** and **VanRail** operating sessions that have been held:

- 236 individual layout sessions have been hosted.
- Approximately 1400 people have enjoyed participating in these sessions.
- The earliest events had one or two participating layouts, whereas current events have had as many as twelve layouts.
- The number of attendees has grown from roughly 10, to as high as 62 over the years.

As we all continue to endure the challenges of COVID-19 and the associated restrictions, it is our sincere hope that we will be resuming Operating Sessions in earnest later in 2021, when many of us will be able to return to participating in one of the most popular aspects of the World’s Greatest Hobby.

Here are a few web site links for you to enjoy. Within them, there are photos, write-ups and other operations related information if you are interested:

- 7th Division Layout Page: <http://7divpnr.ca/node/58>
- Operations Special Interest Group: <https://www.opsig.org/>
- VanRail Operating Event: <http://www.vanrail.ca/>

And so, on behalf of the 7th Division model railroad community, I would like to recognize all the layout owners who have graciously hosted these sessions over these years: Jim Brown, Scott Calvert, Mike Chandler, Anthony Craig, John Green, Brian Clogg, Mark Dance, Colin Dover, Doug Hicks, Gary Hinshaw, Tim Horton, Al Lill, Greg Madsen, Gordon Mitchell, Brian Morgan, Brian Pate, Carl Sparks, Steve Stark, Dick Sutcliffe, and John Walter.



LEFT: In what was the first official operating session as part of a 7th Division Trains meet in 2001, we see conductor Ken R (right) and engineman the late Brian F planning their switching moves in Castlegar on Scott Calvert's first CPR Boundary Sub HO layout. This layout was demolished in 2011.

Photo by Scott Calvert

RIGHT: In 2004, several 7th Division layouts hosted attendees from the Seattle NMRA National convention for special operating sessions throughout greater Vancouver. Here we see the entire evening team of host crew and guests posed behind the Selkirk yard on Brian Morgan's previous Burlington Northern N scale layout.

Photo by Brian Morgan





ABOVE: Glenn M and the late Dave H work Aurora yard in a 2007 operating session on Mike Chandlers proto-freelanced Western Midland HO layout.

Photo by Mike Chandler.



ABOVE: Visiting guest Dan T from Arizona is enjoying switching duties in Sicamous yard on Brian Pate's former HO/HOn3 layout during a VanRail 2009 session. This fictitious dual gauge yard was a busy interchange location between the CPR and the Klondike Mines RR.

Photographer unknown.



ABOVE: Engineer Pete S is preparing to complete some local switching in Duncan while awaiting the arrival of Train Number 52 from Wellcox yard on Steve Stark's former N scale E&N railroad layout during Trains 2009 Operating Sessions.

Photographer unknown.



LEFT: Guest engineer Jim P (left) and host Carl Sparks take a break during a VanRail 2009 operating session on Carl's freelanced Seymour Valley Logging and Railroad Company. One of the signature scenes on Carl's layout is the active forest fire seen on the far right of the photo.

Photographer unknown.

RIGHT: During a Trains 2013 Op Session on Brian Clogg's Capilano Western RR (CWR), Squamish yardmaster Al L (left) is enjoying a rare quiet moment while Ken R. is setting his throttle in preparation for the departure from the yard with a southbound through freight destined for Vancouver.

Photo by Brian Clogg



LEFT: Marc S runs the challenging Kraft Switcher job on the N scale Columbia & Western during Trains 2014. It can often take a guest operator a full 3 hour session to finish this run which includes lifting and spotting 30+ cars in each direction. Here Marc is lifting box cars of pulp from the Celgar Kraft mill west of Castlegar. These loads will make their way up Kootenay River to the division point yard at Nelson and from there east through Cranbrook to a Rayon plant in Alberta.

Photo by Mark Dance



LEFT: Visiting crew members conductor Bill J works with engineer Jim T to switch out cars from incoming train Number 586, and will soon load some cars onto the Canora car ship destined for Vancouver on Al Lill's layout during a VanRail 2017 session. This is an HO switching layout based on the CN prototype in Victoria, BC.

Photo by Al Lill

RIGHT: There is a lot happening during an RMMBC 2019 operating session on John Green's Coquihalla Valley RR. Engineman Rob H on Number 79 signs the train register at Brodie Wye before departing for Coquihalla to meet Number 80 with engineman Jim G who is chatting with Coquihalla Operator Graham S on the upper left side of the photo. In the distance at Iago, Engineman Bruce W brings the loaded Juliet Logger downhill, while father and son Nelson G and Joshua G switch at Portia.

Photo by John Green.



“My Name is John and I’m a Model Railroader”

by John Geddes

I admit that it has taken me years to get comfortable acknowledging that I'm a model railroader. Recently, a friend asked me "What's the attraction of model railroading?" At the time, I didn't have a good answer. That is, I didn't have a complete answer. Since then, I have been planning and beginning the construction of my fourth layout, and as I have progressed along this journey, the question has stuck with me.

In the past, I think I kept my secret because assumed that others would think “I played with trains” – that I was stuck in a childhood fantasy.

The dictionary defines “play” as an activity that is undertaken purely for enjoyment or amusement and has no other objective. Psychologists take this further and define:

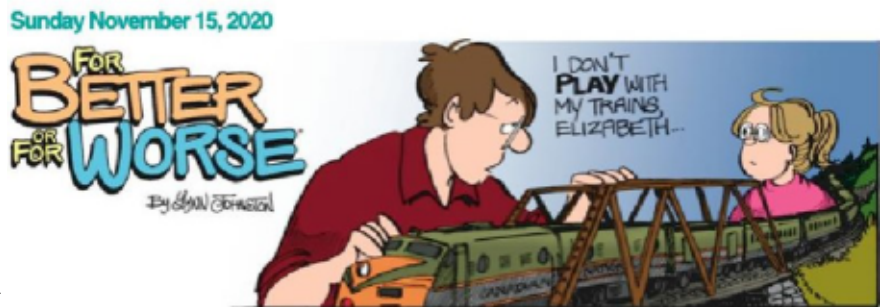
- **Functional Play:** playing simply to enjoy the experience
- **Constructive Play:** play that involves constructing something (building, drawing, planning, etc.)
- **Exploratory Play:** when we examine something closely in order to learn more about it
- **Dramatic Play:** the ability to transport ourselves using our imagination

My current journey starts with a new house and the thought that I can use our single car garage for more than a place to store my sports car.

In my layout planning research I reacquaint myself with hobby gurus like Iain Rice, Tony Koester, Pelle Soeburg, and Lance Mindhiem. At SuperTrains 2019 I pick up a copy of Nicolas Morant's Canadian Pacific and this kindles my desire to incorporate a number of scenes from the Kicking Horse and Fraser Canyons. Google maps and Google Earth allow me to "explore" the CP mainline from Field to Hope in one-metre detail. Along the way, I learn much more about the Canadian Pacific in the Rockies.

With the basic concepts defined, the first rabbit-hole I fall down is learning about the various layout design tools. I join the beta test group of 3rd PlanIt and become a regular contributor the XTrackCAD forum. I explore the mathematical beauty of Splines and Cornus. In completing my track plan (is any track plan “complete”?) I become proficient in the use of my chosen CAD program (you guessed it -- neither 3rd PlanIt nor XTrackCAD).

As my plan progresses, I reach out to more experienced local modellers and operators who freely share their ideas. “I know you have spent a month on this track plan but are you sure that a Nolix with a constant



2.5% grade is a good idea?” “A two-foot aisle, are you planning to lose weight?” “Really, only three yard tracks?” I learn the value of community.

To prepare my garage for the layout, I refresh my framing, insulating, electrical wiring, and drywalling skills. I “Zoom” around Scott Calvert’s layout and visit Gary Hinshaw’s and Tim Horton’s with my head under the benchwork admiring carpentry and wiring. AND I open a “Pro” account at Home Depot. My garage has never looked so good nor been so warm and dry.

To keep me entertained while I struggle with power saws and cordless drills, I expand my locomotive fleet. I discover that there is a whole spectrum of possibilities beyond the SD40-2. And with a little web research, I discover that each loco in my fleet has a real history complete with photos throughout its service life. Now my imagination has grounding and I learn about winterization hatches, multi-marks, and comfort cabs. Along the way, I trace the development of EMD and GE locomotives – understand AC and DC traction – review CP and CN locomotive rosters from the 70’s until the present.

And – wow! – has sound come a long way since I purchased some of the early sound decoders fifteen years ago! So begins a couple of months spent in the Wonderland of ESU and SoundTraxx ... and of course the trusty JMRI DecoderPro. I spend many hours programing, optimizing and documenting my fleet of decoders/locos. I learn the power of Engine Driver. Share ideas with Steve Todd (ED’s creator) for future enhancements to mimic prototype control. Compare notes with Burr Stewart re how to “standardize” function mapping for fleets – and begin to understand Burr’s challenges in implementing braking (his RMMBC 2019 clinic).

And yes, I continue with my construction ... after abandoning a nolix and having no space for a helix, I embark on an ambitious (crazy) plan to use a nine-shelf, 27-track elevator to connect my two decks. Along the way to working out the elevator design I take a clinic in Arduino programming and recruit my nephew to set up a test bed in San Diego while he waits to begin his first year in Industrial Design. Meanwhile hours of consulting other modelers and more googling lead me to a local Richmond company that supplies precision linear actuators and controllers. With a menagerie of Home Depot supplies, I design a wall mounted elevator (still a work in progress for the final stages). Sadly my nephew abandons the model railroad lab in San Diego for a year of snowboarding in Whistler – go figure.

I convince my partner that a trip to Revelstoke to her favourite hotel and restaurant would be entertaining while I watch trains transit the Revelstoke yard in the rain (and am hosted to a tour of the Railway Museum by Doug Meyer). Johanna and I explore every access road to the mainline from Field to about 5km east of Golden. She is impressed as our new Subaru Forrester handles the 13% hills. Exploring the remaining 5km of mainline into Golden is the perfect excuse for a road trip with great friend Rob England – with better judgement we park the car and hike down/up the access roads. Rewarded with spectacular bridge and tunnel photos ... and a couple of trains.

So functional, constructive, exploratory, and dramatic, I “play” with trains. My journey is not done and I don’t think it ever will be – being “done” is not the point.

Of course, you never play without friends and compatriots – Mark Dance, Scott Calvert, Gary Hinshaw, Tim Horton, Doug Meyer, Scott Lamoureux, Rob England, Burr Stewart, my fellow members of the RMMBC Committee, the CVMP email modelling thread, the untold number of contributors to YouTube, the folks that generously give of their time on the many online forums, the helpful folks at Central Hobbies and other suppliers, and those of you that I have yet to meet. Thank you all.

Remembrance

Bob Flegel 1943 – 2020

by Mike Barone

Bob was born in Trail and was employed by BC Tel until he retired in 1998. He lived in Rossland, a city for which he had a fascination regarding its history. Because of this interest he was one of the founding members and first president of the Golden City Railroad Modellers club. He proposed building a portable layout highlighting scenes of Rossland and displaying its history. When this layout, which is a Golden Spike Award recipient, was displayed at venues in BC and Alberta, he was often the driving force behind attendance. Additionally, Bob instituted and coordinated the club's "Train Days" weekend, held in mid-November, at the local mall.

As a long time model railroader Bob loved building scenery and buildings. He received Achievement Certificates for Master Builder Scenery, Buildings and Electrical. Much of the scenery and some of the buildings on the portable layout are his work. Some models displayed in the Rossland Mining Museum are also Bob's efforts.

In the community Bob was well known as someone who gave freely, with warmth and a big smile helping those in need of assistance and giving community service. He is survived by his wife Patsy, his soul mate of 55 years, three children: Tracy, Robert and Lee-Ann, several grandchildren and many other family and friends.



Photos by Don Young



Notices and Contacts

The Bulletin Board is the official publication of the 7th Division of the Pacific Northwest Region, National Model Railroad Association, Canada. It is distributed electronically to all members in good standing. In exceptional circumstances, such as Internet unavailability or medical conditions, the 7th Division may agree to distribute paper copies to affected members.

The Bulletin Board has five issues per year: January/February, March/April, May/June, September/October, and November/December. Each issue is published in the last week before the issue period. Publication means the Bulletin Board is available for download from the 7th Division website. Members will be notified by email when the download is ready.

Note that the views and opinions stated in the Bulletin Board do not necessarily reflect those of the NMRA or regions or divisions thereof.

Your comments and opinions on this publication are always welcome. As well, contributions of letters, articles, event news, plans, photographs and art are strongly encouraged and welcomed. All should be sent to the Bulletin Board Editor (see below). A phone call or email to the editor beforehand is advised if you are thinking of submitting something large or complex. The deadline for submission is two weeks prior to publication but this is somewhat flexible according to circumstances.

ADVERTISING in the Bulletin Board is accepted at the following per issue rates: Full Page = \$48.00, Half Page = \$24.00, Quarter Page = \$12.00, Business Card = \$6.00. Artwork must be supplied in JPG or similar format and in the desired printed size. There may be an additional charge to complete artwork that is not ready to print. Please email your artwork to the editor. Remittance should be discussed and finalized with the division Treasurer.

The following is a shortened list of division personnel. A complete list that includes additional appointed positions as well as all area representatives is available on the [7th Division website](#).

Superintendent	John Martin	604-594-9719 (Delta)	jamartin@jdmartin.ca
Assistant Superintendent	Victor Gilbert	604-708-4161 (Vancouver)	victor@sugarwood.info
Secretary	Randy Nussli	250-380-6814 (Victoria)	rnussli1976@shaw.ca
Treasurer	Larry Sebelley	604-858-5717 (Chilliwack)	sebelley@shaw.ca
Director at Large	Ken Rutherford	250-724-4698 (Port Alberni)	kj.rutherford@shaw.ca
Membership Coordinator and Webmaster	Brian Clogg	604-588-2194 (Surrey)	bcclogg@shaw.ca
Bulletin Board Editor	Rob England	250-629-2006 (Pender Island)	r.england@computer.org
Achievement Program Coordinator	Mike Chandler, MMR	604-526-5078 (New Westminster)	mikado1@telus.net
Member Aid Coordinator	Mike Barone	250-367-6134 (Fruitvale)	fmikebarone@gmail.com
Publicity Coordinator	Dick Sutcliffe	604-467-4301 (Maple Ridge)	ras1@uniserve.com