

BULLETIN BOARD

Volume 19 Issue 1

Jan/Feb 2005



The Official Publication of the 7th Division, Pacific Northwest Region, National Model Railroad Association (Canada)

TRAINS 2004

By Bill Dixon, John Green, Mike Chandler, and Dick Sutcliffe

Submitted by Dick Sutcliffe

Photos by John Green

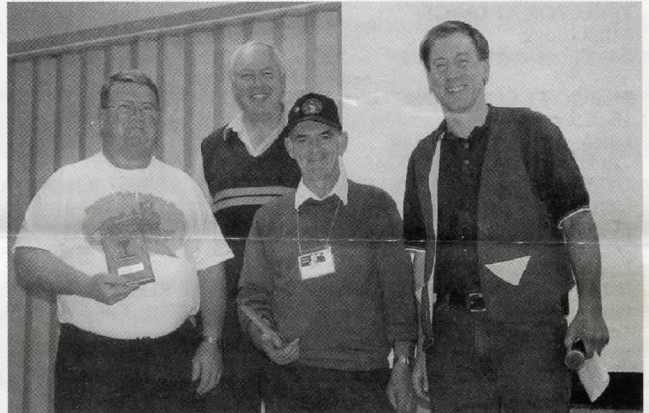
First we would like to thank all of you who pre registered for Trains 2004. The number was in the 180 range, which allowed us to tweak the programs to suit.

Highest registration number issued - 216; Sunday public through the door - 2285; Vendor registrations - 129; and Displayer registrations - 172.

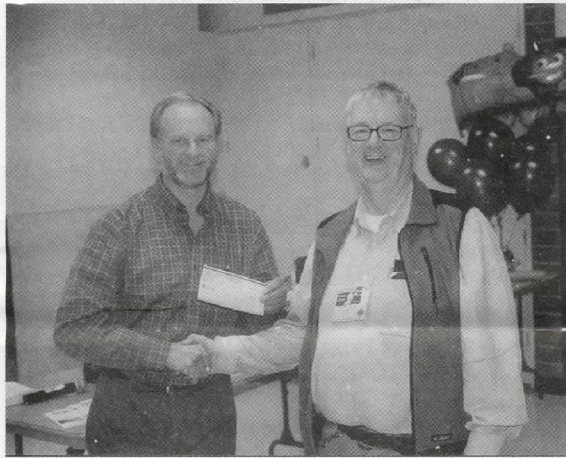
Clinics were well attended Saturday and Sunday.

On Friday evening while three layout owners hosted operating sessions, other registrants participated in self-guided layout tours in Burnaby and Vancouver, with only Don F.

getting lost. Ron Senko reported about 60 guests, while John Green



Contest Chairman Craig Spink (right) with contest winners from L to R, Roy Zschiedrich, Ed Warren and Dave Nickerson.



Thomas Jones (right) receives a \$25 cheque for his 1st place BB 6" X 6" entry from Russ Watson, Bulletin Board editor.

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who resides much further from Cameron Rec Centre, had about 20 guests sign his guest book. Thanks also to Carl Sparks and Cliff Basler for opening their homes and layouts for viewing.

On Saturday evening 116 registrants participated in layout tours visiting pikes in New Westminster, Burnaby and Coquitlam. As the tour area was around Cameron, the last bus arrived back at Cameron relatively early between 10:15 and 10:30 pm. Thanks to our layout hosts, Mike Chandler, Anthony Craig, Matt Hassen, Gordon Mitchell, and Scott Calvert. This year the tours were conducted by Peter Anthony, Greg Kennelly, Dave Manzer, Graham Stokes, and Dick Sutcliffe, while George Massey was standby conductor.

Thanks to all who participated. I am anticipating that next years tour's will be in Delta, Surrey and Langley so anybody with interesting layout leads, please contact John Green.

The contest tables and module entries were great in number and quality (see separate report).

85 sat down to a sumptuous meal, on Sunday evening, from Cosmic Catering, followed by an informative talk by Robert Ashton, Chair of the Fraser Valley Heritage Railway Society, who are resurrecting the B.C. Electric Railway in the Cloverdale area.

Continued on Page 4

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QUESTIONS?????

Please feel free to contact any of the above members if you have questions, comments, suggestions or concerns. The strength of any organization is with it's members!
DIRECT YOUR MODELLING QUESTIONS to our 7th Division Member Aid Chairman, Bob Gardner, MMR, Voice: (250) 832 9883, Fax: (250) 832-0681, Email: rvongard@jetstream.net

The **National Model Railroad Association (Canada)** is a separately incorporated section of the National Model Railroad Association Inc. headquarters in Chattanooga, TN. NMRA (Canada) is presently a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving our railroad heritage through the promotion of model railroading and by promoting and recognizing craftsmanship and service to others within the hobby.

NMRA/PNR RENEWAL

To renew your NMRA and PNR/7th Division membership, send \$73 CDN to Steve Prevet, PNR Office Manager, 4214 Hilltop Dr., Pasco WA 99301 USA, Email: <prevette@owt.com>. MasterCard, VISA, American Express, Diner's Club and Discover charge cards accepted. Make your cheque payable to PNR/NMRA.

7th DIVISION VIDEO LIBRARY

Please phone, write, or Email to request the tapes you would like to borrow and they will be mailed to you prepaid. After use, you are required to mail them back 'Proof of Delivery with \$100 insurance.' **Please keep your return postage receipt for tracing purposes in case the tapes are lost in the mail.** Check your membership expiry date on your Bulletin Board mailing label. If it has expired, please renew it now using the instructions above before requesting to borrow tapes. The library address is:
7th Division Video Library, c/o Don Forsyth, 2022 Cedar Crescent, Courtenay, BC V9N 3B6, phone (250) 338 4497
Email: D.Forsyth@telus.net
A full list of tapes is published in the March and September issues of the **BULLETIN BOARD**

The **BULLETIN BOARD** is published six times per year as follows:

<u>Submission</u>	<u>Mailing</u>	<u>Month</u>
<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Date</u>	
November 15th	December 15th	Jan/Feb
January 15th	February 15th	Mar/Apr
March 15th	April 15th	May/June
May 15th	June 15th	Jul/Aug
July 15th	August 15th	Sep/Oct
September 15th	October 15th	Nov/Dec

The **BULLETIN BOARD** is distributed to all Seventh Division members in good standing. Editorial opinions and those stated in articles do not necessarily reflect those of the Seventh Division Standing Committee.

CONTRIBUTIONS of Letters, Articles, Event News, Plans, Photographs and Art are encouraged and welcomed and may be sent to the **BULLETIN BOARD** Editor: Russ Watson 1297 Yorston Ave Quesnel BC V2J 3B6 (250) 992-3452 (Voice) (250) 992-3453 (FAX) Email: russwatson@telus.net

Please use Email whenever possible. The Editor uses a Macintosh computer which is capable of translating a wide variety of file types including most PC files.

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Email: scottcalvert@shaw.ca

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS and **ADDRESS CHANGES** must be sent to the PNR Office Manager: Steve Prevet, PNR Office Manager, 4214 Hilltop Dr., Pasco WA 99301 USA, Email: <prevette@owt.com>

All other **MEMBERSHIP INQUIRIES** including **NEW MEMBERSHIPS** must be forwarded to the Membership Coordinator: Gary Hazell RR #1 S-4 C-6 Tappen, BC V0E 2X0 (250) 835 8628, FAX (250) 835-8521, Email: comhaven@shuswap.net

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, Pike Ads = \$1.50

Artwork should be supplied in the appropriate size. There may be an additional charge to complete artwork that is not camera ready. Please mail your artwork and remittance, payable to the "7th Division PNR/NMRA," to the Editor's address listed above.

NMRA WEB SITES

7th Division
PNR
NMRA

http://www3.telus.net/rlink/7division
http://www.infoharvest.ca/nmra/pnr
http://www.nmra.org

Welcome!

A very warm welcome to the following new 7th Division

member(s):

Nick Blom

Vancouver

Fred Mischki

Delta

Please feel free to direct any questions, comments or concerns to any of the members, especially Bob Gardner, the 7th Division Member Aid Chairman, and those listed on Page 2. We look forward to meeting you at one of the 7th Division events.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

by *Scott Calvert*

Well, no doubt you will see info on the very successful Trains 2004 meet elsewhere in the BB, however, I must congratulate the committee on another job well done. Having been the show coordinator in the past, I am very familiar with how much work it is to put on. I know that the committee is always looking for help and new blood, so I would encourage anyone to step up and volunteer to assist the crew. Many of them have been active for many years and I am sure would appreciate some relief. Let's not just take the show for granted.

We had the 7th Div AGM meeting at the Trains meet where we covered some of the Divisional regular business. It was well attended and we took care of a fair bit of stuff. We have adopted the idea of distributing the BB by email to anyone that indicates they are interested, so contact Russ Watson if you would like to try this method of receiving the BB. This initiative will get the BB to you faster and will save the Division money.

Roger Ferris, recently retired PNR trustee, gave the group an update on an idea that the NMRA will consider, which is that Canada would become it's own "region" of the NMRA. This would mean that the Regions and Divisions that presently span across the border would be reconfigured. The Canadian "Region" would function as it's own entity, and would effectively "buy" services from the NMRA. It was an interesting presentation and I have to admit that I did not grasp the entire concept. There will be much more information coming out in the future on this item, so watch your BB, Switchlist and Scale Rails/Bulletin for updates.

Those of you who attended the Trains 2004 meet and participated in the layout tour will know that the new Lenz system that I recently installed in my layout decided to quit on me half way through the evening. I have had many inquiries about what caused the "crash" and I have to report at this point I have no idea! Due to pressing work commitments, I have not had any real opportunity to troubleshoot the problem, and so have not determined the cause yet. Perhaps by next BB I will have the answer - and a working layout again! The layout tour visitors were all very kind, and seemed to still enjoy seeing my large "diorama"!

Since this is the last report until the new year, I want to wish you all the best of the season, and good health in 2005. Remember this is a time to share with those less fortunate, so don't forget to support your favourite charity, and help those in need.

EDITOR'S DESK

by *Russ Watson*

As Scott mentioned in his report, your 7th Div Executive responded at the AGM to a recommendation by Gary Hazell, John Zuk and myself to distribute the Bulletin Board electronically by officially approving that method of distribution to those members who agree to receive it that way. As a result of that and efforts by Gary to speak to as many members as he could at the TRAINS meet, this issue will be electronically distributed to 29 members. If all of these members continue to receive it by email, the division will save \$73 per issue for an annual savings of \$438. If one half of the membership chose to receive the BB by email, your Division would save about \$1330. The first time you receive the BB by email, you will also receive the hard copy in the mail just in case you have trouble with the email version. Once you let me know you're happy with the email distribution, we'll eliminate the hard copy mailing to you. Membership expiration notification will be sent by email to those members receiving the BB by email. I encourage all of you with Internet access to give it a try, the savings are huge - I would rather see the money spent expanding our Video Library than on postage!

And thanks to all of those who contributed to the success of the TRAINS show, as usual I enjoyed all aspects of the meet again!

Preparations are going well for the Spring Meet - Goldpan Express 2005 - in Quesnel, March 25 - 27, 2005. Please read the update on Page 8 and send in your registration now!

I hope you all have an enjoyable Holiday Season and wish you all the best for 2005!

MEMBER AID

by *Bob Gardner, MMR, Coordinator*

We've had a slight increase in the number of enquiries fielded this year. These covered a wide variety of subjects such as painting models, benchwork, locomotive details, and building materials. I'm sure there must be more puzzling questions out there so don't be afraid to ask. In the meantime, here are a few modeling tips of my own.

SUPER GLUES

To prolong the life of "Super Glues", also known as Krazy Glue, ACC, CA, ZAP, Insta-Cure, etc., store them in the refrigerator when not in use.

To apply small amounts safely, squirt a little on a hasty-note pad, then apply from there with a tooth-pick or a needle-in-a-dowel tool.

To clear clogged nozzles, keep handy a used drill bit (#50 to #60) in an old pin vise or wood dowel to drill out the hardened ACC.

If the nozzle is completely unusable, you can always unscrew the top and dip out small amounts of cement with a scrap of fine wire. A bottle holder made from scrap wood or Styrofoam makes this a one-handed job.

AFTER CHRISTMAS

Check the stores for cheap Christmas ornaments that can be adapted to our use:

- "Bottle-brush"-type model Christmas trees that can be

continued on Page 4

TRAINS 2004 continued from the cover

This year, 92 model railroaders gave up some of their time to help us run our meet and show. Interestingly, those who travelled the greatest distance were most likely to volunteer. So, out-of-towners accounted for a high percentage of our volunteers. However, two local modellers, John Sled and Ken Catlin, deserve special mention for having volunteered continuously throughout both Saturday and Sunday.

The Prototype tour on Monday morning at Neptune Terminals was attended by about 14 diehards. We arrived about 9am with the rain coming down steadily. Tony Nardi, Vice-president Marketing and Transportation, took us into the boardroom for an overview of the operation. When we came out about 10:15 it was bright and sunny, a perfect day for the tour. We loaded into the vehicles and entered the property, stopping at the engine service, the coal gondola dumper, walked through one of the potash hopper unloaders, viewed a ship loading conveyor, and stopped at the other end of the coal dumper to examine the mule that indexes the coal trains through. Pictures were permitted, Tony was very knowledgeable in his descriptions, and we were able to ask all kinds of questions. We also viewed the south side of the CN yard. Unfortunately the facility was in cleanup mode, so no trains were moving through. Some of the buildings and machinery extend up to three stories below ground, so they need regular pumping and spillage removal. Products handled are coal, including blending; potash & fertilizer, including "foodsafe" products such as hay pellets & cakes, grains; and bulk liquids. The facility is also capable of inbound bulk products with silo storage. Thanks to Al Lill for setting up this tour.

CONTEST RESULTS

Submitted by Craig Spink

Locomotive: 1st Kyle Gardner - Brass Locomotive and tender. Tender scratch built, locomotive built from frame/boiler shell; 2nd Paul J. Crozier Smith - BCR Electric Locomotive 6001; 3rd Paul J. Crozier Smith - BCR MLW S-13 502.

Rolling Stock: 1st Kyle Gardner - CP Crane and Idler car. Idler is scratch built, crane is Gould kit; 2nd Russ Watson - N Scale CNR Wood Van 78186; 3rd Maynard Atkinson - Athabasca Scale Models Express Baggage.

Train: 1st - Roy Zschiedrich - BCR Freight Train; 2nd Dave Nickerson - CPR Work Train Ex #2410.

Prototype Photograph: 1st Dave Nickerson - Ex (CPR) 2860 at Yoho West Tunnel Field Hill (The Big Hill) April 1978; 2nd Dave Nickerson - "Hooping Orders" CP North at "Kitwana" Station.

Model Photograph: None Entered.

Structure: 1st Ed Warren - Parksville Water Tank E&N.

Diorama: 1st Allan Clark - Scratch built curved trestle in HOn3; 2nd Brian Rudko - Prototype replica of a station in Oakland Maine, scratchbuilt; 3rd C. S. Gustavson - Moving a Steam Donkey.

Module: Bruce Daykin - 10' N Gauge model with 11 bridges and 6 tunnels; 2nd Doug McDonald - North Island Model Railroaders; 3rd Ted Kowalik - Farm scene and whistle stop with lake.

Layout: 1st Chilliwack Model Railroad Club - N scale layout; 2nd - North Island Model Railroaders Club - HO Layout; 3rd Drumbuie Model Railway - N scale layout set in Scotland, 1990 to 2000.

Bulletin Board 6" x 6": Thomas I Jones - Fast Eddy's Car Paint Shop.

Novice: Kyle Gardner - Brass Locomotive and tender.

Member Aid continued from Page 3

"butchered" with scissors for a more realistic irregular look

- Small animated or steady lights for buildings or special effects
- Animated ornaments, i.e. revolving or reciprocating, to collect and save to use later for model animation.

Save Christmas cards with mountain or country scenes for scenery reference.

Watch for marked-down desk-pad calendars for use as a modeling surface on the workbench.

Best wishes to all!!!

Victoria Show Report

By David Tomljenovich

Wow, another Record Attendance at the 2004 Victoria Model Railway Show!

The largest one-day event on Vancouver Island set a new record. The 2004 Victoria Model Railway Show held at the Cedar Hill Recreation Centre had a record attendance of 2,734. Overall response to the new location was very well received from the public and sale vendors.

The crowds came in a steady stream right up until the end of the Show. Again, I noted more children with families. One of the major attractions was the Vancouver Island Model Engineers train rides for the kids. The very popular Thomas the tank engine was located next to The Gangers Double 00 layout. Also the Toy Train Operating Society Island Members brought their 4'x 8' Lionel train layout and proved popular for kids who were allowed to operate the trains.

The big crowds also brought smiling faces to the commercial and private sellers. I would like to thank the following dealers for providing the hourly door prizes, BC Shavers and Hobbies, Britannia Models, Central Hobbies, Charlie's Choo Choo's, Creative Hobbycraft, Leisure Time Hobbies, First Step Hobbies, Victoria Scale Rail and Mike Kocot.

Donations will be given out to the following supporters of the Show; Times Colonist 1000 Fund, C-Fax Santa's Anonymous and the News Group Mustard Seed Program.

This leads to the popular vote contest. The winners were awarded plaques with a picture of last year's winner; an O Scale Module curved wood Pile Trestle Bridge by Peter Thornton-Trump. Next years 2005 poster will feature the best of show 'N' Scale module "Snow Shed" by Daryl Barter of the One Track Group.

The popular vote contest winners as chosen by model railroader's are as follow:

Train- HO Logging by Ed Lewis; Rolling Stock-O Scale TOFC by Robert Hopkins;

Locomotive - HO British Columbia Rail by Mark Giles; Model Photo -CN Crossing Trestle Bridge by Len Moss; Proto Photo-CP4400's by Ted Alexis; Diorama - N Scale Cranes by Ted Alexis.

The Public Choice Best Layout went to Ray Brown N Scale "Nanaimo". A well deserved layout. Ray has done a marvelous job creating numerous mini-scenes with lots of detail throughout the layout. Congratulations Ray!

In closing and on behalf of the Show Committee I would like to personally thank the various club members volunteering their

time on the admission tables. Special thanks to the ladies at the Ricochet's Café providing the breakfasts and lunches throughout the day. Special thanks to Don Forsyth, Coordinator for the popular vote contest. This was Don's last Show as a show committee member after 14th years of service, much appreciated. Also thanks to Dave Quissy, volunteers, Peter Thornton-Trump our marketing whiz and public relations, and finally Ted Alexis the other half. Set your schedule for next year's Victoria Model Railway Show, at the Cedar Hill Recreation Centre, Sunday September 25th, 2005. See you there!

AP Awards at Trains 2004

by Ed Warren, MMR, CRC, AP Coordinator, PNR 7th Division
At the Trains 2004 meet in Burnaby in November, there were several AP awards earned. Don Slee had several of his NTrak modules judged for the Master Builder Scenery Award. He received 92 points overall for his fine efforts. This involved the prototypic rendition of scenic elements of the terrain such as roads, ditches, rocks and trees. Also structures, lighting and background had to be well rendered. Congratulations to Don for all his effort.

Kyle Gardiner received the Golden Spike Award for his home layout, with excellent work in trackwork, structures and scenery. His handlaid track is sure to lead soon to an Engineer (Civil) Award. I wish there was an award for his wife who painted the finest backdrop I have seen of the Jura Loops. Kyle also had several models judged in the model contest at the

show. He received merit awards for a Canadian Pacific crane idler service car # 402107 as well as a CN Mountain #6049. Congratulations to Kyle for his achievements.

We are trying to organize the AP program across the Division so every member has access to it. I have spoken to members across the province who have agreed to help out by being available. In future, we want to have a presence at all 7th Division meets and to be able to do house calls where necessary for AP judging. If any member needs a visit to have models judged for the AP program, let me know by email or phone (my contact information is on page 2), and I will make arrangements.

I want to thank Dave Nickerson who has kept the AP Program functioning over the past few years, by chasing down paperwork and delivering certificates. The division covers such a large geographic area, it is hard to be on hand to personally present certificates, but Dave was there when needed.

I also want to thank Russ Watson, Don Forsyth and Dave Nickerson for taking time out from the show activities to help with the judging. Finally I want to thank Craig Spink for doing a great job of organizing the contest area, which made our job a lot easier.

Is your membership expiring?

Please check the expiry date on the mailing label that this BB was mailed in or your Email In Box and follow the directions on Page 2 to renew now.

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TIMETABLE

Visit www.infoharvest.ca/NMRA/PNR
for information on additional events.

- Jan 15-17, SEATTLE, WA**, 31st Pacific Science Center Model Railroad Show sponsored by NMRA/PNR/4th Div, corner of Denny & Broad, 10am-6pm. Info: - Frank Dekker, (425) 425-6964, rekkedrails@juno.com, www.pacsci.org
- FEB 5, (SAT), PORTLAND OR**, SP&S Railway Historical Society Annual Swap Meet. Holiday Inn, Portland Airport Convention Center, 8439 NE Columbia Blvd. 10am-3pm. Info: - Bruce Barney, 10832 SE Stephens, Portland OR 97216, (503) 257-8855, bcbarney@msn.com, www.sps.shs.org.
- FEB 19-20, CALGARY AB, SUPERTRAIN 2004**, Calgary Model Railroad Society Annual Model Railway Show, Big 4 Building, Stampede Grounds, 9am-5pm. Info: - www.calgarymodelrailway.org, supertrain@calgarymodelrailway.org.
- FEB 19-20, PORTLAND OR**, Great American Train Show, Portland Metro Exposition Center, 2060 N Marine Dr. 11am-5pm. Info: - www.gats.com.
- FEB 20, (SUN), SPOKANE WA**, River City Modelers Model Railroad Train Show. Spokane Community College, Lair Student Activities Building, Mission & Green St, 9:30am-3:30pm. Info: - River City Modelers, c/o Bob & Shirley Sample, P. O. Box 314, Elk WA 99009, (509) 292-8332, sastrains@aol.com.
- FEB 26, (SAT), CLACKAMAS OR**, 20th Annual Willamette Model RR Club Swap/clinics etc. Camp Withycombe Armory, S.E. 102nd, off Hwy 212-224, 10am-3pm, (free admission). Info: - Chris Kliner, 1618 SW 1618 5th St, Battle Ground WA 98604, (360) 687-1639
- MAR 25-27, 2005, QUESNEL BC**, Goldpan Express 2005, 7th Division Interior Spring Meet, Quesnel Senior Centre, Modular Layouts, displays, contests, Layout Tours, Proto Tours, Info: email Bill Bernath <bbernath@quesnelbc.com>, or Russ Watson, (250) 992 3452, email: <russwatson@telus.net>
- APR 24, (SUN), HELENA MT**, 25th Annual Helena Railroad Fair. Civic Center, Intersection of Neill & Benton, 9:30am-4pm. Info: - Helena Railroad Fair, PO Box 4914 Helena MT 59604-4914, (406) 443-1578, rrfair@mt.net.
- APR 3, (SUN) NANAIMO, BC** - Vancouver Island Spring Model Railroad Show. Beban Park Rec Centre (2300 Bowen Rd), 10 - 4, Layouts, Swap-n-shop, Model Contests, Sales Tables, Info: Ken Rutherford (250) 724-4698 Email: kj.rutherford@shaw.ca or Rick Lord (250) 724-4205
- APR 29-MAY 1, ESSEX MT**, 17th Annual Essex Express Railfan Weekend, Izaak Walton Inn. Info: - (406) 888-5700, stay@izaakwaltoninn.com, www.izaakwaltoninn.com.
- Jul 3-9, CINCINNATI, OH**, Cincinnati Limited. NMRA National Convention, Sponsored by the Cincinnati Div 7 of the Midcentral Region. Cincinnati Convention Center. Info: info@nmra2005.com www.cl2005.com
- Aug 3-7, SPOKANE VALLEY, WA**, Historic Spokane 2005. PNR Convention Mirabeau Park Hotel, 1100 N Sullivan Rd. Info: - Jerry Quinn, signaljq@aol.com or Shirley Sample, sastrains@aol.com, 509-292-8332

- Aug 7 (Sun), SPOKANE VALLEY, WA**, Train Show & Swap Meet in conjunction with Historic Spokane 2005, Mirabeau Park Hotel, 1100 N Sullivan Rd. 9:30am-3:30pm. Info: - Bob & Shirley Sample, P. O. Box 314, Elk WA 99009, (509) 292-8332
- APR 23-24, MONROE WA**, Great Western Train Show, Evergreen State Fairgrounds, 10am-4pm. Info: - (702) 252-0334, www.gats.com.
- OCT 29-30, SALEM OR**, Great Western Train Show, Oregon State Fairgrounds, 2330 17th St NE, 10am-4pm. Info: - (702) 252-0334, www.gats.com.
- NOV 12-13, VANCOUVER WA**, Great American Train Show, Clark County Fair Grounds 17402 NE Delfal Rd. 11am-5pm. Info: - www.gats.com.
- NOV 19-20, TACOMA WA**, Great American Train Show, Western Washington Fairgrounds, 9th & Meridian, 11am-5pm. Info: - www.gats.com.

Adventures in Sound

by Ed Warren, MMR, CRC

In the past year, as my layout has become more operational, I have started installing sound units in my engines. My short On30 line is a magnet for the recent offerings in steam in that gauge. The standard gauge logging shortline also has a steam engine which was wanting a sound unit. The standard gauge line is all diesel at the moment. I will wait for diesel sound for a while. The main problem with sound units available now in

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their price. At \$200 per unit, it takes a long while to budget for all your engines. Recently, the quality has been rising and prices falling, similar to what has happened in other home electronics.

When using the precursor to DCC 15 years ago, called CTC16, I installed diesel sound units in several engines, and found the continuous rattle and rumble of the engines to be irritating after the initial novelty wore off. After 10 minutes the sound only caused a headache. In contrast, the steam sound, being mostly white noise, was much more tolerable.

In those days, the steam sound I used was the PMP112, a \$30 kit developed by Alan Trammel in Vancouver. You soldered the components to a supplied PC board, and the IC's produced the white noise for the chuff and air pump. A wiper on one driver rubbed over four insulated segments to activate each chuff. The air pump was a fixed rate, and there was no whistle or bell.

I had four of these units left over after the conversion to DCC, and have been hoping to use them in decoder equipped engines. I found that the PMP112 units did not tolerate the high frequency AC used for track power in DCC, even with a rectifier and resistors. In one of those eureka moments that sometimes happen, I realized the other day that most DCC decoders have four or more auxillary 12V DC outputs rated at 100 mA, enough for a sound unit.

I experimented on a Bachmann 2-6-0 On30 engine, adding a driver wiper with a 2K resistor for the chuff control. I hooked the green and blue wires from the decoder to the PMP112 power inputs, and mounted one of the old PMP112 speakers. I dialed up the engine, activated F1, and there was my steam sound, at a very attractive price (nothing). Unfortunately, there is no whistle or bell, but the engine still is much more alive and fun to operate.

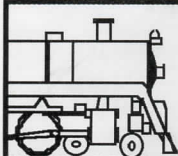
When Bachmann brought out their On30 shay a few years ago, it was too neat not to buy. Then last year the Soundtrax plug and

play sound unit became available. It is very expensive, at nearly \$200. The ads make installation look easy, but I decided to instal a driver wiper, with the enclosed parts to give better chuff response. This involved dismantling the rear engine. Also the track pickup was very poor, and each time the engine hit a dead spot the air pump would start up, as the unit is programmed to pump air in a prototypic manner, and each current interruption was interpreted as a start from depleted air tanks. After attaching jumpers from the trucks to the decoder, things worked much better. The unit plugs neatly into the DCC socket in the tender, with the speaker on top.

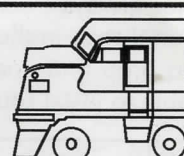
For all that money, the number of functions is disappointing. The unit gives a somewhat tinny chuff sound, but a good pump sound and excellent bell and whistle sounds. There are no other functions such as coupler, injectors, blow down etc. and no ability to shut the unit off short of electrical isolation.

I purchased the Broadway Limited 2-8-0 On30 engine last spring. It comes with DCC and a QSI sound system installed in the tender for less than half what I spent on the shay. There is excellent quality of sound from the two large speakers in the tender, with 12 functions. The chuff, pump, whistle and bell sounds are first rate. There are lots of neat other features, such as the generator whine ramping up when the headlights are turned on. Brake squeal is automatic when the engine slows, and there is coupler clank, intermittent blowdown and other steam sounds. The QSI literature claims the audio can be turned off with F8, but I was unable to do this.

My most recent sound unit is the MRC steam sound # 1627. It is available at Micromart, for about \$65US, about \$90 Cdn after taxes and shipping. I installed it in a 2-4-2 O standard gauge Porter, a modified Grandt Line On3 0-4-0. There was room in the fuel bunker for the decoder, and I was able to put



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the speaker under the cab roof. It has excellent sound quality, although the whistle has that wet, soft quality more associated with a Big Boy than a little Porter. A friend has installed a unit in a Life-Like 2-8-8-2 and it sounds perfect. The unit has multiple functions like the QSI, and the audio can be turned off with F8, or pressing F0 twice quickly.

An added bonus is the box came with a coupon for a diesel sound unit for \$21 US. It was advertised to be a self contained system, with DCC decoder to drive only the sound system for the programmed engine address, bell, whistle, coupler and brake as well as engine sound. It came with a speaker, and only needed to be attached to track power for operation. I ordered one, thinking that not matter what the size, it should be able to fit in an O scale diesel. The unit arrived last week. It is a 3W speaker in a plastic box of the type used for external computer speakers. Inside is a PC board about 4 by 6 cm. with three IC's. There is a DCC decoder chip, a sound chip, an audio amp and voltage regulators. This could be installed in an O scale engine with a smaller speaker, but not an HO B unit. There are two main problems. The PC board is attached to the plastic case with a lot of hot glue, making it hard to remove. The greater problem is the sound quality. The horn sound is good but the bell sounds like that heard in novelty toys. The coupler sound is not recognizable as such. The diesel growl does not ramp up smoothly with a MRC throttle. and not at all with my Digitrax system. I think I will be able to make it operate with further tinkering, but I am not sure that the sound quality can be remedied.

One advantage of having four different sound units is that each sounds different. They all provide good sound, and they greatly increase the enjoyment of running trains on the layout. I would recommend the MRC unit for its price and quality if you are only buying one to try out. The plug and play advertising ploy is not always true, but the modern units are still a lot easier to instal than in the old days. With the competition causing prices to drop and components getting smaller, we should soon be able to instal sound units in all of our engines.

GOLDPAN EXPRESS 2005 UPDATE

By Russ Watson

We are close to finalizing the schedule for the Interior Spring Meet to be held in Quesnel, March 25-27, 2005. Here is the latest info:

Williams Lake Layout Tours - we are working on having layouts available for viewing on the afternoon of Friday, March 25th, for those members travelling through Williams Lake on their way to Quesnel. Directions will be included in the next Bulletin Board and we will also make every effort to get those directions to every one who has registered.

Prototype Tour - We are making arrangements for a tour at Weldwood's Plywood Plant for Sunday, March 27th, tentatively 2:00 to 3:30 PM. The tour will be limited to about 24 people and will require your own transportation to and from the mill. There is no extra cost for the tour; however, it will be reserved on a first come first serve basis to those who have already registered. Please contact me at (250) 992-3452 or email at russwatson@telus.net if you want to take the tour.

Prince George Tour - We have decided to cancel the tour to Prince George as had been previously considered. The trip would consume most of one day and we felt that was too much time to take from our schedule.

Clinics - We have four clinicians confirmed to date and are looking for two more and a spare one in the event of a last minute cancellation. Please consider presenting a clinic and contact me if you would like to help out.

Layout Tours - There will be two time slots to participate in the self-guided layout tours to help ensure everyone, including those setting up layouts or volunteering, have an opportunity to visit the layouts. The layouts on each tour will primarily be the same.

Contests - The Popular Vote categories are: Locomotive, Rolling Stock, Train, Structure, Diorama, Operating Module, Operating Layout, Model Photo and Prototype Photo. Enter to have a chance to win a one-of-a-kind trophy!

Volunteers - We are very short of volunteers and must appeal to you all to consider volunteering. We are primarily looking for people to help with the hall setup and tear down and to work a shift at the entrance door and/or the cash table for the public shows. Please contact Roy Zschiedrich, (250) 747-4586, email: <rocnburl@goldcity.net>.

The Schedule as of November 29, 2004:

FRIDAY AM

Registration	Senior's Centre	8:00 to 4:00 pm
Hall Set Up	Senior's Centre	8:00 to 5:30 pm

FRIDAY PM

Registration	Senior's Centre	8:00 to 4:00 pm
Hall Set Up	Senior's Centre	8:00 to 5:30 pm
Layout Tours #1	Self Guided	2:00 to 5:00 pm
Pub Night	Legion	6:00 pm

SATURDAY AM

Registration	Senior's Centre	8:00 to 11:30 am
Hall Set Up	Senior's Centre	8:00 to 11:30 am
Pop Vote Entries	Senior's Centre	9:00 to 11:30 am
7th Div Meeting?	Board Room	10:00 to 11:00 am?

SATURDAY PM

Public Show	Senior's Centre	12:00 to 4:00 pm
Clinics 1 to 3	Board Room	12:30 to 4:00 pm
Pop Vote Voting	Senior's Centre	11:30 to 3:30 pm
Banquet	Legion	6:00 pm, dinner at 7 pm

SUNDAY AM

Layout Tours #2	Self Guided	9:00 to 11:30 am
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SUNDAY PM

Public Show	Senior's Centre	12:00 to 4:00 pm
Clinics 4 to 6	Board Room	12:30 to 4:00 pm
Prototype Tour	Transportation Required	2 to 3:30 pm

NOTES:

1. The main hall at the Senior's Centre will be open from 7 to 8 am on Friday only for designated volunteers to lay out the floor.
2. The main hall will be open for registrants, exhibitors and vendors from 8 to 5:30 pm on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.
3. During the Public Show hours of 12-4 pm on Saturday and Sunday, registrants, exhibitors and vendors may enter the main hall from the door on the North side (back) of the Senior's Centre.
4. You must display your name tag during all three days after 10 am on Friday to enter the main hall.

We are aware that many of you have made hotel reservations but have not sent in your registration forms. To help us plan the event we would really appreciate receiving your registrations! Thanks, hope to see you in Quesnel next March!