



Mount Vernon Clinic

January 20, 2020

Welcome: Chairman **Ted Becker** welcomed first time attendee **Tom Hawkins** of Anacortes. Well, not Tom's first time, but it has been so long since we've seen him at our clinic, we're treating him like a first timer!

Building Access: Please remember to use the front door. For security reasons, the door cannot be propped open and must remain closed and locked. If no one is there to open it, push the button on the sign on the tripod adjacent to the door, and someone will be right there to let you in. The doorbell had a good workout and seems to be a good solution.

Coming Down the Track: At the February 17 clinic, "Scratchbuilding" is the topic. Be sure to come and see **Cliff Aaker** of Oak Harbor wow us with his tips and techniques he uses when scratchbuilding, both structures and rolling stock.

Feb 17	Mount Vernon	Clinic: Scratchbuilding (Cliff Aaker)
Feb 22-23	Monroe	United Northwest Model RR Club Swap Meet
March 16	Mount Vernon	Clinic: Static Grass Applicators (Ted Becker/Al Carter)
April 20	Mount Vernon	Clinic: Ground Cover (Al Carter)
April 21-24	Eugene, Oregon	PNR Convention
May 18	Mount Vernon	Clinic: REA Operations in Seattle (Thomas Keyes) a
May 18	Mount Vernon	Clinic: Diorama Build Finale
May 22-24	Burnaby, B.C.	7th Div Railway Modelers of British Columbia 5th Annual Meet
July 12-18	St. Louis	NMRA National Convention

7th Division Meet: Our NMRA neighbors to the north, the 7th Division of the PNR, are holding their 5th annual "Railway Modelers of British Columbia" meet in Burnaby, B.C. Included in the 3-day event will be modeling clinics, model displays, operating sessions, and self-guided layout tours. NMRA membership is **not required** to attend, but NMRA members get a discount. Here is a link to the website, including registration and accommodation information. This is a great meet and not that far for most of us!

<http://railwaymodellersmeetofbc.ca/>

Further Down the Track:

For the next “season”, starting in September 2020, we are planning on promoting a “flat car build” – not necessarily a contest. Details still to be worked out. Initial thoughts on this project:

- Making a plastic flat car deck look realistic
- Exploring different types of flat cars
- Examining methods for securing loads

Are you willing to present a clinic (need not be a full hour clinic) related to flat cars? Know someone who might be willing? Let us know your thoughts and desires, please!

Tool Time: This is the part of the clinic where we encourage you to bring along a tool (or more than one) to share with the group. It can be a trusty old standby that you use all the time, or something new that you have discovered. There are a lot of sources for tools, some non-traditional and some obscure. Show us what you’ve got!



Bob Nelson brought along his new “Ultimation (disc) Sander”. But it is not an ordinary disc sander – this one is manually operated (hand crank) that Bob reports works very well, and obviously isn’t as “aggressive” as an electric powered disc sander. It comes with a table that tilts entirely out of the way, and a precision miter gauge. Website: Ultimation.ca and is also available from Fast Tracks (handlaidtrack.com)

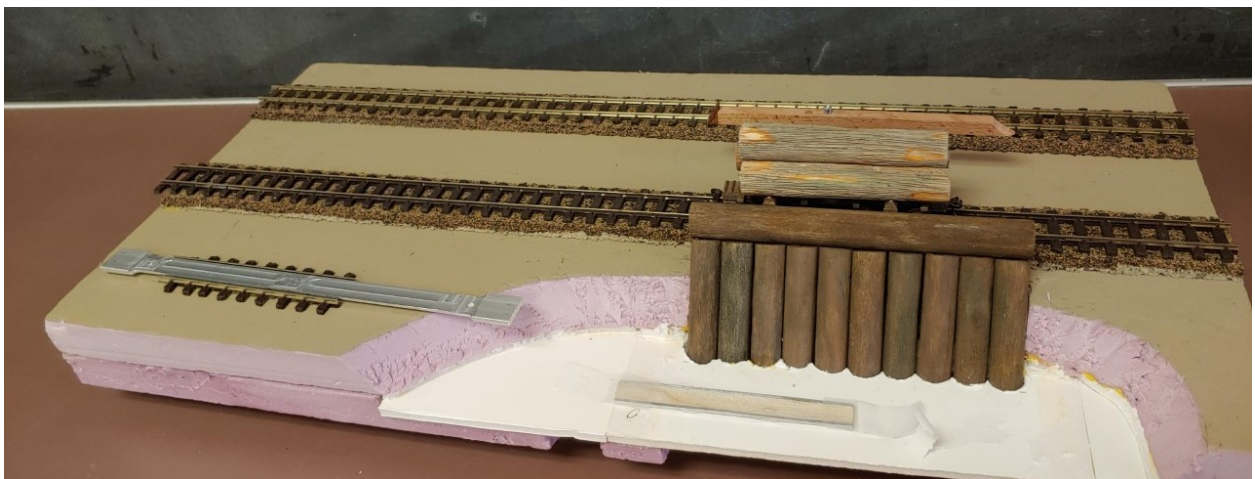


Ted Becker brought along a selection of tools he just received from Widget Supply in Oregon (widgetsupply.com). This company has a lot of tools listed and at very good prices. Ted showed a set of mini tweezers, a high speed metal saw blade (for Dremel tool), a small cutting mat, steel rulers, and a 144 piece set of jig saw blades.

Diorama Build Project: Paralleling the 4D's diorama contest, the Mount Vernon Clinic is having a diorama build project. It was felt that maybe more would participate if it wasn't an actual contest. Same rules: no larger than 1'x2' and must have some reference to railroading. Several people are participating: **Ray Vaughn, Ron Nelson, Ted Becker, Don Jones, Ken Wagner, Tom Buckingham, and Al Carter.**



Ted Becker's city block diorama. Ted has started out with a Walther's Merchant's Row that he purchased used from the WSMRC, and is rebuilding it, removing a door and other renovations. Also included is a DPM kit and an Adam's Ribs restaurant. He isn't revealing yet what his "reference to railroading" will be, so stay tuned and watch his progress!



Ron Nelson is constructing a working jill poke in On30 scale. The piece of aluminum on the left is "currently under development" as a method to hold his log cars stationary when the jill poke swings into action to unload the cars. Ron is quite the inventive modeler!



Al Carter's abandoned railroad grade diorama continues to sprout new vegetation and growth in the form of bushes, weeds, and a couple of trees. Al is using a variety of "tufts" from a variety of manufacturers. Still to come: more detailing and perhaps some water in the ditches...

Modeling Tip: Here is a link to a video I recently watched on Model Railroad Hobbyist's forum site, on a slick way to ballast turnouts

<https://model-railroad-hobbyist.com/node/38405>

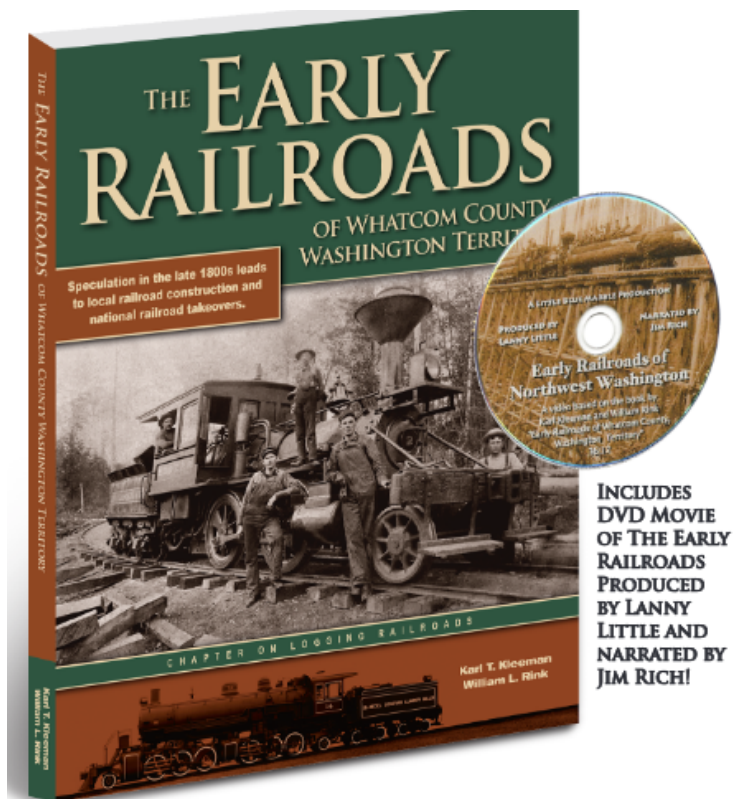
One of the main takeaways I learned from this video is to use a syringe to apply the diluted glue – it is a much more controlled approach than using an eyedropper or pipette. A little more time consuming, but if it means that I didn't glue my turnout points to the ties (been there; done that!), then it is worth it!

Classified Ads: Got something to sell or give away? Bet you do! If you are the "typical model railroader" you probably have piles of items you've stashed away – some undoubtedly forgotten about! Well, you can **list them here in this newsletter** if you want. Just send me an e-mail (tabooma@msn.com) with what the item is, asking price, and your contact info. The sale is between you and the buyer. Also, don't be afraid to list "Want to Buy" requests, or even "Want to Trade".

Now, if you want a broader approach, try HOSwap@Groups.io. The "groups.io" address is a newer version of the old Yahoo Groups. HOSwap is a site that you can list items for sale, WTB, or WTT. In addition to HO scale items, scenery, books, tools, paint, etc are allowed. Check it out! I've been a member for a couple of years and found a couple of "must haves" for my stash.

Local Author. Clinic attendee **Karl Kleeman** has announced his newly published book, "The Early Railroads of Whatcom County", is now available. Normally priced at \$29.95, Karl will have some for sale at the February clinic for \$25.00, and that includes a DVD as well. Co-authored by **William Rink**, this book will be a valuable addition to your railroad reference library!

Karl also co-authored A Rail-Trail Guide Along Bellingham Bay that he will also have for sale (\$6.00).



This is the story of the early railroads in Whatcom County, the furthest northwest county in the State of Washington. Four transcontinental railroads would eventually serve Whatcom County. Before these large railroads reached Whatcom County, four small railroads were incorporated in the county: the Bellingham Bay & British Columbia Railroad Co., the Bellingham Bay Railway and Navigation Co., the Fairhaven & Southern Railroad Co., and the Bellingham Bay & Eastern Railroad Co. This is not just the story of the building of these railroads, but includes the politics and real estate speculation involved as the major transcontinental railroads moved westward. We also share how the railroads impacted the communities they served.

We hope you enjoy this wonderful story, yes about the railroads but even more about the people of that era who were from so many different places and built the community we enjoy today.

Modeler's Showcase: Three entries this month:

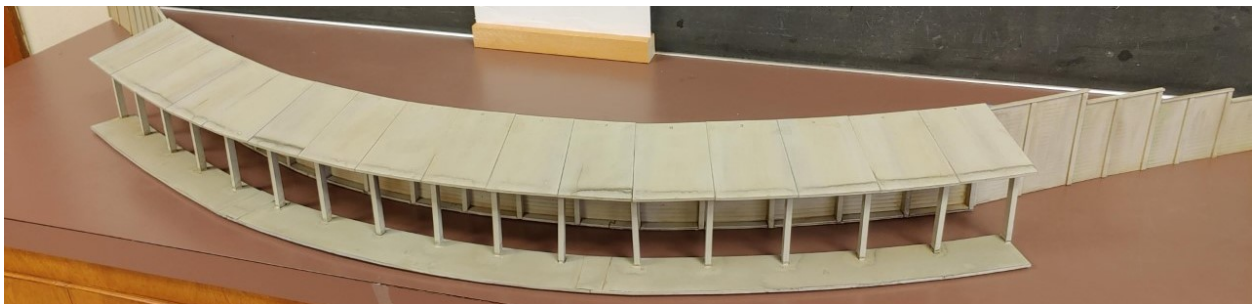
Dave Clarke's Sunset Models GN O-8, with DCC/Sound/Lighting, custom painted. Also an Oriental Limited GN caboose, custom painted:



Tom Hawkins United 2-8-0 with DCC, Sound, Lighting, remotored and custom painted and lettered for Tom's Port Thomas & Southern railroad (formerly a Ma & Pa loco):



Tom Buckingham's snow shed, custom built by Nick Muff, for Tom's layout. Built on a curve and a grade, no less! Nick used his laser cutter to fabricate the shed out of acrylic, with a scribed styrene rear wall. It measures 7 feet long including the wing walls!



Layout Photos: Send a photo or two of your layout (send to Al Carter at tabooma@msn.com). Note: this doesn't have to be a completed scene – people are very interested in progress photos: benchwork, partial scenery, track being installed, etc.

Here are a couple photos of **Terry Andrew's** layout. He handpainted the backdrop, following a tutorial on You Tube by **Chris Lyons**, who uses only two acrylic colors: green and black. Pretty impressive!



After a cookie break, the evening's featured clinician, **Al Carter**, led a group discussion on "Demise of the (local) Hobby Shop" – or, where do we get our trains and modeling supplies now?

Support Your Local Hobby Shop is always a good practice. Skagit County lost its only retail hobby shop a couple of years ago, and Mike O'Brien closed down XTrains, and while there is a Hobbytown USA in Bellingham (and Lynnwood), they don't seem to cater much to model railroaders.

Remaining model train type hobby shops in the Puget Sound Region include **Broadway Hobbies** (Everett), **Eastside Trains** (Kirkland), **The Electric Train Shop** (Burien), **Online Trains** (Tacoma), and north of the border, **Central Hobbies** in Vancouver B.C. Another hobby shop, while not catering to model railroaders, is **Skyway Hobbies** (Renton), that, as Ted Becker put it, probably has every known brand of model paint imaginable, as well as plenty of tools, supplies, and plastic models (ship models for your harbor scene!).

Also discussed were the "craft stores" like Hobby Lobby (which does carry some model railroad and other genuine modeling stuff), Michael's, and JoAnn Fabrics.

Art stores are a great source for painting and weathering supplies. Dakota Art in Mount Vernon and Bellingham have, among a ton of other stuff, individual Pan Pastels (weathering!). Another good store in Mount Vernon is Tri-Dee Arts. And Dick Blick has a store in Seattle, as well as a huge on-line store.

And of course, local hardware stores carry rattle can paint, glues, adhesives, some balsa and basswood, and small screws, etc. Al reports he once bought some #0 by ¼" wood screws from Hardware Sales in Bellingham (perfect for securing Caboose Industries ground throws). Local lumber yards are a great source to order homosote and things similar items that the big box stores don't carry. And don't forget Dollar Tree – lots of cool stuff in those stores!

But, when all else fails, we turn to the internet these days. Of course, there is good ol' Ebay, where you can find just about anything, it seems. And Amazon, with their Prime shipping, can get you that needed turnout or rail joiners in 2 days (and some of the prices on Amazon are quite competitive).

A separate PDF list of some of the websites discussed is included with this newsletter. But note: this is not an "all inclusive" list! I only listed some of the many site we discussed at the clinic. There are, obviously, many, many more websites that cater to model railroaders.

One site caught my attention: Shipwreck Beads down in Olympia. Thanks to **Jeff Moorman** for recommending this site! There is both a store and a website (shipwreckbeads.com). They have a huge inventory of tools and other beadmaking supplies that are quite applicable to our hobby. For example, they have 127 different jewelers pliers listed, and the prices are attractive, too.

Questions/Comments/Contributions to this newsletter should be sent to **Al Carter** at tabooma@msn.com. If you want to be removed from the mailing list, contact **Tom Buckingham** at tom@401kplanninggroup.com. To volunteer for a clinic, contact **Ted Becker** at rail.bird@at.net