



# The Mt Vernon NMRA Clinic



May 15, 2023

**Editor's Note:** I've been dragging my feet in publishing this newsletter because I hoped to announce that Ted Becker would be going home, but things are dragging on in his recovery and he is still stuck at the Everett Center. Besides, I thought it would be a good idea to check in with all of you mid-summer, so you don't forget about our clinic!

**From the Clinic Chair:** What better way to finish up a clinic "season" than a visit to Nick Muff and a viewing of his incredible layout! I counted over 20 visitors, eager to see what Nick has accomplished, and they weren't disappointed! It was fun to watch the jaws drop on first time visitors! Some folks had viewed Nick's effort many years ago and were amazed at how much Nick has accomplished.



**Ever wonder** how Nick got the F-7 into his basement? Check out this YouTube video: [Nick Muff puts a full-size F-unit cab in his basement! - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxAx7K4YLTA) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxAx7K4YLTA) For more great stuff from Nick, check the 4D's YouTube site: [Clinics - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjWp6F8wZPVNpC-1jt6PBLEp6277NuJ6Q) (https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjWp6F8wZPVNpC-1jt6PBLEp6277NuJ6Q) Among the many great clinics there, you'll find: [Nick Muff's teen adventures on Westside Lumber Co for Mt Vernon Clinic](#)

[of 4DPNR 19 Apr 2021 - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EOS9WNs3Avw&list=PLjWp6F8wZPVNpC-1jt6PBLEp6277NuJ6Q&index=56)

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**Announcing...** a new clinic co-chair. **Dale Bearden, MMR**, has stepped up and volunteered to help the clinic by becoming a co-chairperson. Dale is an excellent model railroader, focusing on the On30 scale with his Monson RR (with friend Karl Kleeman), as well as being experienced in many other scales, including live steam. Dale brings a lot to the "modeling table" and I look forward to fresh input to the clinic leadership team, which also includes **Tom Buckingham** (roster and newsletter publisher), **Steve McCartt** (photographer and videographer) and **Dave Falconer** (refreshments). And, of course, **Ted Becker**, (Chairman Emeritus) who remains quite active offers support and input via email. Thanks for joining the team, Dale!

**Ted Becker Update:** **Dave Falconer** and I paid a visit to Ted, who is still hospitalized (9-plus months) and I can report that he is hopeful that he can be released to go home sometime in July. He says he expects to be confined to a wheelchair for the foreseeable future. He has already designed (and redesigned several times) a new layout for his train room that will be smaller and wheelchair accessible. He welcomes emails at: [rail.bird@att.net](mailto:rail.bird@att.net) and visitors (arrange first). He is still at the Everett Center.

**New Feature – Pun/Joke/Quote of the Month:** From "Master Punster" **Steve McCartt**:

*Railroad Quote of the Month. "The only sure way of catching a train I discovered is to miss the one before." G.K. Chesterton*

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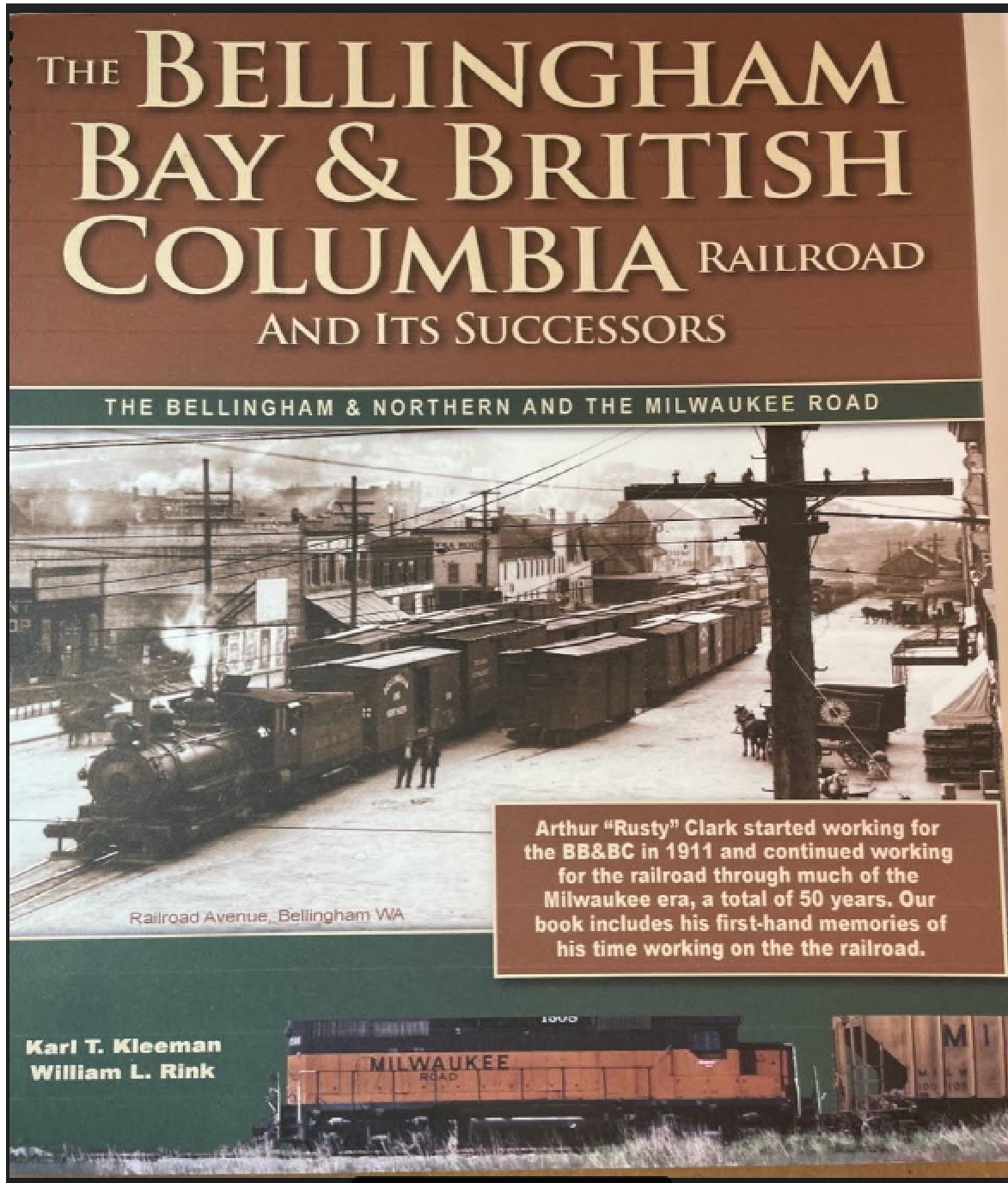
### Coming Down the Track:

<b>Aug 21-26</b>	<b>Dallas, Tx</b>	<b>NMRA National Convention</b>
<b>Sep 9</b>	<b>Alger</b>	<b>WSMRC Open House</b>
<b>Sep 18</b>	<b>Mount Vernon</b>	<b>Clinic: (TBD)</b>
<b>Oct 7-8</b>	<b>Lynden</b>	<b>Train Show/Swap Meet (Whatcom Co. Fairgrounds)</b>
<b>Oct 14</b>	<b>Alger</b>	<b>WSMRC Open House</b>
<b>Oct 16</b>	<b>Mount Vernon</b>	<b>Clinic: (TBD)</b>

**Looking Ahead to Next Season:** A quick poll of those present at the clinic came up with some suggestions for clinics next season: 1. Passenger Car Interiors (Mark Malmkar) 2. Detailing Track (Tom Buckingham) 3. Kitbashing Walthers Cornerstone Buildings (Bob Stafford) 4. Making Trees from Rabbit

Bush (Bob Stafford) 5. Weathering (TBD) 6. Detailing Structures (TBD) 7. Rust (Al Carter) This is by no means the final plan for next season, but it's a start! Thanks for the input, folks!

**Karl Kleeman** is at it again – he (along with co-author William L. Rink) has published another book:



Karl reports you can buy the book at Village Books in Bellingham, price: \$34.95. Karl also plans on having books available at local train shows at a discounted price. You can contact Karl at [trainswas@gmail.com](mailto:trainswas@gmail.com).

I found Chapter 11 particularly interesting as it dealt with the Milwaukee Road in Whatcom County, and I lived in B'ham during the late 70s, just before the demise of the Milwaukee. Fascinating!

**Wheelchair Lift** Since Ted will be confined to a wheelchair for a while, he needed a way to get from the garage floor up into his house (same height as the front steps). He designed a ramp, and Dave Falconer (right) and I planned to construct it. Then, he was gifted a wheelchair lift, or elevator, which you can see behind us. So Ted drew up new plans for a landing, using his CAD program on his computer, and materials were donated from a church group. Then Dave and I met up one morning and went over to Ted's to build the thing. Dave is a former house builder, among other things, so he was in charge and I was just his grunt. The landing turned out pretty darn good, if we do say so ourselves. In the background you can see some of Ted's R/C airplanes. His train room is off to the right, and will need a ramp, although it is only about a 1 foot rise, so it will be easier.





## Photo Tour of Visit to Nick:

Since we didn't have a "formal" sit-down clinic, there is no **Tool Time** or **Modeler's Showcase** for this edition of the newsletter. Well, not quite true... you could consider the rest of the newsletter a Modeler's Showcase of Nick's modelmaking and layout...

I took a few photos, which I'll start off with, and then we'll be treated to some much better pictures from company photographer **Steve McCartt**

**Dave Falconer** (left) in deep discussion with **Leigh Wilson**. Photo taken looking out the fireman's door of Nick's F-7 diesel cab.



**Joseph Finley** (back to camera) and **Bob Stafford** mulling over the possibilities....





**Tom Taylor** (left) supervising **Iver Johnson** as Iver is getting ready to take a picture; **Ron Nelson** (right) seems fascinated by the scene in front of him.



**Steve McCartt** (left) and **Don Jones** (center) paying close attention to Nick's explanation of one of his techniques.





## Photos by Steve McCartt:

*The KCS Union Station, one of the centerpieces of Nick's layout. Each of the 3 chandeliers has 84 individual LEDs! The station features a completely detailed basement and sub-basement.*



*This model of a Gorre & Daphetid swayback stockcar was built for Nick by his childhood friend, the late Kenneth Strawn.*



*A very rare one of a kind United-PFM 0-6-6-0 loco that Nick had custom painted/weathered, tuned and DCC added.*



*The Curran feed store, Gentry, Arkansas. Nick laser cut the components from his own CAD drawings and printed his own decals on his Alps printer.*





*A look down Main Street in Gentry, Arkansas.*



*The Dairy Queen in Gentry, Arkansas: Yes, that is a Blair Line kit, one of the few commercial kits on the layout. Of course, Nick added lighting, interior, figures and other details to give it his personal touch.*





*Kansas City Iron & Metal scrapyard in Kansas City with the "KCS Southern Belle" and the CB&Q "KCS Zephyr" in the background.*



*Nick isn't afraid to rust things up! Cool car up on the sign frame (just like the prototype, naturally)*





Two rare Columbia Valley Models house kits on either side of a Bachmann "Sears Craftsman" house, in the town of Noel, Missouri. Look closely and you'll see Nick and his wife of 60 years **Sue** in the upstairs room! (Columbia Valley Models was a short-lived craftsman kit company from Bellingham, WA).



The auto carrier semi-trailer was modeled after a real one from (now defunct) Estabrook Salvage in Marysville, WA (along I-5). Nick drew plans and laser cut the parts from styrene.





*Miss Bettie's Diner is a Walthers kit that to which Nick added a complete interior and lighting.*



*How about a swamp? This is Nick's in-progress version of a Louisiana swampy bayou. He 3d printed the cypress stumps and is grafting on trunks carved from cedar shake. Note the crocodiles and cabin on the right, complete with an animated rocking chair and banjo music!*



*Finally, ever wonder what the engineer's side of the cab of an F-7 looks like from the inside? Nick painstakingly restored the interior as well as the beautiful outside. The horn works (but is disconnected for safety reasons), as well as the headlight (very bright!), number boards, class lights and the lights for the gauges!*





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**Building Access:** Please remember to use the rear door (up the ramp off the parking lot). For security reasons, the door cannot be propped open and must remain closed and locked.

**Contact Info:** Temporary Clinic Chairperson is **Al Carter** ([tabooma@msn.com](mailto:tabooma@msn.com)). Clinic Co-Chair is **Dale Bearden, MMR** ([dale90rox@gmail.com](mailto:dale90rox@gmail.com)). Name badge maker/keeper and roster manager is **Tom Buckingham** ([tom@401kplanninggroup.com](mailto:tom@401kplanninggroup.com)). Refreshment provider is **Dave Falconer** ([dsfalconer@aol.com](mailto:dsfalconer@aol.com)). Photographer and Videographer is **Steve McCartt** ([smccartt@comcast.net](mailto:smccartt@comcast.net)). Newsletter writer/editor/publisher/photographer and general all around behind-the-scenes guy is **Al Carter** ([tabooma@msn.com](mailto:tabooma@msn.com)).

**Bring:** For “**Tool Time**” bring a favorite or new tool or new modeling supplies (paint, glue, whatever) to share with us. For “**Modeler’s Showcase**” bring your in-progress or completed models and show them off! For the “**Free/Sell**” table bring your unwanted items to sell or give away. Have photos of your layout or projects or railfanning trips, bring them on a USB thumb drive and we’ll show them with the **New Projector**.