

Superintendent's Annual Report to AGM 2016

This has been a good year for the 7th Division. Membership remains healthy at well over 300 strong and our finances are in excellent shape. Most importantly, our members are actively and enthusiastically involved in Model Railroading and the hobby is alive and well.

Selkirk Express 2016

The major event of 2016 was the Pacific Northwest Region Annual Convention, staged in Salmon Arm as "Selkirk Express 2016". David Walker chaired a committee who contributed an incredible amount of work to stage a highly successful event. (David's detailed report has been posted on our web site.) Sincere thanks to David, Doug Meyer, Lori Sebelley, Stu Solbakken, Ed Parsons, Jim Little, Mike Barone, Brian Kelly, Donna Hazell, Jim Guillaume and Gary Hazell on behalf of the entire membership of the division for a job well done.

Brian Pate's Klondike Mines Layout

Much has been written about the relocation of several sections of Brian Pate's Klondike Mines Railway to the Visitor's Centre in Dawson City and to the Revelstoke Railway Museum. You'll hear more from Mark Dance, featured speaker at this year's Modeler's Meet banquet, and you can see an excellent article by John Stevenson in the Sep-Oct issue of the Bulletin Board. The efforts of all those involved are a tribute to their commitment to Model Railroading and railway history but also to the amazing quality and historical accuracy of Brian Pate's original work.

Division Secretary

The position of 7th Division Secretary is one of those behind-the-scenes jobs that keep the organization informed and running smoothly. The Secretary doesn't get much attention if he's doing things well and that has definitely been the case for the past 7 years. Bob Leggett will be stepping down after this year's Annual General Meeting. I can't thank him enough for all he has done for the group. Your work has been greatly appreciated, Bob, by everyone you have served.

Past-Superintendent

On a similar note, I'd like to add my own thanks to our Past-Superintendent - Russ Watson. He accomplished a lot during his four-year term; most especially the creation of a Policy Manual which

documents the many facets of our organization. That manual is of great value and will serve as a reminder of Russ' efforts for many years to come.

Train Expo

The annual Vancouver Train Expo (VTEX) is set for its second year in the PNE Forum building after many years at the Cameron Centre in Burnaby. This year's show is bigger and even better and we wish the organizing committee every success. As an NMRA "sanctioned event", we are involved in actively promoting the show and many of our members volunteer at many levels. Peter Mueller, Tom Lundgren and Mike Batten are particularly heavily involved.

RMMBC

After VTEX 2015, some of our members expressed an interest in having an expanded "Modeler's Meet" as part of the annual train show. This eventually evolved into plans for the first Railway Modeler's Meet of BC (RMMBC) under Committee Chairman Rene Gourley. This gathering will illustrate a renewed commitment by the 7th Division to the numerous components of our hobby. The organizers are shooting for an event that sends participants home after a memorable and worthwhile experience and bring them back in increased numbers to RMMBC 2017 next May. We wish them great success.

Debate continues about running the "meet" in conjunction with the Vancouver Train expo. Traveling to the lower mainland is a major expense for those who reside elsewhere and there is concern about perhaps forcing members to choose between the two events. On the other hand, it's almost impossible for someone to participate fully in the "meet" while running a layout at the "show". There is a chronic shortage of volunteer to stage either event, let alone simultaneous events. We're trying very hard to find out what you, the membership, actually prefer and what will draw you to both events. Your opinion would be helpful and is urgently needed.

Video Library

The video library, like the VCR, has faded into history and the inventory will shortly be dissolved. Many thanks to Don & Gladys Gooch for maintaining and administering the collection.

Bill Hewlett Collection

So time ago, Bill Hewlett's widow very generously donated his extensive collection of slides to the 7th Division. After several years in limbo, the collection has finally been scanned to a DVD and uploaded to

our web-site. Special thanks to Bill Galovich for doing the scans for us. Mike Chandler and Brian Clogg both helped get the images copied and posted onto the 7th Division web site. They are worth a look.

Membership

Your executive wants to make sure your NMRA membership is even more valuable to you. In 2017, we're resolved to try staging more "local" events, so you can meet other modelers in your area and increase your enjoyment of the hobby. Frankly, we don't know if that will actually interest you. Maybe you're perfectly happy with the status quo – maybe you'd attend a local gathering every few months or maybe that's not appealing. We'll try to find out through the usual sort of surveys and opinion polls, so please let us know what you think.

Electronic Elections

In anticipation of a possible postal strike in Canada, the 7th Division set-up a system to allow for voting by e-mail for the Pacific Northwest Region elections. The exercise went well, with an equal number of ballots cast by e-mail and conventional mail. Interestingly, PNR passed a motion that will allow electronic elections in future at the Regional level.

The Division decided to experiment with an e-mail election for the three executive positions up for renewal in 2016. Participation was about what we expect – 45 ballots cast. Many opted not to vote because it was essentially an election by acclamation. Our Constitution & Bylaws currently require a vote only by Canada Post or in person at an AGM, unless the election is uncontested (by acclamation).

Paper balloting will cost us roughly \$370 – an unnecessary expense in the age of e-mail. A vote at the AGM means only about 20-30 attendees will determine the results for over 300 non-attendees. Your Board of Directors believes that electronic elections are the most cost effective way to conduct elections that reflect the wishes of all members and we will be proposing enabling changes to our Constitution. We will definitely continue to accept ballots cast by regular mail by those who prefer that method.

New B. C. Societies Act

The B. C. Government has enacted new legislation that requires us to resubmit our Constitution and Bylaws to the Registrar. Ken Rutherford has very kindly agreed to take charge and Steve Stark has offered his very able assistance. The changes must be submitted by Nov 2018, and we plan to have our new documents ready for ratification at a General Meeting well before then.

Annual General Meeting

The second annual Railway Modeler's Meet of BC is planned for May 5-7, 2017, while the Vancouver Train Expo will again be held in November. Your Board is discussing appropriate dates for our next Annual General Meeting. There are Constitutional requirements to be met where the meetings are concerned and our fiscal year to consider. All will be addressed by the proposed submission under the Societies Act and will require approval from the general membership.

We have posted the annual reports from our Board members and Standing Committee members on the web-site. The reports can now be viewed by every member and comments are welcome.

First Term Comments

As my first year as Superintendent ends, I'd like to thank my fellow Directors (Dan Rowsell, Bob Leggett, Larry Sebelley and Ken Rutherford) for their service to the organization and the help and advice they've so generously provided. Past Superintendents Russ Watson and Scott Calvert have both helped me immensely.

I am continually impressed by the quality of the individuals who keep this group functioning. The contributions of people like Web Master - Brian Clogg; Bulletin Board Editor - John Stevenson and Publicity Coordinator - Dick Sutcliffe are quite astounding, as is the work done by Mike Chandler, John Green, Rene Gourley, and Mike Barone. It is greatly appreciated. I suppose the reader might think I'm just listing names from our executive and Standing Committee rosters, but these people are invaluable to the 7th Division and it would be impossible for the group to function as it does without them. To a new guy, in a new job, they have been especially helpful and generous with their time and advice – and I thank each of them most sincerely.

John Martin

Superintendent 7th Division PNR NMRA