



# Canadian Flyer

Volume 23, Issue 5

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## Operating and collecting toy trains

### CTTA 2024-25

[canadiantoytrains.org](http://canadiantoytrains.org)

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### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Spring is in full swing and our April meet was another big one, with over 65 in attendance! Big special thanks to our American friends who came up from WA state to be with us for another great day of train talk, a great lunch and lots of buying and selling. With warmer weather it's time to shift into BBQ Season, so get ready for grilled burgers and smokies for the next 2 meets before Summer break.

Our CTTA Modular layout was busy running all weekend at the Railway Museum of BC for the 1st Annual Buddy & Friends Children's Festival May 3&4. Our layout stayed in place after the March Train Show. Thanks to my fellow operating crew Mark Horne, Jim Barrett, Brian Kraus, Dave Emmington and Keith Herndier. Thanks also to Gordon Hall, who also had a feature display with many tracks of trains running that kids can control.

Right now, we are facing some rough times ahead for our hobby. Locally, many of the Exec & Organizing Committee for the Vancouver Train Expo have stepped down after several years and we have yet to have anyone to step up to take over as the show lead. Internationally, the Tariffs imposed by the US on China and other countries have the model train industry filled with turmoil and uncertainty. Fortunately, many industry manufacturers have presented a united front to voice their concerns that the hobby is in serious danger of being wiped out. We can only hope that things improve quickly. Production of our next few Club Car programs from Atlas O and MTH are on hold.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our next meet, as the weather warms and we see more of the Sun. I hope you're getting in some time enjoying and running your trains!

Kyle

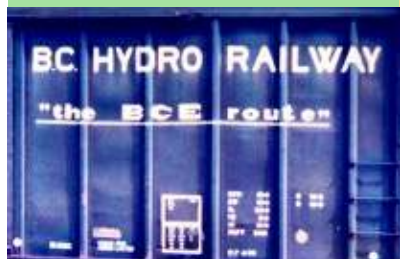
## 2024-25 CANADIAN CLUB MEETS

meetings at Charles Rummel Community Centre, Burnaby  
doors open at 11am UPCOMING DATES:

SUNDAY MAY 25, 2025

SUNDAY JUNE 29 2025

SUNDAY SEPT 28 2025 AGM







a beautiful April Sunday

APRIL  
door  
prize  
Winners  
--->

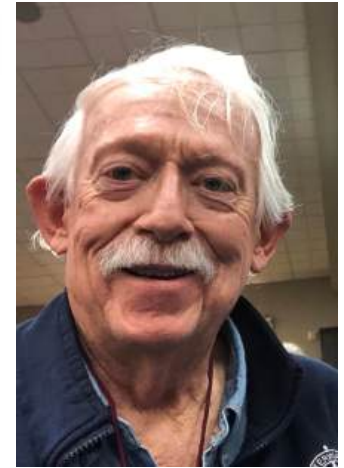




## IN MEMORIAM — ROBIN DODSON

The executive of CTTA are sad to announce the passing of Robin Dodson, esteemed member of CTTA and its predecessor the Canadian Division of TTOS. Robin served on the executive, and carried out the duties of chairman of the Canadian Division's 2001 TTOS National Convention with elegance and wit.

Over the years, Robin collected tinplate trains of all sizes and kinds.



While residing in Nanaimo, he made and posted excellent videos of his standard gauge and O gauge trains. You can view Robin's trains on our YouTube Channel here:

[https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLuVS0uFVu-V9bnQ9-HXVRqWd-QP\\_ZwggG&si=qelVi4FVEhrWcB4p](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLuVS0uFVu-V9bnQ9-HXVRqWd-QP_ZwggG&si=qelVi4FVEhrWcB4p)

After relocating to Ontario, Robin returned to a focus on British 0 Gauge trains. In 2022, CTTA was asked to develop and present a webinar on the history of Toy Trains for the Toronto Railway Museum. Robin wrote the chapter on the history of British trains.

When CTTA launched our new website in 2014, Robin had lots to offer and immediately added his authoritative expertise to Charles Reif's article, "A Brief History of Toy Trains for Canada":

[https://www.canadiantoytrains.org/toytrain\\_history/a-brief-history-of-toy-trains-for-canada/](https://www.canadiantoytrains.org/toytrain_history/a-brief-history-of-toy-trains-for-canada/)

A co-founder of the COOTTS collectors' meets while in Nanaimo, Robin more recently joined David Cook in sharing tables on the Ontario model train show circuit, where he will be greatly missed. For those members who have been attending the York meets in Pennsylvania, Robin often joined the 'Canadian Contingent & Friends' for a week of serious train browsing. A true gentleman.

Our condolences to Anne and to the Dodson family.



Robin riding the rails at the Strasburg Railway in Pennsylvania



a younger Robin exploring Britain's railway history.



Anne and Robin flanked by Gail and David Cook where they reconnected at one of the Ontario train shows.

**EVENTS:**

May 25, St. Thomas ON.  
**ST. THOMAS MODEL TRAIN SHOW**  
 Elgin County Railway Museum  
 Info: [collectorshows.ca](http://collectorshows.ca)

June 7 & 8, Dorval (Montreal)  
**MONTREAL MODEL TRAIN exposition**  
 Info: [montrealmodeltrainexposition.com](http://montrealmodeltrainexposition.com)

**PREVIEWS:**

Aug 23 & 24, St. Constant (Montreal)  
**A GREAT PASSION FOR MODEL TRAINS**  
 ExpoRail, The Canadian Railway Museum  
 Info: [www.exporail.org](http://www.exporail.org)

Sept 13 & 14, Edmonton AB  
**GREATER EDMONTON MODEL TRAIN SHOW**  
 Info: [www.mmrf.ab.ca](http://www.mmrf.ab.ca)



The famous Sicomous CPR station/hotel, as modelled beautifully by the late Jorge Beristain in 2018.  
 Below, a rare photo of the first Sicomous station, built in 1890 and destroyed by fire in 1898.  
 photos thanks to Lost Hotels & Bars BC on Facebook



Editor: Charles Reif

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finishing a modification of an old  
 Lionel General loco  
 without the benefit of 3D printing.  
 nuts!



what have you been working on?

# TRAINSHOWS.NET™

TRAINSHOWS.NET  
 TrainShows.net

TrainShows.net is your complete guide to finding upcoming model train sho...



**AUGUST  
 23 & 24,  
 2025**

**RAILWAY MUSEUM, RIDES,  
 MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITIONS  
 AND  
 RETAILERS**



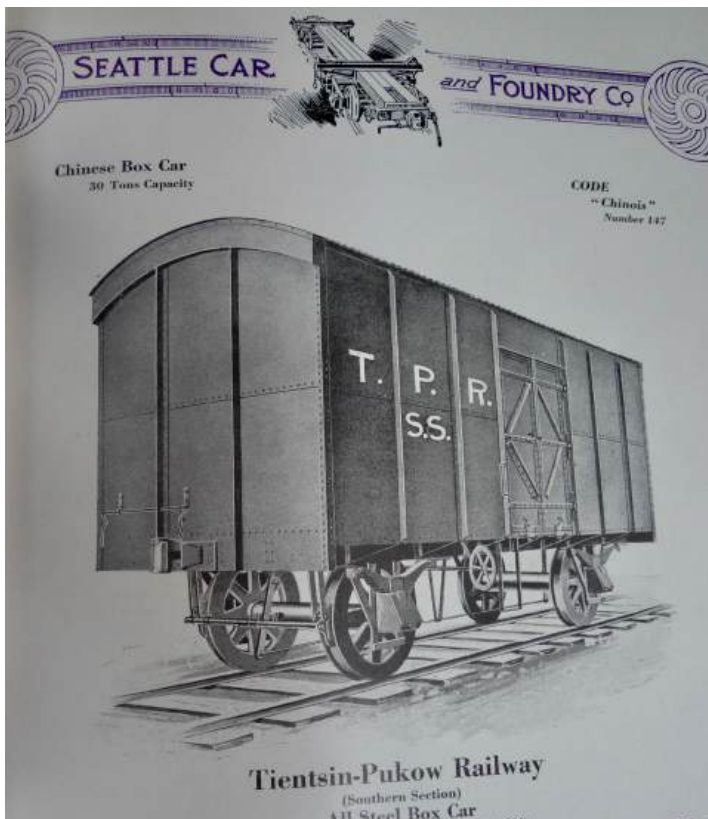
**A GREAT  
 PASSION  
 FOR  
 MODEL  
 TRAINS**



**EXPORAIL, THE  
 CANADIAN RAILWAY  
 MUSEUM**

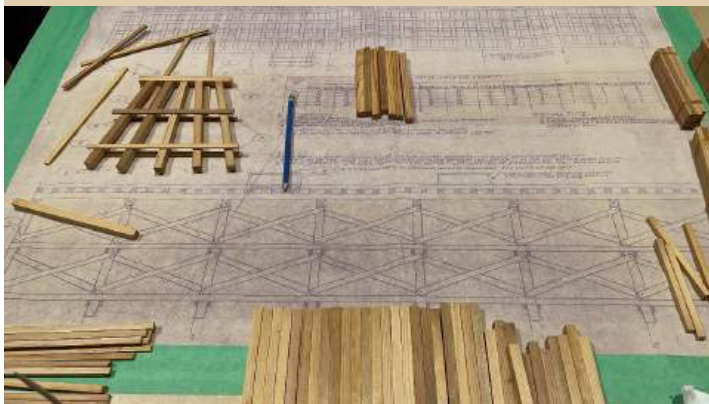
110, RUE ST PIERRE  
 SAINT-CONSTANT (QC) J5A 1G7  
 INFO@EXPORAIL.ORG  
 WWW.EXPORAIL.ORG





back in the day, the boxcars were going to China

Mike Munk found an unbuilt trestle kit from the 70's and presto! looking fine.



posted by Ivan Dow for Montreal Model Train Expo  
[see Events page 4]

36 years raising Money for Sun Youth. The Montreal Model Train Exposition. June 7 & 8 Dorval Arena.



**THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST DIVISION  
& THE SEATTLE CHAPTER  
OF THE  
TRAIN COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION**



## Do you operate or collect toy trains? Come be our guest.

If you have O or S or Standard gauge trains or related accessories that you would like to sell, bring them. Interested in buying, that's fine too!

We meet at the Shoreline-Lake Forest Park Senior Center  
18560 1st Ave NE, Shoreline, WA. 8 Sundays per year.

Our PNW Division meets at Chehalis, WA Moose Lodge 3 Sundays per year.

The TCA was founded in 1954 and currently has  
over 25,000 members worldwide.

Our Seattle Chapter Meets start at 9AM.

Remaining Seattle Chapter 2025 Meet dates:

May 18th, August 10th, October 12th, November 9th & December 14th.

Our PNW Division Meets in Chehalis start at 10AM.

Remaining PNW Division 2025 Meet dates: June 8th & September 28th.

Any questions please contact:

Dennis, TCA Seattle Chapter President at: (206) 919-2086

David, TCA PNW Division President at: (425) 478-9031

1/1

Don McKay flags  
a blue BC Hydro  
double-door  
boxcar:  
"the BCE route"



## Layering a Forest Backdrop

by Charles Reif

a friend wanted his forest to appear to continue over hills into the distance.



step 1: once the molded plaster (or paper mache) hill slope is in place, rough in the distant hills on the wall in a light green tone.

[do a sketch plan on paper first, so you know where you are going with each step.]



step 2: paint the foreground hill line in a medium green down to touch the plaster hill.

then do a ragged top edge with dry brushing to suggest tree tops.

[a slightly bluish green suits conifers.]



step 3: sketch in tree forms in a dark green over the medium green. they will be what stands out behind the modelled trees.

[practice on paper until you can do quick gestural forms. you don't want too much detail.]



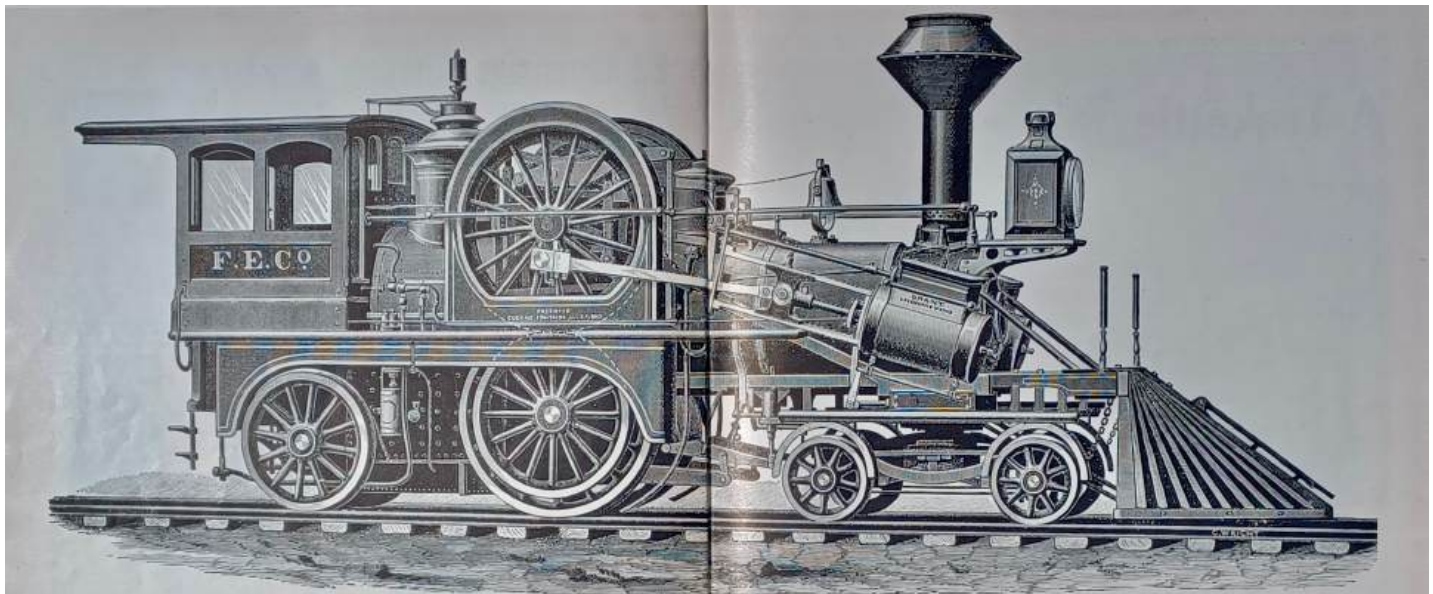
step 4: brush a film of thinned bluish- green paint sketchily over the distant hills to only suggest shadow and form.

[distant objects should appear less detailed than nearer.]

now the foreground landscaping work brings it to life.



*One of a Kind Department: from the archives (Model Trains magazine, January 1955)*



FROM THE AGE OF STEAM

## The engine that chased itself faster

### PRINCIPAL DIMENSIONS OF THE FONTAINE ENGINE

Cylinders, diameter and stroke	16" x 24"
Top or driving wheels, diameter	72"
Intermediate or friction wheels, diameter	56"
Bottom or rolling wheels, diameter	70"
Total wheel base	21'-5"
Total weight of engine in working order, pounds	94,000
Total weight on drivers, pounds	34,000
Built by	Grant Locomotive Works
Year built	1890

BY ANDY ANDERSON

IF EUGENE FONTAINE had been content to stick to smokestacks, of which he was a successful designer, he probably would have gained little fame outside of railroad circles. But Mr. Fontaine had an idea: he would design a locomotive that would be faster than any then in existence. He came up with the contraption pictured on these pages, and the resulting controversy as to its merits spread over the nation. That was back in 1890 and 1891.

Fontaine's idea was to increase the speed of his engine by having the 72-inch drivers work on 56-inch friction wheels which were attached to the 70-inch rolling wheels making contact with the rails. Thus, he reasoned, the engine would move along the track at a faster pace than it would if the 72-inch drivers were in direct contact with the rails.

It worked out that way, too. Officials of the Canada Southern, on which the engine was tried, staunchly supported the inventor's claim and pointed out that actually the friction wheels were

just toothless gears. Anyone knew you could increase speed with a chain of gears!

What they overlooked was the fact that, as you increase speed by the use of gears you also increase the power needed to drive the first gear in the chain — just as, in reverse example, a block and tackle will allow a man to lift twice as much weight as he can lift with a single pulley, but he must pull twice as much rope in order to do it.

So, in reality, the Fontaine locomotive with its 72-inch drivers accomplished no more than a conventional locomotive (of the same power) with 90-inch drivers working directly on the rails. In fact, it didn't accomplish as much, for some energy was lost in added friction and in slippage between the wheel treads. What seemed to be an 80 per cent advantage turned out to be a 20 per cent loss.

The controversy went on for months.

It was finally brought to an end when the *Railroad Gazette* printed a letter describing a "new-type velocipede" which "reinforces the power of the operator by means of the duplex action of his legs and arms, the backward thrust of the former propelling the vehicle by the rotation of the crank, while his arms simultaneously are pushing it forward." Like this:



Model Trains 37



Chris Uhlig shared photos of his lively layout at the April 12th Prescott Model Railway Group in Brockville Ontario

