

# COOTTs ISLAND NEWS

SUMMER 2025 EDITION ISSUE #6

BY KEN LOCKLEY

## COOTTs MAY 4th MEET:

It was gratifying to get 22 Island O Gaugers at our May 4th recent Cootts Meet. Perfect driving conditions to the "Oliver Woods Rec. Center". We had a reasonable amount of buying & selling to keep everyone browsing the tables. We also had two ladies present. The Muffins seemed to go over well, making a change from donuts. An important aspect to this meet is seeing some new faces. New CTTA Member David Tomalty from top of the Malahat was present. A good time had by all !!!! As usual Jim Sutherland did a great job of M/Cing and running the auction. Thanks Jim!!!!





### **DOOR PRIZE WINNERS ;**

Brian Driscoll

Greg Clarke

Stewart Vinnels

Jim Sutherland M/Ced the meeting and ran the auction. Russ Etherington is the Communication contact. The next Cootts will be announced later.



### **Difficult times ahead for the Hobby Industry**

The retailers in the industry have some real concerns as to how they are going to keep their shelves full. With many of the items we take for granted are sourced from China so the next few months is going to be tuff, till the USA and China can come to a tariff arrangement.

Canadian hobby dealers already have a dollar disadvantage and now face increasing costs and availability problems. Swap meets and Train Shows are going to become more important as a means of keeping the hobbyist able to buy.

This situation is largely overcome in O gauge with train clubs such as the monthly CTTA meets in Burnaby and twice yearly Cootts meets. It was great to see a better attendance in the recent May 4 /25 meet.



## KEN SHOWERS LAYOUT TOUR

Russ and I had the opportunity to visit Ken's layout in mid May. Ken has been a railroad enthusiast all his life, starting at four years old with a little clockwork Motor Loco shown in photo #1. His layout is a mixture of Standard Gauge, American Flyer and O Gauge, with rolling stock from all suppliers.

What I zeroed in on, was the number of passenger trains that he has. Maybe the passenger cars lead him to be an investor in the "VICTORIA PACIFIC RR" that in 1967 provided a tourist passenger train service in the Victoria area. During this period, Ken acquired his B.C. Steam Engineers ticket.

As a young man, in his working life, he served an apprenticeship at Meston's Auto Body Shop and Peter Pollen Ford. These skills Ken has used continually throughout his life.

In the mid 1967, Ken joined the Saanich Fire Department until he retired in 1989. It was during this period that Ken and Heather and their 2 kids built their outstanding log home in a wilderness setting in Metchosen. Many people have enjoyed the beautiful atmosphere that a log home provides.



## KEN SHOWERS TOUR con't

You really can't leave the property without visiting his workshop. His body work and mechanical skills are apparent with several cars under wraps. These include a 1934 Packard and a 1935 Ford pickup which is Ken's every day car. I think the highlight of his skills are most evident in the 1960 Corvette you see in the photos.



Thanks Ken for the opportunity to visit and chat about your life with trains, cars and hobbies.

Thanks also to Russ for being co-pilot on this project, great fun.....

KL.

## **OBITUARY:** ROBIN M. DODSON

MARCH 30, 1943—MAY 7, 2025

Our model train world lost a great supporter & enthusiast on May 7/25. Robin was one of those memorable characters that made the hobby interesting. Full of enthusiasm and a promotor of new people to the hobby. His interest in different scales kept him buying and selling up to the end. British and European as well as our North American rolling stock.

This enthusiasm we see today in our COOTTS Meets which was started and promoted by Robin with the help of Larry Cleghorn and Brian Driscoll.





## **COLLECTORS CORNER:** by Ladi Kusnyerik

Lionel Corporation introduced diesel locomotives to their train line in 1948 which instantly turned into a huge success with their 2333 NYC and especially their SF F3 units. As collectors, we all know the majority of the F3 sets are extremely desirable especially the later road names such as Rio Grande and Milwaukee locomotives, but I'm going to throw a switch, and talk about the GP7 and GP9's. I hope you not disappointed.

Geeps, as that was the slang for General Power diesel locomotives introduced by Lionel Corporation in 1955 as a replacement for the popular early Alcos. They produced GP7's first in their diesel line and in 1958 introduced GP9's which had the popular Dynamic brake blister added to the roof. The Geeps featured Magne-Traction, operating couplers, 3 position e-unit, operating horn, illumination on both ends and lots of extra cab details. Although this was supposed to be the norm for Lionel Geeps, there was one Geep that came out literally bare bone. Pennsy 2028. I would expect this much later in years when the Lionel Corporation implemented drastic cuts to quality and chose the cheap end of the spectrum,



but not when they were introduced for the first time! Number 2028 had no operating horn, no battery cover, no ornamental horns or handrails, no cab lenses or number boards and illumination on one end only. Whaaat? Are you real? Maybe that's why #2028 was a one year production only. But don't get fooled, there is a very rare variation of this locomotive sold with a tan coloured frame instead of the more common user unfriendly gold paint. I only have the common variation, but I made it special with all the bling she deserves and added handrails, ornamental horns and number boards. That's what I'm talking about.

Continued on next page...



Continued from page 6.....

Even though I find all Geeps equally attractive and desirable, there are two Geeps worth mentioning and they do fall under the extremely difficult to locate category. It is the Milwaukee solid orange stripe through cab #2328 and the Chesapeake and Ohio 2347 made specifically for Sears, the one I never came across nor have ever seen for sale anywhere. But just recently I was fortunate enough to find the original solid stripe Milwaukee #2328 through a friend and I am very thankful for it. I guess personal miracles do happen sometimes, with or without help. LK.



THANKS LADI FOR YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND SHARING WITH US !!

### **FOR SALE:**

Train storage cabinet 42" wide and 39" high. It has 7 shelves and will hold 28-35 boxcars.

Two doors with magnetic lock. Price \$60.00 contact Ken at [lk.lockley@outlook.com](mailto:lk.lockley@outlook.com)



## **PAST AND UP COMING EVENTS**

PAGE 7

JUNE 29/25	CTTA MEETING AND AUCTION, BURNABY
AUGUST 24/25	PARKSVILLE RAILROAD DAYS AT THE PARKSVILLE MUSEUM
SEPT. 28/2025	CTTA MEETING AND AGM. BURNABY
OCT. 26/2025	CTTA MEETING AND AUCTION, BURNABY
OCT-19 /2025	<b>COOTTS MEET DATE /OLIVER WOODS CENTER</b>

September is the month for renewing your CTTA membership.

Annual dues are \$25.00 for the next year,

**CTTA membership:** Contact James Barrett 604 939 8035 or barrettoo7@gmail.com

### **BRIAN DRISCOLL**

Parts and Service

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