



Blueridge model railroader recognized

submitted by Brian Gardner

Long-time Blueridge resident and model railroader Graham Stokes has been recognized for his work promoting the hobby.

Graham was presented with the Ross Heriot Memorial Gold Spike Award for his volunteer work. The award was presented May 1 during a virtual meeting of the Railway Modelers Meet of BC.

The award is presented annually to the individual or individuals who have devoted their time and effort to assist model railroaders. Named after Ross Heriot, an ardent model railroader who died in 1976, the award has been given since 1970.

"I was surprised to receive the award," Graham said.

Graham quarterback's a monthly meeting (online since the pandemic) of model railroaders from Deep Cove to Pemberton and the Sunshine Coast. Participants on the calls go over their latest modelling, provide tips on different projects and often show presentations of their model railroad layouts. Photos and videos of real trains are often on the agenda.

Getting the meeting notices out, preparing the agenda and running the meeting is all part of Graham's work.

As you might expect, Graham has a layout of his own. He models in HO scale, which is 1/87 the size of actual railroad equipment. His "Hidden Prairie Valley Railway" is set in approximately 1955 when steam and diesel locomotives were running. It is loosely modelled on scenes from the CPR in southern B.C., including the Kettle Valley Railway.

"Model railroading has been multi-generational in my family," said Graham. "My father got me interested when I was ten years old and my son was interested when he was younger."

As to the current state of the hobby, Graham says there "isn't the big wave of popularity like in the past when kids got trains sets at Christmas." However, Graham mentions young people leading the way for restoration of old trains in England and he points out how many kids always rush to the front of the Skytrain when going for a ride.

Graham joins a long list of Blueridge residents making a mark by contributing to the community in a variety of ways. Join us in congratulating Graham!

Interested in model railroading but not sure how to start? Give Graham a call at (604) 929-4394. Open to all ages!