

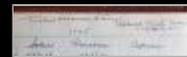
# Tucker's Hardware and Hobbies 1906 - 2014

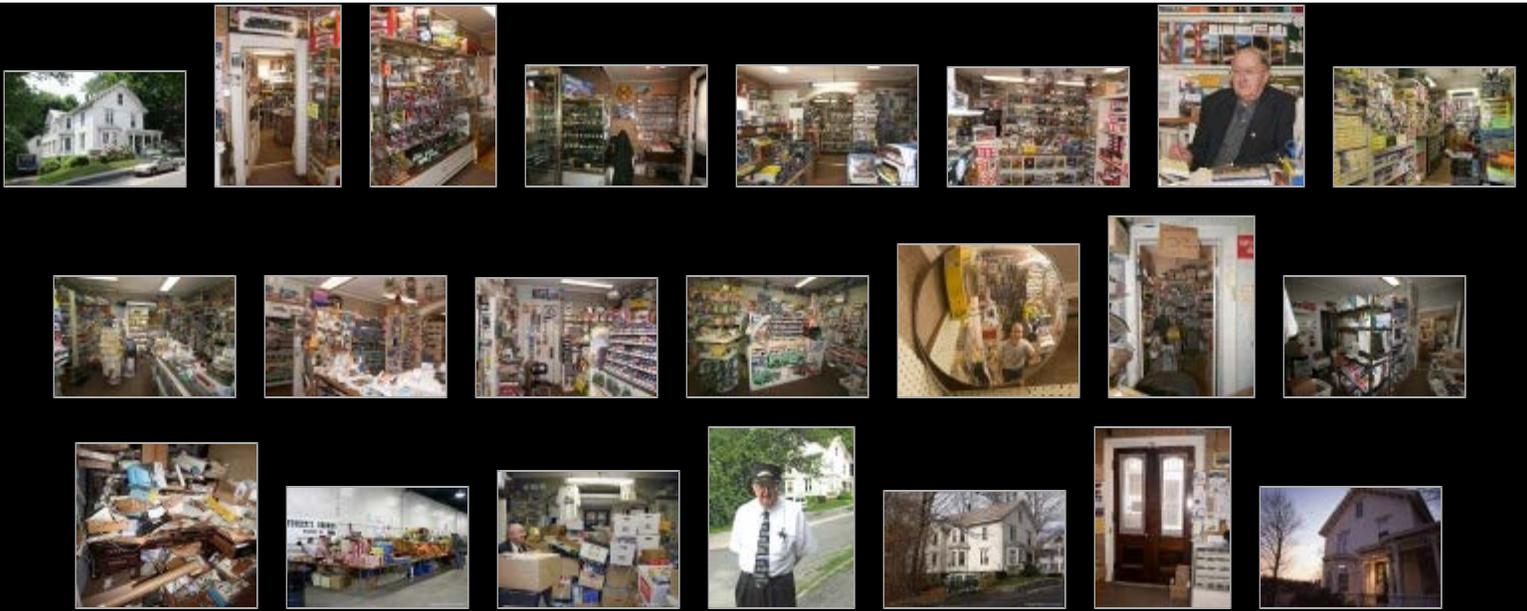
For 108 years, the Tucker family name stood in front of a Warren store. In 1906, Arthur S. Tucker and a business partner opened a Main Street hardware store in Warren, Massachusetts. After Arthur died suddenly in 1945, his grandson Robert A. "Bob" Buck ran the store with help from his parents and some part-time employees starting at the age of 15, working on weekends and in the afternoons after school. He took over full time after graduating high school in 1947 and then in 1955, he purchased the business from his parents and continued to operate Tucker's Hardware, later with help from his wife and eventually his children. Over the years, Bob's deep interest in railroads led to an increasing amount of store space devoted to trains. Finally in 1981, the hardware business was sold, and he decided to try making a living exclusively on the railroad hobby.

In 1981, Tucker's Hobbies was born, located in the house where Bob grew up watching trains as a child. His goal was to provide good service and a wide range of quality products focused on railroading in the New England area. It also served as one more excuse for Bob to continue to eat, drink, and breathe trains during every waking moment. His 30-year service as Show Director for the Amherst Railway Society's annual Big Railroad Hobby Show gave him more opportunities to spread his enthusiasm about the hobby to new generations of young people. Over the years, many customers became good friends and shared model railroad operating sessions, photographs and conversation, slide shows and movie nights, dinners and trackside visits, good stories and bad jokes.

A chapter closed when Bob passed away on his birthday, October 12, 2011, at the age of 82. What began as one man's dream 33 years ago has come to an end. This photo gallery shows some pictures taken during the history of the Tucker's Hardware and Tucker's Hobbies stores. Photo captions provide additional details.

Click here to [start at the beginning](#), or click on any photo to see a larger version or to navigate through the set. Click [here](#) to download the whole gallery as an Adobe PDF file (8MB).

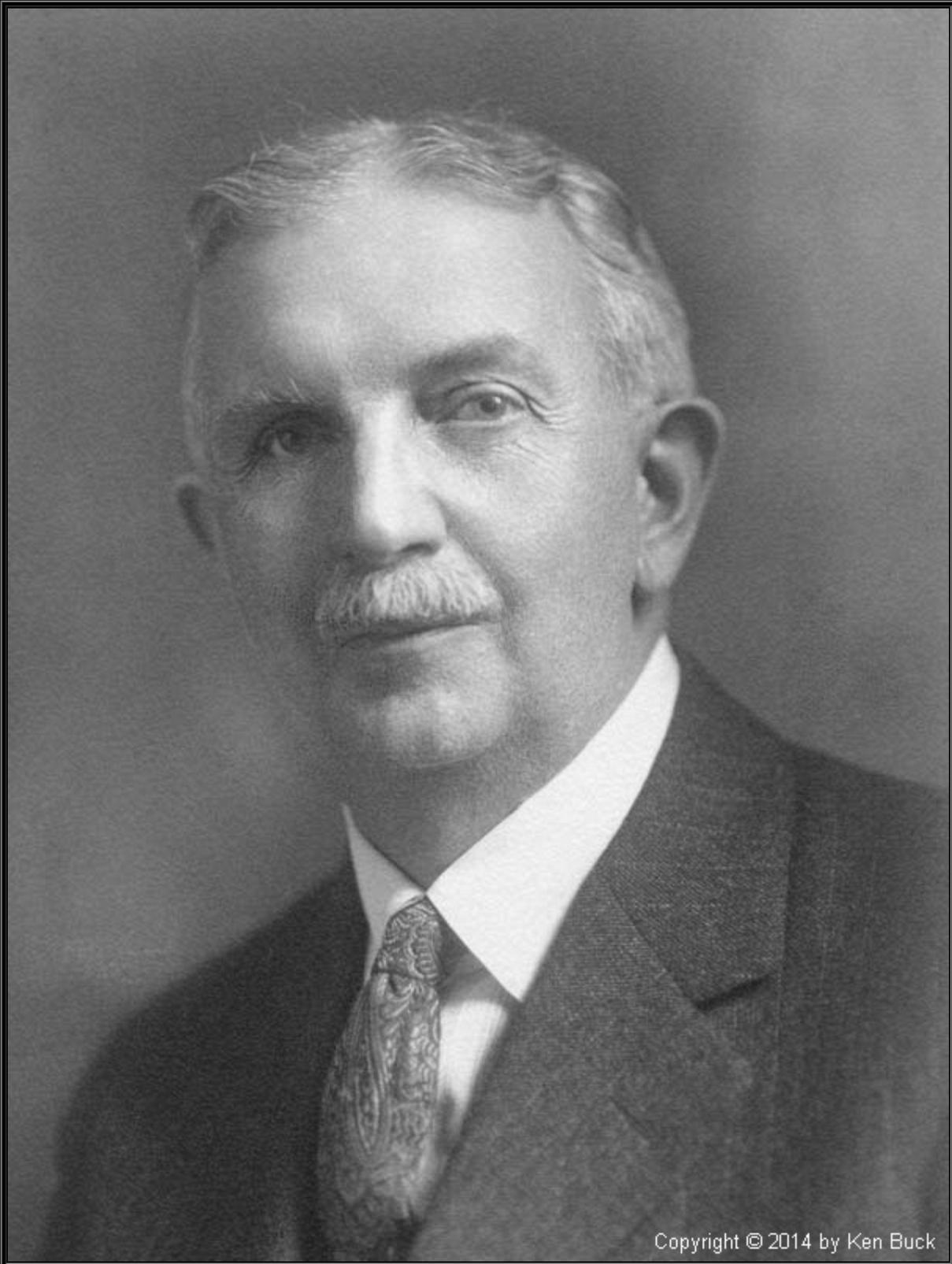




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Arthur Simpson Tucker (1872-1945), Bob Buck's grandfather, was originally from Monson, Mass. and moved to Warren around 1900 where he worked at the Torkelson gun factory and a nearby fish rod factory, before joining with C. D. Perkins to purchase a hardware store on Main Street. Arthur was a member of the Masons, a deacon in the

Congregational Church, and appears to have passed along his sense of humor and enjoyment of an active social life along to his daughter and grandson. Bob's middle name was Arthur, and Arthur's last name headed the hardware store that Bob took over and later the hobby shop that he started. Arthur's wife Alice Demond grew up on Bacon Street in the same house where their grandson Bob later grew up and opened the hobby store.



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Arthur Tucker's hardware store on Main Street, Warren, about 1940. Arthur's longtime employee William G. "Bill" Wood is standing next to the gas pump. The top floor was rented out as the Masons' hall, and the second floor served variously as a millinery, a doctor's office, a hairdressers, and living quarters. After Arthur died in 1945, the store was taken over by his 15 year old grandson Bob Buck with help from his parents, until he purchased the business from them in 1955. In later years, Bob and his wife Sylvia renovated the second floor apartment and lived above the store.



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Arthur S. Tucker (on right) and Arthur's longtime employee William G. "Bill" Wood (on left, standing next to the gas pump), in front of Arthur Tucker's hardware store on Main Street, Warren, about 1940.



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Fire at Arthur Tucker's hardware store on February 10, 1942 (a bad luck day, the same date that he died, 3 years later). It started around the chimney and burned the roof out, destroying the top floor Masons' hall and damaging the stock, but the rest of the building was saved.

*my glass*  
**A. S. TUCKER** **C. D. PERKINS**  
**TUCKER & PERKINS**  
**Hardware, Paints, Oils, Automobile Supplies**  
**WARREN, MASS.** *1/18-21*

**A. S. TUCKER** **C. D. PERKINS**  
**A. S. TUCKER**  
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**WARREN, MASS.** *Nov 26-21*  
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**ARTHUR S. TUCKER**  


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*My darling Marjorie* Copyright © 2014 by Ken Buck

Some letterheads from the early days of the store. It was operated as Tucker & Perkins from 1906 until 1919 when Arthur Tucker bought out his partner and placed his own name on the signboard..

*Trickett Hardware Store*

*1955*

*Robert A. Buck - Owner*  
*as of April 1, 1955*

<u>Sales</u>	<u>Purchases</u>	<u>Expenses</u>
0 2491.04	2253.06	

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Hardware store ledger book entry by Marjorie A. Buck recording transfer of ownership to her son Bob on April 1, 1955.



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Open house at the hardware store sometime in the 1950s. The store is now shorter after the third floor was removed due to fire damage. The Tucker's Hardware Store sign is the same one used by Arthur Tucker, covered over with new paint.



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View inside the hardware store on February 20, 1956 showing an early American Flyer train display nestled in between the housewares and trash cans. Photo by Robert A. Buck.



Hardware store open house event in 1960.



Bob and Sylvia Buck receive new Rambler and congratulations from Chester C. Putney, Executive Secretary of NEHDA, and Harold F. Fenerty, Sales Promotion Manager for American Motors. At left is John J. Lane, North Brookfield, Mass., auto dealer who arranged to have a Rambler on demonstration in front of Tucker's during Hardware Week. Copyright © 2014 by Ken Buck

Bob and Sylvia Buck win a new Rambler station wagon in July 1961 as part of a hardware store promotion campaign.

# SPRING OPEN HOUSE

AT

## TUCKER'S HARDWARE STORE

"THE PLACE TO GO FOR THE BRANDS YOU KNOW"



***SEE YOU AT TUCKER'S  
IN WARREN***

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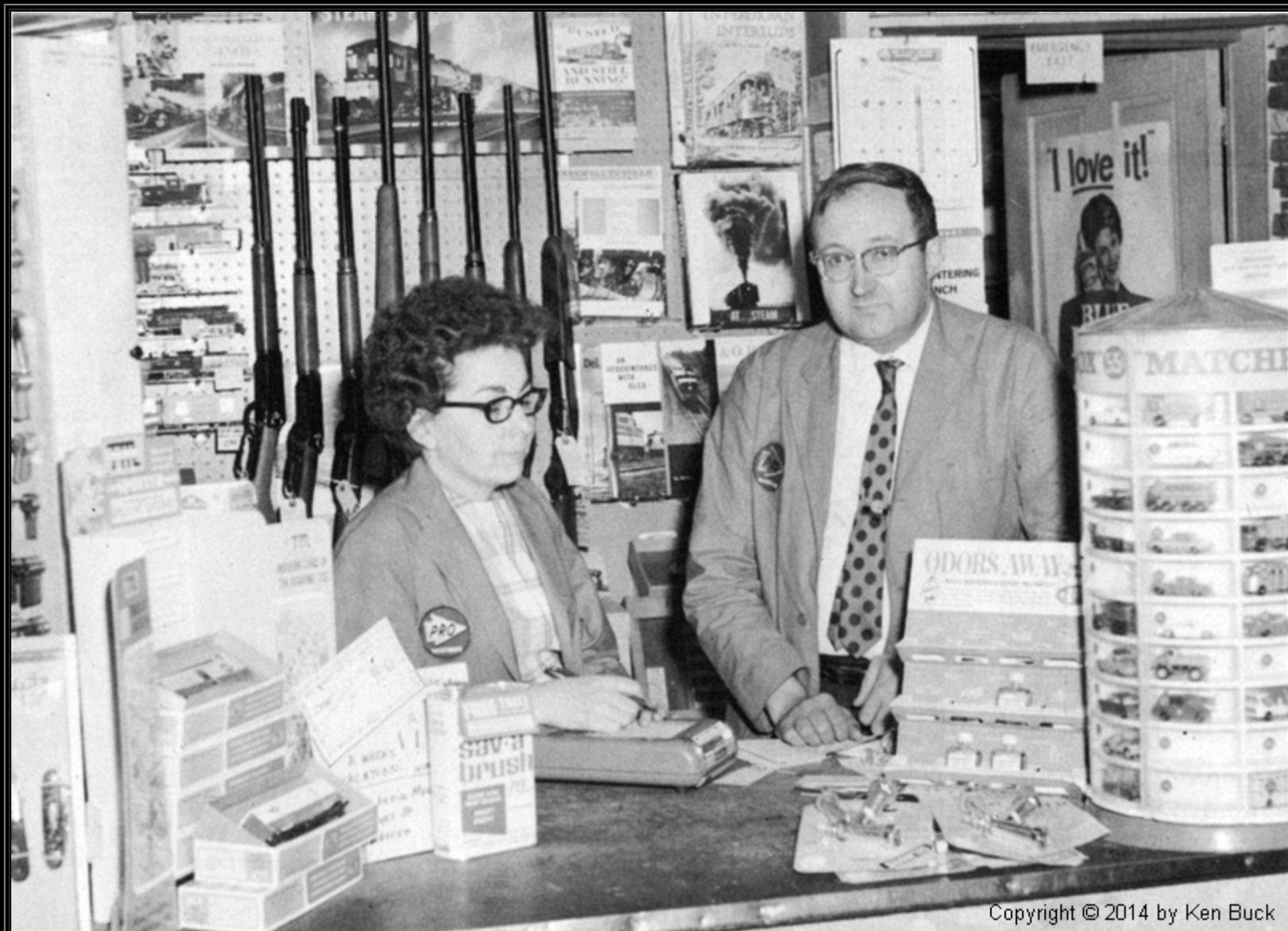
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Hardware store open house promotion flyer from 1962 with a caricature of Bob.



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Another open house event at Tucker's Hardware store in April 1968, with promotional giveaway car on the sidewalk next to the store.



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Bob and Sylvia Buck at the store during a hardware promotion event in 1969. Notice the railroad books and HO scale brass locomotives on glass shelves next to the gun rack behind the counter, and the Train-Miniature freight cars on the counter next to the key machine and hose sprayers. The hobby business was well on its way to taking over.



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Hardware store open house in 1967, showing a new metal sign, merchandise display, and automobile on the sidewalk as part of a regional hardware giveaway contest.



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Interior of the hardware store on April 15, 1980 as Russ sweeps the floor during cleanup following a break-in. Model train merchandise has now expanded to cover a large part of the store. Photo by Robert A. Buck.



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Tucker's Hardware store during the winter of 1980-81. Photo by Robert A. Buck.



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Bob's famous roll-top desk at the hardware store in 1981, barely visible under at least 30 years of debris. Arthur Tucker bought it second-hand from the Warren Savings Bank next door in 1924. The desk was completely cleaned off and moved up to the Bacon St. store where it was never seen again. Compare this picture with [a later one](#) taken in 2011.



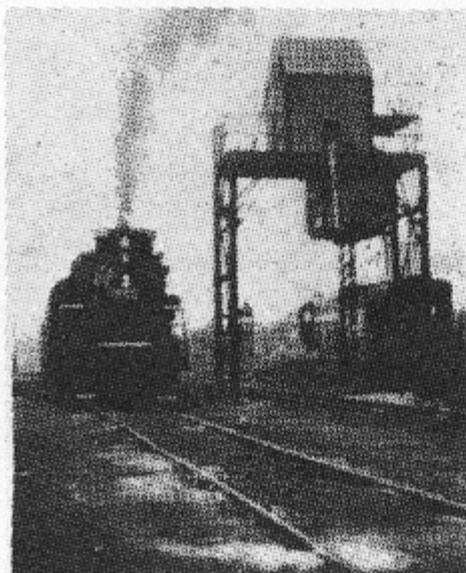


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Poster at the hardware store directing hobby customers around the corner to the new Tucker's Hobbies location.



The old Tucker's hardware store was operated as Warren True Value by the Royce family from 1981 until it was sold to the bank next door to put in a drive-up window. It was demolished on September 16, 1997, at 12:44 PM. Photo by Robert A. Buck.



Robert A. Buck

## **TUCKER'S HOBBIES**

(formerly Tucker's Hardware)

**Railroad Hobby Headquarters**

**O, HO, N Scale—Books—Magazines**

**Hours: Tues.-Sat. 10-6**

**Fri. 10-9**

**Closed Mondays**

**8 Bacon Street**

**Warren, Mass. 01083**

**(Turn at Library, 1st bldg. on left)**

**1-413-436-5318**

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Transitional business card for the new hobby store. Although most hardware customers didn't buy shovels and house paint at the hobby store, most hobby customers had become accustomed to buying railroad books and models at the hardware store.

The photo image was of Nickel Plate Road Berkshire #759, to be later replaced by a more appropriate B&A steam locomotive. The store was open late on Fridays until 9pm. During the 1960s and '70s, lingering customers on Friday nights were often invited to Bob's house to operate his model railroad, or watch railroad slide shows and movies. In later years, the Friday groups would adjourn to a local restaurant for a late dinner and storytelling sessions.



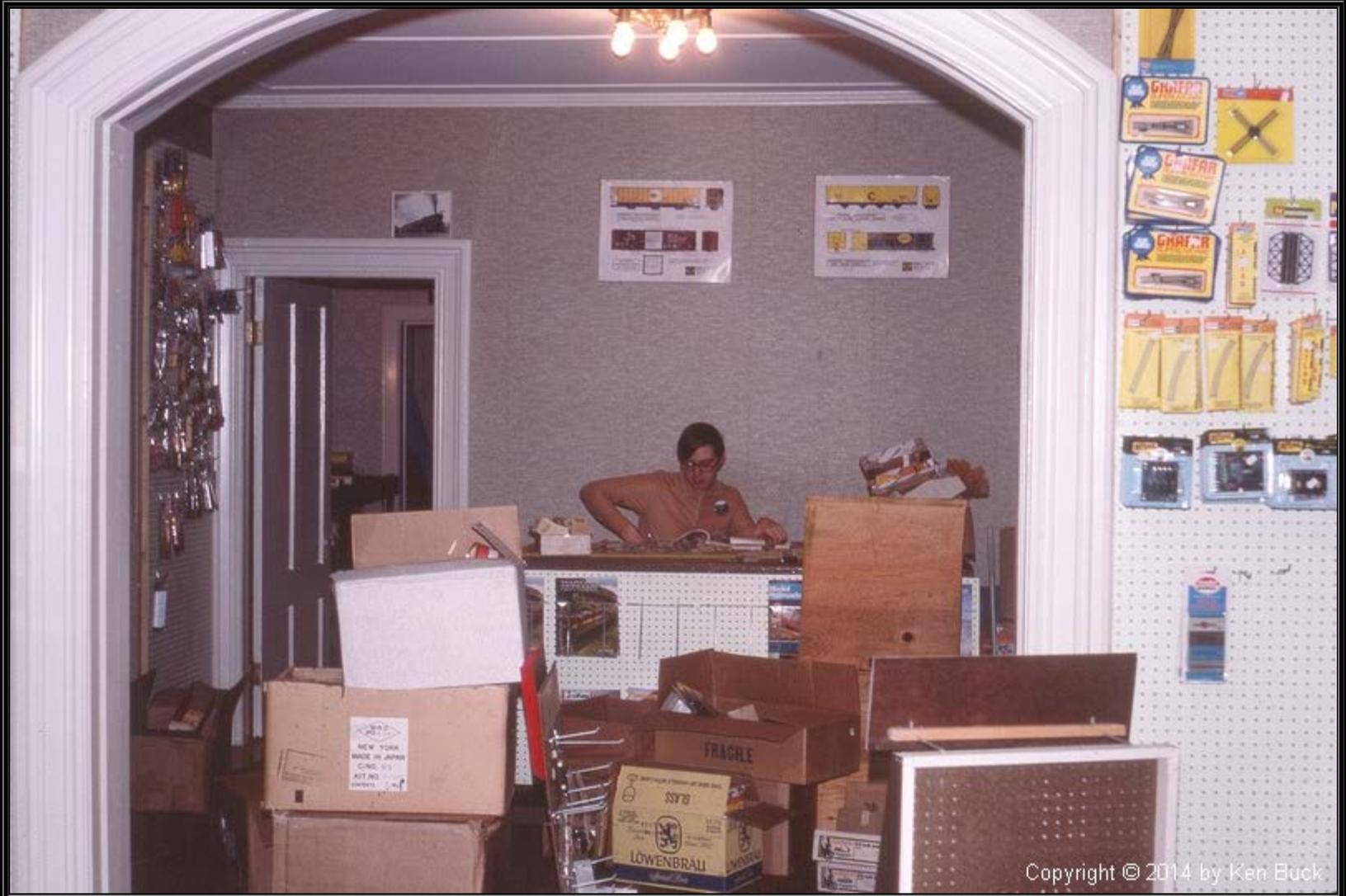
Danforth and Eliza Keyes' house on Bacon Street, Warren, MA, circa 1875, taken from a tintype. It was later owned by their great-great-grandson Robert A. "Bob" Buck, and the future home of the Tucker's Hobbies store.

The Keyes' daughter Charlotte "Lottie" Keyes married Walter Demond of Ware; their eldest daughter Alice married Arthur S. Tucker, who would operate the Main Street hardware store. After her husband died at a young age, Lottie returned with her three daughters to live in her parent's house. When Arthur and Alice were married, they also lived in the Keyes house until Lottie bought the former Torkelson house up the hill on Bacon St. where the Tuckers moved in. Eventually Arthur and Alice's daughter Marjorie married James E. Buck of Greenville, Maine, and they moved into the Keyes house where their son Bob grew up, watched trains over the low windowsills, and eventually opened the hobby store.



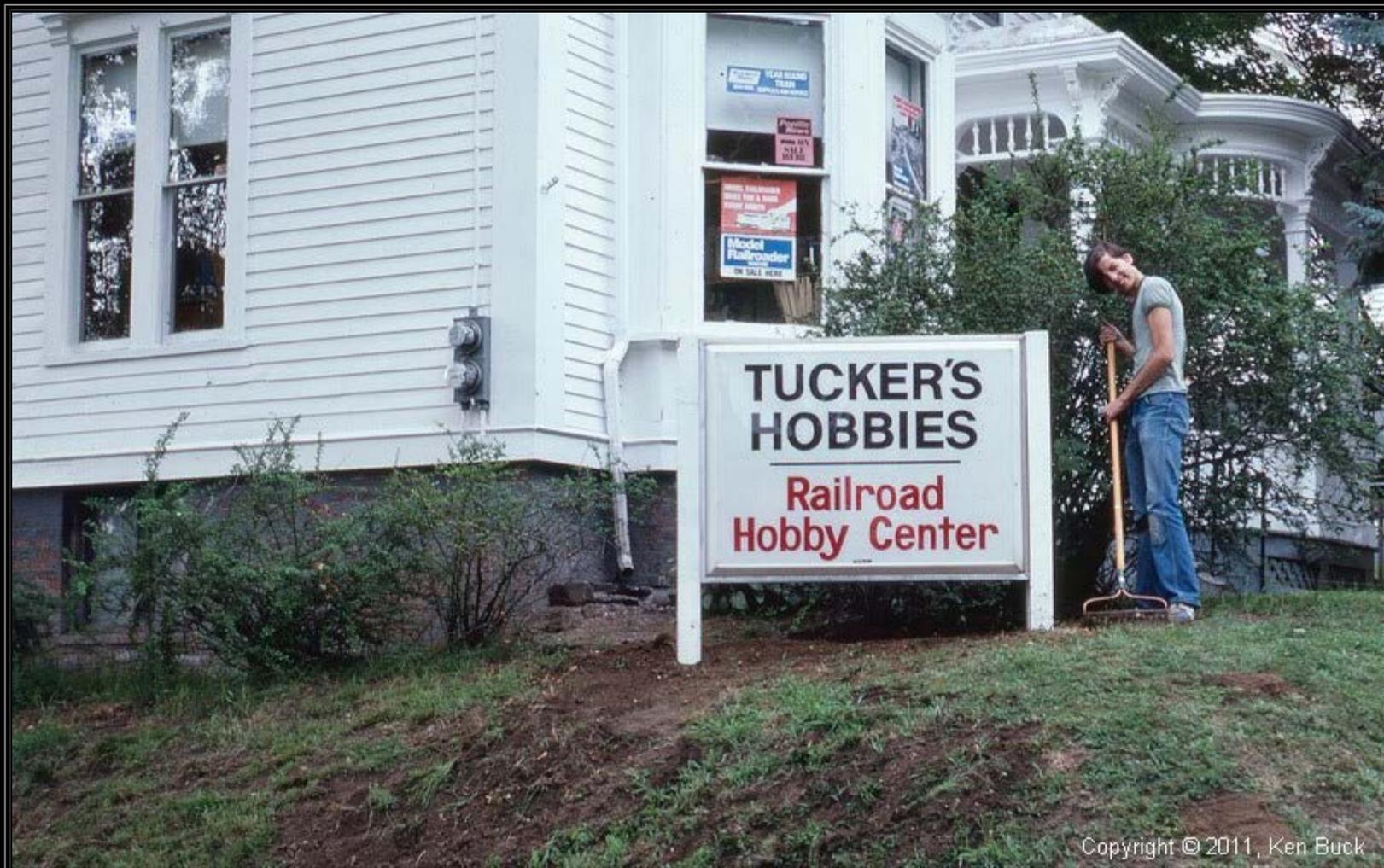
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Preparing to create the hobby store in the first floor of the family Bacon Street house. Newly refinished hardwood floors would be protected by carpet and pegboard applied to the walls for hanging items.



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Continuing work to create the hobby store, setting up the counter, hanging items on the walls and unpacking boxes moved up from the hardware store.



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New Tucker's Hobbies store sign installed in 1981 at the Bacon Street location with landscaping provided by Russ. Photo by Robert A. Buck.

# Trains: Once a Fascination, Now His Business



Telegram photo

**Russell Buck and his father, Robert A. Buck, in the family model railroad and hobby store on Bacon Street in Warren.**

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Picture from an April 1982 newspaper article showing Bob and his son Russ at the new hobby store.



Bob Buck in front of the book display behind the counter of Tucker's Hobbies in June 1981.



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Bob Buck in 1985 at Tucker's Hobbies store. Photo taken by Brian Solomon.



**Robert A. Buck**

**Quality HO - N - O Scale  
Brass - Kits - R-T-R  
Books - Videos  
Tools - Details**

**Tucker's Hobbies  
29 Bacon St.  
Warren, MA 01083  
(Turn at Library, 1st building on left)**

**Hours: Tue-Sat: 10-5, Fri: 10-9  
Closed: Sun & Mon**

**Phone: 413-436-5318**

**Fax: 413-436-7013**

**Web: [www.tuckershobbies.com](http://www.tuckershobbies.com)**

**Tucker's  
Railroad  
Hobby  
Headquarters  
Hobbies**

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Updated Tucker's Hobbies business card from the 2000's.



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Bob's house and the Tucker's Hobbies store in the former Keyes house on Bacon Street, Warren, in 2005. The house where Bob grew up was originally built for his great-great-grandparents Danforth and Eliza Keyes about 1870. The store is on the first floor, with living quarters upstairs.



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Inner entrance to the store in the front hall, January 2008.



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Showcase in front hall containing N scale locomotives and cars, in January 2008.



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View of showcases and the front hall of the store, April 2006.





View of store interior looking toward the counter and book display in February 2007.



Bob Buck behind the counter at Tucker's Hobbies in 2007.



View of store interior from the counter looking out toward the street in November 2003.



View of store counter towards bay window with various parts, tools and accessories, in April 2006.



View from behind the store counter, February 2007. As always, the counter space is clean and accessible.



Inner room display in the former downstairs dining room, containing paint, track, accessories and building kits at Tucker's Hobbies in February 2007.



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Inner room display in the former downstairs dining room, containing paint, scenery and building kits at Tucker's Hobbies in April 2006.



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View from the mirror in the front corner.



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Back room at the store where customer items were set aside for future pickup.



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View of the back room (former first floor bedroom) at the store in April 2006, containing computer, microfiche reader, shelves with overflow stock and various clutter.





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Each year Tucker's Hobbies attended the annual big Amherst Railway Society railroad hobby show held in West Springfield, Mass. This is only a small part of the huge display set up in January 2004.



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Bob surveying the mess at the store after returning from the 2003 Amherst Railway Society train show. It usually takes several days to put the store back together after the show.



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Bob Buck wearing railroad conductor's hat outside Tucker's Hobbies store in August 2008.



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Tucker's Hobbies store in the former Keyes house on Bacon Street, Warren, in 2009.



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Looking toward the front doors in the front hall area, January 2008.



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Evening view outside Tucker's Hobbies in 1999, probably on a Friday night to be followed by dinner and railroad stories at a nearby restaurant. Photo by Brian Solomon.