



WCRA NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2016

POLAR EXPRESS ON SALE

PGE 60 YEARS TO N. VAN

BILLY MINER NOW OCT. 1



GENERAL MEETING

The **General Meeting** of the WCRA will be held on **Tuesday, August 30 at 1930 hours** at Rainbow Creek Station, corner of Willingdon and Penzance in Burnaby.

Entertainment will be presentation by **Tom Price**, from Calgary called "130 Years of Mayhem" about some of the bad events on the major railways: washouts, derailments, slides, collisions etc; stuff most railfans don't see much of. He worked 37 years for CPR, from track-gangs to Roadmaster all around the west, and helped design the new track geometry test equipment. His Dad and Grandfather worked for the CPR too, so lots of history to recall.

ON THE COVER

Pacific Great Eastern RSC-3 #561 shines at the Mac Norris Station in this **Trevor Mills** photo taken mid July, 2016 from the cupola of PGE caboose 1817. The PGE was connected by rail to North Vancouver 60 years ago this August changing the community of Squamish forever.

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

- **West Coast Railway Heritage Park open daily 1000 through 1700k.**
- Wednesday, September 7—deadline for items to be included in the October 2016 WCRA News
- Tuesday, September 27—WCRA General Meeting, Rainbow Creek Station, 1930 hours
- Saturday, October 1—Billy Miner Train Robbery event at the Heritage Park, as rescheduled— a fun and educational day for all ages. See page 11

The West Coast Railway Association is an historical group dedicated to the preservation of British Columbia railway history. Membership is open to all people with an interest in railways past and present. We are a non-profit British Columbia society, registered as a Canadian charity. Membership prices are as follows, **Please note that GST must be added to all fees:**

Senior \$50 (\$52.50), Individual \$55 (57.75), Family \$65 (68.25) **E Members (electronic newsletter only) are \$35 (\$36.75) Senior, \$40 (\$42.00) individual and \$50 (\$52.50) family.** Other categories are:
- Junior Member (age 18 and under) \$ 30 (\$31.50)
- Sustaining Member \$100 (tax receipt) **plus** membership type regular fee
- Life Membership \$700 (\$735) individual life / \$1,200 (\$1,260) family life

All memberships include the monthly newsletter, Heritage Park admission (except Special Events), mini rail rides and discounts on food and merchandise. The Association holds a monthly meeting on the last Tuesday of the month at 1930 hours in Burnaby at Rainbow Creek Station in Confederation Park. Apply through www.wcra.org or mail to WCRA, PO Box 2790 Stn. Term., Vancouver, B.C., V6B 3X2.

EDITORIAL

YOUNG PEOPLE AND GETTING THEM INVOLVED

The topic of getting more young people involved in railway preservation and our preservation projects is one that is heard consistently throughout the industry—no matter where I go. It is a topic brought up at railway conferences such as those of ATRRM, it is also a topic often heard around many railway museums and operations. And, while there are bright lights to be seen in many places, they are in the minority. This is a topic that needs to be taken seriously by railway museums and tourist railway operations everywhere.

Many of our organizations are based mostly on memories of the past, yet there are as many opportunities to use the experiences we present in relevance to today and the future as well. Often, we just neglect these opportunities—and also fail to engage those younger people that we do see thus losing the opportunity to connect in ways relevant to them.

Are young people interested in trains—and in what we do to preserve them? You bet, if we take the time to engage them, help them have a bit of fun, and encourage them to step in and volunteer. At our West Coast Railway Heritage Park we see them everyday. Usually they are part of a family group visiting, and yet it is just so easy for us to focus on the parents (or grandparents) and forget the younger inquiring minds. One of my favourite volunteer activities in the summer is to spend a day a week volunteering as the engineer on our miniature railway. As we travel around the Heritage Park on our 25 minute run, there are a whole host of opportunities to demonstrate and show how a railway operates and how and why certain things are done. But do we take the time to do that—or do we just operate the train? Something for all of us to think about each time we have that public interaction.

And what about projects? Do we invite younger people in to help with our project work? Do we take time to provide them skills training and support them in doing a major restoration job? The answer is probably not.....but here at WCRA we have a perfect case in point.

On the cover of our last issue you noted the photo of our CN FP9A #6520 in progress of its body work to prepare it for painting planned for this fall. It is a large job, and involves needle gunning, welding in new metal where rust spots deem that necessary, and sand blasting as well as priming the surface once it is properly prepared. The work is going well and each week I can see the difference when I am there.

Who is doing this? Well, two young people in their teens—Brodie and Morgan. They are being carefully trained and mentored in the skills of project safety, body work, welding and surface preparation by our mechanical team and the work is progressing well—with the goal of the full primer coat by the end of summer. They tell me they are enjoying the work and the learning. The key is they are actually doing the work—not just watching some of us.

Remember, it is not up to young people to find us—it is up to us to find, engage, encourage, support and involve the young people that we need for our futures. They are out there if we take the time to ask—and then bring them in, teach them, mentor them, and let them work.

So, marvel at the photo below of Morgan (in the nose) and Brodie (welding on the side) at work on a warm summer day, July 27, 2016



I can't wait to see the final product!

Don

ASSOCIATION NEWS

FROM THE JULY GENERAL MEETING

Chair Jeremy Davy called the meeting to order with 28 members, staff and guests present:

- A minute of silence was held for member **Joe Garisto** (member for 14 years) and former member **Dave Haffey** who helped considerably in the mini-rail development at the park. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of June 28th was moved, seconded and carried.

REPORTS

COLLECTION – **Mike McGaw** gave a brief report on restoration progress of BCER #960 with some follow up by **Bob Hunter**. New volunteer **Gordon Frank** from the Cloverdale group is now assisting this group in their restoration efforts.

- Interest has been shown in the offer of de-accessioned items to other railway interests. In particular the RS-1 and dining car have attracted interest and are in discussions.
- A major donor is assisting in funding the restoration of engine 6520. Additional donations for this project would be welcome.

FINANCE – Nothing special to report. A recent film shoot improved revenues and allowed payment of some invoices.

OPERATIONS – Preparations for Billy Miner days are well underway. It promises to be a well-attended, fun, event. Volunteers are still needed so if you can help, phone the park.

FUNDRAISING – **Ken Tanner**. A grant application is in process for the acquisition of the MP2 shop. **Don Evans** reported that progress is positive and we hope to have some good news in the next month or so.

- A member has put forward an offer to donate \$1,200 towards the installation of the semaphore signal if others will match this amount.
- A reminder about the Gala set for October 5 at the Roundhouse in Yaletown
- The recent starlight gala celebrating the completion of #2 produced good results.

LOCOMOTIVE 374 – **George Game** reported attendance, gift kiosk sales and donations figures. Many overseas visitors drop by with British and Germans the main nationalities showing up. Volunteers are still needed despite having all days covered for August.

NEW BUSINESS - **Bob Hunter** presented a collection of books from donors for sale. Some, in mint condition, were available at greatly reduced prices.

GUESTS were welcomed

EVENTS CALENDAR - Billy Miner Days was emphasized along with the usual items from the newsletter

TRACKSIDE REPORTS

- **Bill Marchant** contributed items of interest in his usual entertaining fashion.
- **John Cowan** stepped forward to related some experiences from his days on the West Coast Express
- **Eric Anderson** brought forward donation of Canadian Tire money

ENTERTAINMENT - Supplied by **Bill Marchant** was a video of GTW trains from the 1950's

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome to membership.....

- Svetla & John Adams and family of Burnaby;
- Elena Butler and family of Garibaldi Highlands;
- Greg & Karina Conn and family of Vancouver;
- Robert Hall of Kamloops;
- George & Sharlene Jian and family of Garibaldi Highlands;
- Jennifer Lee and family of Richmond;
- Caroline l'Heureux and family of Squamish;
- Andre-Jean Maheu and family of Squamish;
- Jila Mahinfar and family of North Vancouver;
- Julie Morgan and family of Brackendale;
- Steve Norris and family of Vancouver;
- Alison Quesnel and family of Brackendale;
- Catherine Rosen and family of Brackendale;
- D'Arcy & Michelle Ulmer and family of Garibaldi Highlands;
- Russell & Sarah Ward and family of Squamish;
- Byron Welch and family of Chilliwack;
- Blair Yorke & Kurumi Ichike and family of Squamish;
- Meghan Zuvelek and family of Squamish

We welcome back to membership Paul Shirley of Yuba City, CA, as well as.....

- Rick & Kitty Ashe and family of Squamish;
- Eva Bergesen and family of Whistler;
- Celeste Bickford and family of Britannia Beach;
- Cliff Fisher of North Bend;
- Phil Halloran and family of Edmonton;
- Max & Sonya Hufton and family of Britannia Beach;
- Richard & Julie Lutz and family of Garibaldi Highlands

(J.D.)

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

If your label reads 7/31/2016 then your membership has expired, if your label reads 04/30/2016 then this is your last issue. If you are an electronic news subscriber, please watch for an email noting pending membership expiry. Please renew—we need you all as members if we are to continue to be able to preserve British Columbia's railway heritage. (J.D.)

MEMBER NEWS

Dave Haffey, one of our early mini rail volunteers and past member, passed away July 2.

It is with sadness that we pass on news of the passing of **Ron Anderson** on August 2, 2016 in Squamish, BC. Ron was a major contributor to both his community and to the WCRA over the years, serving on our very first Advisory Committee when WCRA first chose Squamish as a location for our Heritage Park, and then also serving many years on our board of Directors including a stint as board chair. His counsel and guidance was always clear, calm and helpful as we established in the community and then grew our new attraction. A celebration of life for Ron was held Monday, August 15 at the CN Roundhouse & Conference Centre and was attended by more than 300 people. We will miss Ron dearly.

WCRA TRIVIA #333 - By Ryan Cruickshank

"Jell-O" has what famous connection to railroading?

(Answer on page 30)

VANCOUVER TRAIN EXPO 2016

Last year the show moved to the Forum Bldg at the PNE which is located at 2901 East Hastings. This year's show will be held on November 5th & 6th at the same location. The 2016 Public Show hours have been extended. The hours this year are: Saturday 10am to 6pm and Sunday 10am to 5pm.

WCRA at the SHOW

Again this year, WCRA will be providing the MiniRail at the Show and will also have a booth where we will be promoting the Association, the Park, 374 and Special Events, as well as selling surplus books and artifacts as a fundraiser.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED - We need assistance with set-up of the Booth on Friday Nov 4th in the early evening and with staffing it on Nov 5th and 6th during the show hours. If you have time you can donate on any or all of the days please let Jeremy Davy know your availability by email jeremy.davy@wcra.org or by phone 604.484.2791 (pls leave message if no answer). (J.D.)

COLLECTION

ORIGINAL STANLEY PARK MINIATURE TRAIN TO BE PRESERVED

As an update from the coverage in our last issue, we have had several readers come forward with photos or stories of the Stanley Park train. For this issue, here are a couple of photos of the train in Victoria where it was originally built and operated prior to it being purchased by Stanley Park and coming here - thanks to **Hugh Fraser** for sending these. Hugh also has in his collection a letter of invitation from its original owner to come for a ride!



The original Stanley Park train, photos here taken in 1939 in Victoria where the train was built by then Provincial Engineer John Armstrong. The train would be sold to the Vancouver Park Board for Stanley Park in 1947, where it operated until 1963. It was then sold to Ted Humphrey of Vancouver until it was recently donated to WCRA this year for preservation.

FP7A #1404 GETS A LOOK OVER

Greg Robertshaw and **Richard Courage** report.....After talking with several people and looking at various reports on the condition of the unit , we decided to go back to basics and determine the actual condition of the unitthis started with a visual inspection of reported faults , we found cables disconnected on a traction motor as well as a few missing parts in the cab and control stand. We decided to start at the electrical cabinet, here we found a couple of doors seized due to rust and hinges broken. We inspected for water leaks through the roof ...nothing found , there are a few open bolt holes in the car body that would let in moisture. All cabinet doors were removed and then a systematic clean up of loose paint , dirt and rust was carried out and is still ongoing ...no obvious burnt wiring has been noted in the cabinet to date . On inspection of the engine compartment we found it does have the 645C engine and all equipment does appear to be intact and in reasonable condition ..we have removed some floor panels to access wiring runs but have not yet found a major fault , this will continue and all wiring will be checked .

So from initial inspections the unit looks in reasonable condition including the carbody , only a couple of spots needing rust repair. Trevor has also helped in locating wiring diagrams and manuals, so at this time we are continuing the clean up phase and will then move to wire checking stage.....more as time progresses, we are still working on CP 8000 s cosmetic restoration. (G.R.)

PGE #2 HAS A STARRING ROLE



On Monday morning, 18th of July, under the supervision of our crew member **Roy Crowston** the little #2 was gently removed from the roundhouse, pulled across the turntable and placed in front of the WCRA Squamish station.....(Photo, rear cover by Don Evans)

This move was done to facilitate a movie shoot that is taking place later this week, I watched and took a couple of pictures and paused to reflect on some of the work that the ‘Monday Morning Crew’ had performed on this historic little engine over the last 3 years,

As I stood admiring this pristine little locomotive standing in front of the station I thought of the many hours of hard and dirty work that had been performed by our motley little gang to accomplish this challenging project, this was only possible by the dedication and determination of every member of this élite little group that would not give-up and all worked together so well to accomplish all of this.....

I know that everyone of us can have a sense of pride that we took a rusted out, seized-up, moss covered immovable chunk of scrap and turned into a thing of beauty that has gained much respect and interest, this much loved piece of Squamish history that now holds a spot next to the Royal Hudson in the roundhouse is about to make a movie debut and start earning her living once again.... Just a passing thought from one of the ‘Gang’.....(M.L.)

PGE #2 became a wood burner for the filming and was treated with bunting around the smokebox front—photo here by Craig McDowall (page 9) and also rear cover by Don Evans. The consist used for this “early 1900’s” train was open observation car *Henry Pickering*, Colonist car #3514 and coach *Marjatta*.

PAUL D ROY COACH GETS NEW ROOF

Thanks to the shop efforts of Kyle and helpers, a new roof membrane was put onto coach WCXX 5596 *Paul D Roy* along with new gutters. This brings this coach to our best standards for waterproofing. Great work Kyle and team!

THANKS

- To **Elinor Warkentin** of Goodbye Clutter for the donation of two antique lanterns converted to 110v electrical operation
- To **Nick Monkhouse** for the donation of a series of ten Ralph of the Roundhouse books that he collected (circa 1906 to 1928)

WEST COAST RAILWAY HERITAGE PARK

Home of the Royal Hudson



POLAR EXPRESS TICKETS ON SALE NOW—FOUR WEEKENDS

Polar Express tickets are selling well via www.wcra.org Last year this popular event sold

out, we expect the same for the 2016 version. Dates this year are four weekends - November 26 / 27, December 3 / 4, December 10 / 11 and December 17 / 18. Go to the blue purchase tickets tab at the top to buy your tickets—prices for 2016 are \$30 coach class, \$45 first class and \$49 all seats on the Saturday 6PM (Night time) departures. Tickets are already selling fast so make your plans today and book your space. It's not too early!

As with previous years, guests are invited to really experience the Polar Express and come dressed in their housecoats or pajamas. There will be fun for everyone with some additional elements added this year.

This review from the 2015 event was posted by Chantel:

“We had a group of 11 people last year (2015), 3 generations (grandparents, children and grandchildren) and we all had a great time. Sure put us in the Christmas spirit! The train ride was my most memorable memory—everything from the actors, the hot chocolate and cookie, the singing of Christmas songs and the trip itself leaving in the daylight and coming back in the evening (4:00PM departure). When we got back to the roundhouse we got to do pictures with Mr and Mrs Claus, decorated gingerbread men, made Christmas crafts, made wishes in the tunnel on the mini train, and went upstairs to see the Christmas village with its toy trains.

“I REALLY ENJOYED MYSELF. I loved the keepsakes—the silver bell (both my children got one and they will always have a special place on our Christmas tree) and the hot chocolate mugs we got to keep. I will most definitely be attending again this year and every year after! I'd like to thank everyone at the West Coast Railway Heritage Park—thank you for your volunteering and your efforts to go over and beyond.”

BILLY MINER DAYS RESCHEDULED TO OCTOBER 1

A change has been made to the plans for the new event Billy Miner Days. The saloon and concert night went ahead as scheduled on August 19, but the family event has been shifted to the fall to take advantage of the school trip market and increase the historical content. The new strategy for sales will focus on the school field trip market on the Thursday and Friday, September 29 & 30. The general public event will be on the Saturday October 1st. This format has proven successful with our “Mystery of the Magic Pumpkin” event.

This new major event will have something for everyone with fun, food, train rides, music, drama and more. **Billy Miner Days** will capture the sprit of the famous “Gentleman” train robber of the early 1900's. In addition, several new heritage artifacts will debut, including a working blacksmith forge (with blacksmith), butter churning and a restored printing press in operation!

Food trucks will be on site to look after those appetites, and there will be magicians and live

entertainment as well.

There will be live steam on the mini rail, hay rides, gold panning, bouncy castle, magician, mini putt, contests and lots more fun for the family. And, ride the Silverdale (big) train and experience a hold up by Billy Miner himself—be prepared for the posse to arrive on horseback and for them to relieve you of your loot!

Individual Sherriff's Passes are \$15 and the Family Posse Pass (up to six people) is just \$55. Passes include all activities—including all rides! You can buy your passes on line at wcra.org just choose the time for your ride on the "Silverdale (Robbery) Train" and all other activities are non stop and included. Again—all tickets are good for the whole day, specified time is for the train ride only. (G.B.)

PROVINCE ARTICLE SENDS GUESTS TO HERITAGE PARK

A feature article in the Vancouver Province paper's Travel Section, July 19, 2016 edition, did a great review of the West Coast Railway Heritage Park and has helped send many guests our way this summer. Titled "Squamish Rail Museum a Hidden Gem", the story by **Michael McCarthy** covered a visit to the Park and had a photo with **Sebastien Lagors** in front of the Royal Hudson as an eye catcher. Thanks to Michael and The Province for this great article.

FUNDRAISING

WCRA GALA OCTOBER 5, 2016—NOW ON SALE

The date for the WCRA Fundraising Gala has been set—it will be held on Wednesday, October 5, 2016 at the Locomotive 374 Pavilion / Roundhouse in Yaletown. Our organizing committee is **Ken Tanner, Craig McDowall, Gord Bell, Lisa Tuningley and Don Evans.**

Tickets are now open for sale for this event and work is getting underway on sponsorships as well as major auction prizes. Tickets are \$250 per guest or \$1,800 for a table of eight, each ticket includes a charitable receipt (est. \$150 in value). This is an important major fundraiser for WCRA—please consider supporting it by attending and bgy bringing guests (K.T.)

RING OF SUPPORT PAVERS AVAILABLE

The Ring of Support Garden at the Mac Norris Station continues to flourish. Next round of stones arrived the first week of July and Cat has now installing them. Have a look on your next visit to the Heritage Park—it is looking great! (G.B.)

A reminder that our Ring of Support paver stones are still available. Don't be left out—Get Your Name Carved in Stone (or of someone you wish to honour or remember). Call Ken

Tanner at 604-898-9336 in Squamish or Jennifer at 604-681-4403 in Vancouver and we can help you. There is also an application form at www.wcra.org Thanks for you support to the WCRA (K.T.)

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LOCOMOTIVE 374 PAVILION

Our visitor count for July was 6,318 This was 812 people more than last July. The YTD Total is 24,690 Visitors. Summer has arrived and the days are now getting warmer. In July we saw many more Tourists coming through the Pavilion. 200 plus guests in a day was the norm. Photo below (aerial view) shows #374 outside in May for its anniversary celebration.



We had over 600 Visitors during the Roundhouse's July 14th Bastille Day Event. **David Wheeler** was on shift and very busy until 4 PM that day. Special thanks to **Orrin Webber** for coming in and keeping the Pavilion open until 5:30 PM.

Another new volunteer has been added to the crew. **Silvana** comes to us from Brazil and will be with us for 4 months. She hopes to continue working with us when she returns from Brazil in the future. We now have most shifts covered but could still use 3 more for backup on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. If you would like to help out please give me a call @ 778-875-3573. You will not be working alone and can come in as little or as often as you want. Any help would be very much appreciated. If you like meeting people, some RailFans, you will really enjoy working at the Pavilion.

We are located at the corner of Davie St & Pacific Blvd. Just across from the Canada Line Yaletown/Roundhouse Station. Hope you are having a good Summer! (G.G.)

FEATURE ARTICLES

FROM THE STEAM CHEST—JUNE 1974

- with thanks to Craig McDowall

WCRA

A successful Railcon Event for 1974 has drawn to a close. The event, held on June 1st & 2nd would have been better with a larger turnout but was still considered a success. At the closing banquet, two speakers were featured. Robert Swanson talked about the new Royal Hudson #2860 train about to start from North Vancouver to Squamish. And Robert Klein, from the CPR Research Department in Montreal, talked about possible electrification on the CPR in the Rockies.

On Tuesday, June 11th, WCRA's Mountain Observation car #598 was returned from the NRHS in Portland after being run on the OP & E. The car is currently in customs bond at CPR's Drake Street yard. Once cleared, the car will be sandblasted, repainted CPR Tuscan Red, and renamed 'Mount Garibaldi'. It will then join 2860's Royal Hudson train on the BCR on a lease basis for an initial three year period.

BC Hydro & CNR

On May 6th at 15:30, a collision occurred in New Westminster between BCH #906 (SW 900RS) and CNR #1282 (SW 1200 RS). The CNR engine was hit at right angles on the pilot by the BCH engine. The BCH's coupler ruptured the CNR's fuel tank and the Hydro engine was dragged sideways. The CNR engine was switching with one man on board on the blind side. The Hydro engine was approaching New West from Lulu Island. Its train was thus caught on the bridge over the Fraser River with no engines on the island to pull the consist back off the bridge. All river traffic was stopped until they arranged for trucks to pull the cars off one at a time. It took about 10 hours to clear the bridge. The Hydro engine was back in service in two weeks but the CNR engine was deadheaded to Winnipeg for repairs to her fuel tank.

BC Rail—Royal Hudson

2860 is now in regular service, except for Mondays and Tuesdays. The Hudson's restoration was completed by June 2nd and she was steamed for the first time on June 11th and ran light to Coquitlam on June 12th. She left Drake Street yard at 12:30 and returned at 15:00 hours. Six coaches are now refurbished and repainted Tuscan Red with 'British Columbia' on the letterboards. These six were taken over to North Vancouver behind the 2860, under her own steam, on June 17th. A total of 15 coaches were purchased with the rest to follow after being refurbished.

The Royal Hudson left Drake Street and coupled onto the six coaches at the downtown CPR station and then departed on the CPR New Westminster branch to Brunette Street and crossed over to the CN/BN line and on the way back westbound to the tunnel before crossing the harbour to North Vancouver, she hit speeds of 60 mph and was a sight to behold. The locomotive has a new boiler certificate valid by CTC and ICC. She is now owned by the Province through the Department of Travel Industry after being purchased from Joe Hussey. The train's current consist is:

<u>Former CPR Number</u>	<u>Hudson Train Name</u>
Baggage # 2757	Prince George
Coach # 2270	MacKenzie
Coach # 2241	Lillooet
Coach # 2283	Squamish
Coach # 2252	Clinton
Coach # 2271	Quesnel
Coach # 2242	Lone Butte
Coach # 2260	2260 (loaned from CPR)

There are six ex CPR lightweight coaches and three parlour cars being readied for the train. For extended runs, spare tender #415797 from a coal burning #2800 series engine had been purchased but no work yet being done. A liquor licence has been applied for use in the parlour car.

On June 18th, a test run was made to Squamish which went very well. Then on Thursday, June 29th the Inaugural Run to Squamish when Premier Dave Barrett was the 'hogger' in the North Vancouver yard at the start of the trip and then turned the cab over to Engineer Frank Smith. Arriving in Squamish with the trainload of VIP's, the city of Squamish set up lunch, a logger's show in the downtown park where ex PGE #2, a 2-6-2T engine is displayed.

Fares for the five day a week excursion are (were!): \$5 for adults, \$3.75 seniors and students and \$2.50 for kids 5 to 11. There is a connecting transit bus service from the Larwill bus depot at 150 Dunsmuir at 9 AM to meet the 10 AM departure and returning after the train arrives back in North Van.

Skagit River Railway

Due to problems with railway personnel, the SRR will not operate on a regular basis this summer as anticipated. They will, however, make one trip on July 4th using their 2-6-2 and run from Sedro Wooley to Concrete WA (MCM note: I have just transferred film I shot of this trip with a bunch of our members back then . . . will put some sound to it and show one night at the meeting)

Northern Alberta Railway

NAR has discontinued its passenger service from Edmonton to Dawson Creek after passenger loads dwindled to a mere trickle. The consist was locomotives with coaches, not RDC's. This service was started in 1912.

THE NORTHERN SUMMIT

- by Eric Prince Stathers

The Northern Summit is an excerpt from "In the Ditch—Stories of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, 1929-65" by Eric Prince Stathers. This book is well worth a read as it presents real life scenarios that the wrecking crews would face in years past. This particular story is of great interest to WCRA as we now own this car and are currently working to commence its restoration. The story captures a fascinating part of the history of this car that many may not be aware of... (Editor)

Before I can tell the story of the next derailment, I'll have to make a detour via the Norfolk & Southern Railway. By this time, as the line (PGE) was being extended and the traffic was expanding, we were purchasing a variety of new rolling stock; and among other things we needed another Business Car. These Business Cars are used by company officials and by important guests of the railroad in their trips up and down the line. The company heard that a car was available for purchase from the Norfolk & Southern Railway. So, in my capacity as Superintendent of Car Equipment, I was sent down to look this car over with the authority to make the decision whether or not to purchase it if I thought it was suitable for our purposes. This railroad ran from Norfolk, Virginia down into Florida. It was purely a freight outfit and did not run any passenger service. The General Purchasing Agent, who I had been dealing with, told me that the head of the Board of Directors, who had delusions of grandeur, wanted a special car for himself. This Colonel (I have forgotten his name) purchased the car from the Pullman Company and had it converted at great expense into his private Business Car. I think it was somewhere between 130-140 thousand dollars, which was a great deal of money in those days.

It was a very luxurious car. It had a full-sized bedroom and a tiled shower, then two more compartments, a dining room, a stainless steel kitchen, the crew's quarters, and a sitting room; all done in the finest of furnishings. The linens were something to see, the finest obtainable. There was a whole complement of wine glasses, for all different kinds of wines, and specially

built cupboards to hold and protect these glasses from any shocks during travel. It was all crystal; when you tinged it with your finger the glasses would tinkle just like bells. There was a complete service of plates and crockery, all china, and beautifully trimmed with gold around the edge and golden initials "NS" (for the Norfolk and Southern) in the centre of each piece.



The old Colonel used to enjoy going to the horse races in Florida. He would fill this car with his friends and female company (you might call them entertainers) and off they'd go to the horse races in Florida. In fact, I was told by officials of the Norfolk & Southern Railway that the Colonel's parties were costing more money than the railroad was making on freight service and they had to put the Colonel into forced retirement, which is partly how this railcar came up for sale.

Now it happened that the Colonel was a great friend of Barnum & Bailey (the circus people) and he used to take Mr. Barnum along on these trips to Florida. So when Mr. Barnum found out that the Colonel was building this new car, he gave him the old silver from his original Barnum & Bailey Circus Car: knives, forks, spoons, the silver tea set, cream jug - the whole

works! Barnum had purchased more modern silver to use in his second car, so the original set was all given as a memento to the Colonel. It was all curlicues; a real Victorian design of silver cutlery, and it had quite a history behind it.

Well I decided that the car was suitable to purchase and telephoned our Vancouver office long distance to give them my opinion, and they gave me authority to sign the papers and bring it home. How I brought the car back to British Columbia is another story in itself. I had to ride the car, of course, and travel over a lot of different railroads before I got to Vancouver. When I got to the border between the United States and Canada, they were going to lock me out of the car. There was no way that I could look after that car if I was locked out of it, so I was put into bond. I was handed a bonded seal by Canada Customs, with instructions that as soon as I got off the car I had to put this seal on. It is a crime to break a bonded seal!

Anyhow, we finally got back with the new Business Car. It was a beautiful car. With everything marked "NS", we had to find a name for the car which matched the monograms on the tableware and the silverware, so it was called the *Northern Summit*. All of the sleeping cars and special business cars have their own name. The *Northern Summit* also had the Royal Insignia added in 1958 it, commemorating the trip made in it over our line in that car, from Prince George to Williams Lake. As you might imagine, after acquiring that car and living in it all across the United States and into Canada and being bonded with it, I developed quite an interest in the *Northern Summit*.

The weather was really dirty, windy, rainy, an awful night, on October 21, 1963. When the night freight train pulled out, immediately behind the diesel engines was the *Northern Summit*, and right behind that was our other Business Car, *Cariboo*. Only a few miles up the line, just south of Brunswick Beach, on a curve there was a cracked rail. Whether it was hit by a rock that came down from the highway above is not known. But when the weight of the lead diesel engine came onto that rail it snapped, and the lead diesel derailed. All three diesels came off the track and spilled over in the ditch, coming to a full stop. In the caboose at the rear of the train was Conductor Joseph Pakulak. It not certain where Pakulak was at the time of the derailment, whether he was sitting or standing, but the sudden shock travelling down the train when the engines stopped abruptly threw him down to the floor of the caboose. His skull was fractured and he died of his injuries, just a young man, leaving a widow and two children. It was an unfortunate and unusual accident that was fully investigated in a coroner's inquest.

In the crew quarters of the *Northern Summit*, asleep in their beds, were the cook and the steward. The momentum of a moving train is greater than the force which can be applied by the air brakes, so the cars at the back press forward and either telescope the cars in front or push them off the track. There were about seventy freight cars behind the business cars in this train, and their momentum drove the *Cariboo* halfway up into the *Northern Summit*. Although it was a wooden car, the *Cariboo* had a steel frame underneath and the cars and frames actually

penetrated one another, locked together in one huge mass of grinding metal.

The front end of the *Cariboo* was thrust right through the dining room of the *Northern Summit*, and stopped not more than a foot away from the bunks of the sleeping men. Neither man was injured, but they were trapped in their compartment. The man in the upper bunk managed to squeeze down to the lower bunk to where both of them could see out of the window. They could see out, but there was nothing to break the window with. Fortunately, the other men in the train crew (the engineer, fireman, and the two trainmen) were not injured. By this time we had radio telephones in the engines, so that even though his locomotive was partially over on its side the engineer was able to contact the Chief Dispatcher and tell him the train was in the ditch. Assistance was immediately sent out from North Vancouver, and we were also notified in Squamish. The front end crew then made their way back down the train where they saw the two trapped men banging on the window. They waved for them to move aside and threw a big boulder through the window to smash it. Then the cook and the steward threw a mattress over the broken glass and they were assisted out of the car to safety and taken immediately to Vancouver. Conductor Pakulak was rushed to the hospital.

In Squamish we could hear on the company radio some of the arrangements that were made to take care of the men and crew of the train; there was nothing for us to do in that regard. But the first thing I thought of was all that valuable china, cutlery, and glassware on the *Northern Summit*. So instead of waiting for the wrecking crew, I jumped in my car along with the Chief Electrician, Jack Mahood, and we drove down the highway to Brunswick and got down onto the line beside the wreck. All of the crew had been taken away and the train was deserted. We could smell propane gas from the tanks underneath our business cars. The feed lines had been damaged and were leaking, so we disconnected the tanks and cut them off, and got them out of the way. Then I said to Jack, "Now the first thing we've got to do is to get that beautiful cutlery and china out of here, before any vandals get in her and steal it". So by pulling and prying on it, I was able to clear away some of the loose metal and managed to get into the kitchen and into part of the dining room of the *Northern Summit*.

In order to pick up this wreck, we had to start with the big crane on the north end to recover the engines. The line was closed, so it was a case of keeping at it until everything was picked up. They brought an engine and the shop crew from North Vancouver with rerailers and various other equipment to begin straightening out at the south end. Using the big hook, we eased the first engine back onto the track and then went back for the second and then the third. By this time we were into the second night and it was terrible weather, blowing a gale and the wind howling and the rain coming down really hard. I remember that second night very well. Stan Goad, the Superintendent of Motive Power, who was in charge of engines, was there with me. We had both just purchased new nylon rainproof suits with pants and a coat, with a parka on top so that we could wear a cap and pull the parka over top and we were dry. That wind was so strong that you could lean against it. Really! And when gusts of wind came along, you had to hang onto something or it would blow you along the track. And the rain! It was pelting

down so thick it was obscuring the lights. By this time we had a string of electric lights and a light plant going and sometimes the wind would blow the lights over. It was a terrible, terrible night to work. However, we stayed with it all night, and eventually we had all three engines back on the track.

Then came the time to pull the business cars apart. We couldn't actually see how much damage had been done, but there was no use trying to take them apart delicately because we couldn't save anything anyway. So we put a locomotive on one end with the big hook, and the other two engines on the other end. When we tied on, we gave a little nudge and another little nudge, pushing the cars a bit further together to loosen things up. Then I gave the engineers the highball to back up.

There was this most almighty tearing sound a teeth-chattering noise, with wood splintering, glass breaking, tortured steel being ripped apart as the two cars separated. Finally, they were apart. It didn't take too long to clean up the rest of the train and we hauled back to Squamish and set the two business cars in the coach yard. The *Cariboo* had a wooden body on a steel frame, and it was too old a car to do anything with so after the accident we just wrote it off as a dead loss. Joseph Broadbent, General Manager of the railway, wanted to know what we were going to do with the *Northern Summit*. (photo below, at Squamish after the accident, by Eric Prince Stathers)



So I got together with my Car Shop Foreman and four or five of the best mechanics we had in the shop and asked their opinion. After the Chief Electrician had made his survey, we figured that we could rebuild the car and put it back in shape. So that's what we did; cut off the damaged section and rebuilt the whole end of the car. That work was done in our little wooden shop in Squamish (today WCRA's PGE Carshop!) . This was long before the construction of the big shops they have there today. The *Northern Summit* was completely restored, so that if you examined it today you'd have trouble believing it had ever been smashed. Of course we had to replace that beautiful crockery and the only place it could be acquired was England. We sent some broken pieces back to England and they produced crockery of very much the same pattern with "NS". on it. The *Northern Summit* is still operating as one of the business cars for the B.C. Rail.

Sources:

1) Original photographs from the estate of Eric Prince Stathers. 2) Pages 152-156, Chapter 14 The Big Hook – from the first volume of Eric Prince Stathers memoirs entitled: "In the Ditch Stories of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway 1929-65" by Eric Prince Stathers available for purchase on Amazon.com. <http://www.amazon.com/author/ericstathers>



PGE Business car Cariboo was written off after the accident (Eric Prince Stathers)

Postscript.....The Northern Summit did continue in service on the PGE / BC Rail system into 2002 as a business car. It was sold to a private collector in 2002, and later purchased in 2006 by WCRA. It is in our collection today—complete with the original china, original royal logos and all, and is our next up passenger car restoration effort.

FIRST OFFICIAL TRAIN BETWEEN NORTH VANCOUVER AND SQUAMISH

As you may have noticed, we have put a little extra focus on the Pacific Great Eastern in this issue. That is because it was 60 years ago, on August 22, 1956, that the first official train operated from North Vancouver to Squamish along the new extension to the railway. Engineer Hugh Campbell was operating the train two orange MLW units and the business car Northern Summit was along with the dignitaries.

This would change Squamish forever. No longer would it be necessary for passengers and freight to travel by steamship in order to connect to the railways and markets of Vancouver. Freight could now flow directly to the main railway interchanges, Shortly after, the highway would also be completed and Squamish became just a short trip—opening up what today we call Sea to Sky Country.

RAILWAY NEWS



COAST STARLIGHT OBSERVED

Here we are in Oregon this August 12, and we have a view across the Clackamas River to the Union Pacific (former SP) mainline. Just looking out the window casually at 1800 hours and what should cruise by but the northbound *Coast Starlight*. Noted in the consist was that the train had two Superliner Sightseer Lounge cars - one in the coach section and one in the sleeper section. Looks like the old Pacific Parlor cars (ex ATSF) are gone.

CASCADES CARRYING GOOD LOADS

In July, your editor had a chance to ride Amtrak Cascades in both directions between Vancouver and Seattle. On both occasions, the trains were entirely sold out at the Seattle end. Seems like the trains are getting good use. One of the trains was a new Talgo set pushed south by a GE unit, the other was one of the older Talgo's pulled north by a freshly repainted Cascades F59PHI.

Were my eyes fooling me? Just a brief glimpse while here in Oregon, but I think I saw an Amtrak Cascades en route to Eugene with freshly painted F40's on each end.....one would be a baggage / can car, but is there a Cascades painted live F40 out there? Or was I seeing things? (which is entirely possible)



MOTIVE POWER NOTES.....

The CN 3000 series Tier 4 GE units are showing up regularly on the system in the west. They have even been seen in Squamish a few times mixed in the motive power of the regular trains. CN 571 to Squamish on August was powered by 3008 / 3045 (T.M.)

Several more were recently delivered.....BNSF train #31 arriving at Memphis to interchange with CN had BNSF locos 6942 / 5068 and then ten new ET44AC's for CN—numbers 3093, 3095, 3100, 3109, 3107, 3099, 3090, 3097, 3096 and 3092 fresh from GE's Texas plant. (J.M.)



QUICK TRAIL CONVERSION ALONG ARBUTUS

The City of Vancouver wasted no time after track removal to pave a section of the former CPR Arbutus corridor. Photos here of the section between 16th Avenue and King Edward Ave. as rails are removed June 16th and paved path July 26th.(C.D.)





But, of course, not all are happy.....many have their own personal ideas of what the former right of way should become.

SD30C-ECO ORDER COMPLETED

Bombardier Transportation's Mexico plant has now completed the full order for CPR of SD40-2 conversions to new SD30C-ECO units. On the roster now are 50 such units, numbered 5000 through 5049. (BL)



MOTIVE POWER NOTES

Southern Railway of BC is testing a unique unit for three months—blue painted GP20D # CEFX 2036 is showing up regularly on various assignments. It is nicknamed the Blue Beast, and features a high cab with good visibility.

PROJECT GREAT NORTHERN 1090

Project GN 1090 update August 13 from TrevorI went down to the car with the plan to do something with the roof. I never made it up there. I cleaned up a bunch of scrap metal inside the car. There has been some discussion about the rebuilding of the frame of the car and how much was rebuilt. I searched all over the cast ends and ornate castings that hold the truss rods in the middle of the car for the casting dates. I found these dates and they are all in 1924. The entire frame was rebuilt from wood to cast steel. The truss rods that were in the wood frame were kept and incorporated in the new steel frame. While I was under there I did some scraping and painting including the entire side of one of the trucks before I ran out of primer. When I was scraping, some of the Pullman Green from the 1920s paint job was showing through. This will be the final colour of the car with Gold Leaf lettering.

On August 14 I (Trevor) got up on the roof and took a section out to determine what was there. He found badly rotted wood with a layer of paper and three layers of canvas on top. While the wood was bad, it was good enough to make a template for reconstruction. (T.M.)
www.trevorstrains.weebly.com

GRAND CANYON RAILWAY #29 BACK

Grand Canyon Railway 2-8-2- #29 is back in steam. The railway had it out and running in steam testing mid August. (M.C.M.)

INTERESTING CONSIST ON BNSF

Noted arriving New Westminster on BNSF July 7th was a motive power consist of BNSF 7970, Norfolk Southern 8003 and 9484, and CN 2247 / 2501 / 2261 / 2582. (J.M.)

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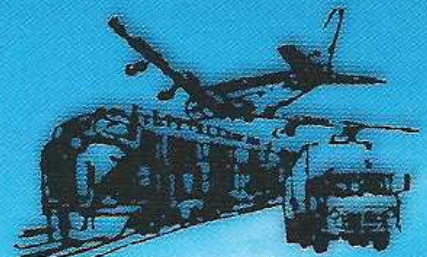
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TRIVIA ANSWER

Jell-O and several other patents including the manufacture of gelatins were owned by **Peter Cooper** (12Feb1791-4Apr1883), who was the designer and builder of "*Tom Thumb*", America's first steam locomotive. The patents were later sold to Pearle Bixby Wait, a corn syrup manufacturer, who developed a packaged form. In 1899 it was sold to Genesse Pure Food Company and in 1923 re-christened the Jell-O Company. Its now a trademark of Kraft Foods. The product was manufactured in the town of Leroy, New York until 1964 and in 2012 opened the Jell-O Museum at that location.

BACK COVER

Pacific Great Eastern #2 is out for a starring role in some filming for a new TV series Timeless—scheduled to air on NBC next year. (Don Evans photo, July 20, 2016)



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