



WCRA NEWS

AUGUST 2018

WCRA SUNSET DINNER TRAIN - AUGUST 25

POLAR EXPRESS 2018 NOW ON SALE

Sunset Dinner Train August 25, 2018
Squamish BC

For more information:
604-898-9336
WWW.WCRA.ORG



GENERAL MEETING

The **General Meeting** of the WCRA will be on Tuesday, July 31, 2018 at Rainbow Creek Station in Burnaby, Willingdon and Penzance, at 1930 hours.

Entertainment will be announced at the meeting

ON THE COVER

Plan now to be on board the West Coast Railway Association's first ever Sunset Dinner Train, departing from the West Coast Railway Heritage Park in Squamish at 1730k on Saturday, August 25. In addition to a great scenic ride across the Mamquam River bridge and through the Squamish estuary (with great views to the Stawamus Chief at sunset), you will enjoy first class food and beverage with appies prior to departure and then tapas on board. Full details are on page 8—thanks to **Christian Vazzaz** for the photo and card for the event.

AUGUST CALENDAR

- **West Coast Railway Heritage Park open daily 1000 to 1700**
 - Bill Miner Escape Room open by reservation every day
- Friday, August 10—Newsletter deadline for the September issue of WCRA News
- Friday, August 17—Drive in Movie Night *A Knight's Tale*—Show at dusk, \$20 per carload or \$5 walk in. Concession open and mini rail rides available prior to the show
- Sunday, August 19—High Tea at the Mac Norris Station—604-898-9336 for reservations, seatings at 1200, 1400 and 1600
- Saturday, August 25—WCRA Dinner Train, Heritage Park, 1730k (see page 8)
- Tuesday, August 28—WCRA General Meeting, 1930 k, Rainbow Creek Station

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.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

FROM THE JUNE GENERAL MEETING

Prior to the meeting, Chair **Craig McDowall** advised the members that **Arthur Irving**, a member for 56 years, passed away June 23rd. A minute of silence was observed and details of his funeral were provided. **Craig** shared a poignant moment from a Collection Committee last fall, and **Jeremy** read a remembrance of Arthur written by **Bob Hunter**.

Craig then called the meeting to order at 1940 with 18 Voting Members, No Spouses, No Staff and 1 Guest present.

Jeremy updated Members of Changes in the Board of Directors:

Don E was named Chair of the Board;

Craig was named Vice-Chair;

Debora Sweeney and **Steve Crombie** have been appointed Directors with terms ending March 2019. **Bob P** gave a brief biography on both.

Ken T updated Members of his transition from Staff to a Volunteer effective July 1st. His wife is retiring that date this will allow him more family time.

Bob P covered all the Staff Reports:

President/CEO – a dynamic Cash Management Plan has been developed which will permit:

- Raising more donations for the WCRA Endowment Fund – Goal \$5.0M (now \$1.4M);
- Generating Operating revenue – to take us beyond operating day to day;
- A dinner train is planned for mid-August. Planned route going both North & South of the Park - duration 1.5 to 2 hr. Track & Pilot is being donated by CN and Union

Finance - The year-end financials were delivered to the bank last week and they are happy with what they saw.

Heritage Park - Rotary Convention in May drew a good reaction from 300 delegates.

Railway Operations - **Singh** continues concentrating his efforts on getting the Budd Cars operational. Both units have the APU and one engine operating and another also has its 2nd operating.

Fundraising – **Ken T** reported results are ahead of Q1 and on plan with L/Y;

- He is arranging a Dinner at the CN Roundhouse to introduce some potential new donors to the Heritage Park.

Collection – **Mike McGaw** addressed current projects:

CP8000 - Good progress being by **Greg** and **Richard**. Need to develop focused fundraising ... to date all the expenditures have been funded personally by the restoration team;

BCER960 - Likely sufficient funding on hand. Next task is to spray the upper steelwork;

GN X-180 - To be moved inside the PGE Carshop to prep for painting.

374 Pavilion – **George G** reported that donations and sales from the kiosk are good. Research is being done on some surplus donated books as they appear to be more “high-end”

than usual. If this is confirmed, consideration is being given to selling them on e-bay instead of at the Pavilion. The recent Vancouver Int'l Jazz Festival added to the visitor count. The Community Centre & Pavilion will be open on July 1st. **George** has Canada pins & flags to hand out.

Events Calendar was reviewed

Show & Tell – Ryan preceded the segment with a brief report. He then followed with an explanation of the evolution of geared logging locomotives, describing their similarities/differences using a Bachman G-Scale Shay to demonstrate.

Trackside Reports –Bill reported many items of interest.

50/50 draw was held. Winnings were donated back to WCRA Garden Track Project ... Thanks Jim McPherson

Entertainment – In tribute to *Arthur Irving*, **Bill** showed a video on Great Northern Steam.

MEMBER NEWS

Arthur Irving, one of our long time members, passed away on June 23rd. Arthur was the consummate Great Northern fan, and a long time contributor and regular at our general meetings, events and the Collections Committee. While not one of our original founding members, Arthur had been a member since 1962. A service for Arthur was held on July 4th in Burnaby.

Bob Hunter has the following remembrances of Arthur....

“I met Arthur in 1974 when I joined the WCRA; he joined in 1962. In recent years, I drove him to many of the meetings. One might suggest his demeanor was “grumpy” and “critical” while beneath that exterior.....was a suburb historian, sharp as a tack even in his declining years.

We knew he lived in the same house his whole life and didn't drive but I just found out he was interested in (brick and mortar) theatres and theatrical collectables. Who would have known?

Probably in the mid-1970s President (Roger Burrows) or the Executive decided due to the increasing amount of business, that the WCRA Monthly meetings would now start at 7:30 PM rather than 8:00 PM. Arthur was adamant that the meetings always had started at 8 and he would not be party to the earlier start. At the first meeting with the early start, Arthur appeared before 7:30 but REFUSED to enter the meeting room, instead he hung out in the hallway with the door open listening to the proceedings, until 8 clock exactly when he joined the meeting.

There is a photo of Arthur in Barrie Sanford's book “Railway by the Bay” page 146. The caption reads: Great Northern Railway enthusiast Arthur Irving about to step into history as the last passenger to board a train [The GN International] at Crescent Beach on October 25, 1969. On this final day of operation the GN crew obligingly ran the entire train to allow the

dozen or so passengers going on the last run to ride in the parlor car-free.

In the mid-1970s the WCRA desperately wanted a steel car to store and display its small artifacts; a steel baggage car would be ideal. For some time we had seen two BN Work Service cars (a flat car and a wooden Baggage Car) on isolated track on front of the BC Penitentiary in New West. For some reason (a tip perhaps) Arthur went out to New West to investigate. The two cars were being scrapped on site. To his (and our) utter horror it wasn't a wooden Baggage Car but a Wood Sheathed STEEL Baggage Car, perfect for our needs. As the story goes Arthur was so upset he walked all the way home to East Broadway.

Finally, Arthur's crowning achievement. In the early 1980's he offered on behalf of the Association to inquire to Burlington Northern Railway regarding the possible availability of a pair of open platform Parlour Observation cars (ex-GN 1057 & 1090) currently in work service. At a subsequent monthly meeting if one looked carefully you might have seen Arthur smiling like a Cheshire cat, as the meeting dragged on and on. Finally Arthur was up with a report & announced he had received a reply from Burlington Northern. They had considered our inquiry. Having sat thru the whole meeting with not a wink or a nod he announced BN would not sell either car to us but rather DONATE BOTH CARS to the WCRA. We wondered how he was able to contain himself during the meeting!"

We will all miss Arthur—he was a real contributor—and he was a special “one of a kind”.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome to membership:

- Eric Anderson & Karen Ravensbergen and Family of Vancouver
- Charles Clark and Family of Brackendale
- Evelyn Coleman and Family of Garibaldi Highlands
- Anita Constantin and Family of Garibaldi Highlands
- Hajar Courteau and Family of Garibaldi Highlands
- Steve Crombie of Vancouver
- George Curry of Erickson MB
- Keeley Kidner and Family of Garibaldi Highlands
- Peter & Jill Longhurst and Family of Vancouver
- Adam Moss of Squamish
- Renata Niania and Family of Garibaldi Highlands
- Nam Ki Park and Family of North Vancouver
- Shannon Prasad and Family of Brackendale
- Alison Strong and Family of Brackendale
- Debora Sweeney of Vancouver
- Hazel Whitehead and Family of Garibaldi Highlands

We welcome back to membership:

- Tony Bateup and Family of Tata Beach, Takaka New Zealand
- Mike & Susan Edwards and Family of Garibaldi Highlands
- Brodie & Pippa Henrichsen and Family of North Vancouver
- Trisha Loscombe and Family of Garibaldi Highlands
- Ken Tanner of Squamish
- Edward & Nicole vonDehn and Family of West Vancouver

(J.D.)

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

If your label reads 07/31/18 it is time to renew your membership.....if it reads 04/30/18 this is your last issue of WCRA News. We need all of you as members, please renew today.

WCRA TRIVIA #354 - By Ryan Cruickshank

Who is *Miss Rail Rose* of Wilson, NC ?

(Answer on page 31)

COLLECTION

BCER 960 GETS ITS HOODS MOUNTED.

Work continues on BCER 960. With the rear hood pretty much finished with final paint... onto front hood in next few weeks. Just about looking too shiny... Eh! For sure will show her flaws, but was the same with the original late 40s paint job. **Bob Gordon** and I re-sanded rear hood sides and through the last of our paint on them, plus the front hood and it's side panels. Still some blips in paint work requiring attention but on the home stretch for this aspect.

(photo page 7)

Work also well along on the units inside doors and the cab access to the hoods.

(photo right)

(M. McG.)





BUDD RDC'S UPDATE

All mechanical repairs have now been completed on RDC-1 #BC-21 with the recent air compressor change. Focus has now shifted to interior repairs and clean up for display during BC Rail Pioneer's picnic on Thursday, July 19.

This week, volunteers **Don Lawrence** and **Robert Misjak**, and staffer **Dawson Loop** helped **Singh** replace engineer's seat, remove garbage and debris from lockers, remove broken tables, vacuum all seats and clean floors. Work will continue this week with further cleaning and installation of new carpet runner in the centre aisle. (photos page 8)

After the picnic, efforts will shift on final mechanical repairs on BC-33 and subsequent interior repairs and cleaning. In the fall, air brake equipment on both cars will be removed and sent out for recertification. Also, new batteries will be installed. We anticipate both cars to be fully operational by November. (S.B.)



Rob cleans the seats in BC 21



Don tries the new engineer's seat!

WEST COAST RAILWAY HERITAGE PARK *Home of the Royal Hudson*



AUGUST 25—SUNSET DINNER TRAIN—GET ON BOARD

Reservations are now being taken for the first ever WCRA Sunset Romance Dinner Train, which will operate on Saturday, August 25 with a 1730 start. Make plans now to be part of this very special evening, which will combine a unique and scenic rail trip around Squamish with wonderful food and beverage. And, it will generate funds to help support WCRA and the Heritage Park with our projects through the summer and fall.

Here is how the evening is planned out for our Sunset Dinner Train:

5:30pm – Cocktail Reception on the Canron Upper Deck with served appetizers, CN Roundhouse & Conference Centre

6:00pm – Guests watch from the Canron Upper Deck as their train pulls into the Mac Norris Station.

6:30pm – Boarding begins, Guests greeted on the Mac Norris Station platform with a

complimentary glass of wine as they board.

6:45pm – Train departs Mac Norris Station – An eight course “Culinary Trip Across Canada” tapas food service commences as the train makes its way across the Mamquam River and then onwards to the Squamish estuary.

7:30pm – Train stops at the estuary with great views while food service continues

7:45pm – Train departs estuary, final tapas and dessert on the return trip.

8:30pm – Train arrives back at the Mac Norris Station.

This will be a “white glove service” evening with live entertainment throughout the event. There will be a full Cash Bar available on board the train as well, with lots of fun and great views to enjoy.

Reserve your spots now! Price for this unique and special event are just \$125 pp tax included. Couples will be for \$250 tax included. Invite some friends, make up a foursome and we will seat you at tables directly across the aisle! There will also be a limited number of tables for four in the open observation car Henry Pickering—there are only eight tables available here and they will sell for \$150 pp (\$600 per table of four)—these tables will be in the outdoor section of this classic car with fresh summer air and great views.

To make your bookings just call us at the Heritage Park 604-898-9336, toll free from Vancouver at 1-800-722-1233 or contact us at info@wcra.org

Get on board our Sunset Dinner Train—you’ll be glad that you did.

HIGH TEA AT THE HERITAGE PARK—August 19 IS NEXT DATE

Join us for High Tea this summer, as the popular event returns to the *Mac Norris Station* at the West Coast Railway Heritage Park. This year’s schedule has two remaining Sundays— August 19, and September 16 with sittings at 1200, 1400 and 1600 each date. Price is just \$25 per person, enjoy a selection of specially blended teas with pastries and finger sandwiches. Reservations please at 604-898-9336 or e mail tea@wcra.org (T.C.)

NEW GATE HOUSE NOW IN SERVICE

The new admissions booth has now been placed into service at the West Coast Railway Heritage Park. Guests are now greeted at our new gate house before they cross the bridge. They will pay there and get oriented to the park at that point with maps etc. We believe this will create a much better first impression for guests arriving at the Heritage Park, and also provide a better orientation and answers to questions they may have about their visit.

For us at the Park, we also believe that this will help control some problems we have had with vagrants and scavengers that have been found lurking in the park at the back of the carshop on



several occasions. It will also improve revenue as all guests will now have to check in before they can enter the Park area.

Volunteers please note, everybody entering the park is expected to check in on arrival so please identify yourself as a volunteer to staff and let them know what project or activity you will be working on.

Thanks everyone for your support. (G.B., T.C.)

(Tammie Cassaretti photo)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

So, can you help—will you help? The Heritage Park is looking for volunteers in many capacities for the summer....these include heritage interpretation, tea house greeters and servers, gift shop and guest services, forge operators, beanery staff and more. And, there is always the grounds work to be done—weeding, track brushing and vegetation management and more. In fact, there is something for everyone to do—and it is great fun getting to talk with our guests and hear their appreciation for all that we do. Please talk to the Heritage Park if you can help—604-898-9336 or info@wcra.org

In addition, the West Coast Mini Rail is open and operating daily (with good crowds) and we need to keep building our team of qualified operators—contact Jeremy.

DRIVE IN MOVIES 2018

The popular Drive in Movie nights are continuing at the West Coast Railway Heritage Park. The remaining dates and shows lined up for the 2018 season are as follows:

- Friday, August 17 – *A Knight's Tale*,
- Friday, September 7 – *Bedtime Stories*
- Friday, October 5 – *Avengers Infinity War*

All showings start at Dusk, price is just \$20 a car load or \$5 walk in. Concession will be open and MiniRail available one hour prior to dusk. Mark the dates! (T.C.)

POLAR EXPRESS TICKETS ON SALE

With Day Out With Thomas now behind us, our largest annual event—**Polar Express** is about to open for sales. Watch our website and Facebook for info. and get your tickets quickly! Polar Express sells out every year, and this year will be no exception. So get in there as soon as you can and decide the date and time for your 2018 Polar Express experience.

PLATFORM CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



Work on the platform extension at the Mac Norris Station has completed its first phase of work. Special thanks to our staff and volunteers for their great work on this project, especially to **JC Saez** and **Dave Lentinello** for their talents. (Don Evans photo, page 11)

This work has been partly funded by a Heritage BC grant—and prepares a first phase towards the development of the Garden Tracks shelter project. The next element will be the building of the ramp and raised platform between Garden Tracks 2 and 3. The new platform is immediately useful as it will aid the boarding of trains at the Mac Norris Station by providing a safe and solid platform for a second major boarding point.

VOLUNTEER INSURANCE HAS YOU COVERED

A reminder to our members and volunteers that WCRA carries a Volunteer Insurance Policy to protect you when you are helping as a volunteer on projects or activities at any of our facilities or activities. This is a personal injury type policy, and is carried in addition to our overall General Liability coverage.

A question had arisen about the age limit for coverage—as the renewal policy had indicated age 70 or under. We are happy to report that the insurer has waived this clause and all volunteers are covered—regardless of age. (D.S.)

LOCOMOTIVE 374 PAVILION

Our visitor count for June was 5,239. We had 146 less people than last June. Year to date, we are up 836 visitors over last year.

Summer is finally here after a slow start. It is now warm enough to leave the jacket at home. Lets all hope for a long stretch of good weather.

July 1, Canada Day, we entertained 504 Guests and handed out 400 Flags, 300 Lapel Pins and put 250 Canada Maple Leaf Tattoos on people. With the Jazz Festival playing in the Roundhouse and July 1 being a holiday we had very busy but enjoyable day.

Another thanks to **John Day** for keeping our vast fleet of N-Gauge Model Trains running. Many of the young visiting children sit in front of the display case hypnotized by the model trains circling inside the cabinet. (And our staff who are model train fans) Keeping our trains running is almost a full time job for John.

A photo of **George Game** and **Margaret Luciw** appears at the top of page 13. Margaret is a local senior who drops in too help us out on many occasions. So a special thanks to Margaret!, as well as to all our volunteers.



Summer visitors have arrived. Many by VIA, Rocky Mountaineer and cruise ships. The Pavilion is much busier now and the need for more volunteers is evident.

If you would like to help please give me a call at 778-875-3573. If you like meeting and helping people you will enjoy your time at the Pavilion. One or two days a month would really help us out, especially on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. We have free parking if you plan to drive in. We are located at the corner of Davie St. & Pacific Blvd. Just across from the Canada Line Yaletown/ Roundhouse Station.

The Pavilion is on Summer Hours - 10 AM to 4 PM. If you are in the Yaletown District, please drop in for a visit and check us out. (G.G.)

FUNDRAISING

SUPPORT OUR SUMMER DIRECT MAIL CAMPAIGN—THANK YOU!

By now you should have received our summer Direct Mail Campaign, encouraging and

soliciting your support on two key projects—the creation of the Garden Tracks Shelter to better protect our precious rolling stock collection, and the completion of the Great Northern transfer cabooses X 180. Both these projects have been supported with grant funds from other agencies and sources, but both need your support in order to utilize the grant funds and see the projects progress. For those of you who have responded, we thank you very much for your contributions! The platform project you see on page 11 is evidence of the work being done at the Park, and your support is what makes these things possible.

In the case of the caboose X-180, the project is well along and all that is needed to complete is some volunteer and staff labour, and the purchase of final components and the paint. By the time you read this issue the car will have been moved into the PGE Carshop and preparatory work for painting should be started. The goal is to have a beautiful bright red GN X-108 by fall.

Please consider WCRA for support this summer—we need all of you in order to make these projects reality. It is not too late to help—send your donation today.

LEGACY GIVING—LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY IS UP TO US!

The passing of another of our long time members, **Arthur Irving**, is a poignant reminder that none of us are immortal. Arthur's seat at the general meetings sits vacant these days, and we remember him and his contributions fondly. Thankfully we have new generations of members coming along, and many are becoming active in our operations and activities.

But it is up to us, members like me and so many of us who grew up with trains and have the passion for what we do, to make sure that the next generation has what it needs to sustain our work for the future. And that is where legacy giving comes in. We have the opportunity to provide the needed funding for the future in a painless and effortless way—through designating a portion of what we have today through our estates to the success of our railway preservation efforts in the future.

Many of us don't take the time to think ahead to that inevitable future, and to what good we might do when the time to move on from this world occurs. We often think that legacy giving is for the very rich, and we don't stop to realize that just owning a home means that there is a substantial amount to be directed at that critical time. If there are no directions in the form of a will, then much of the value that a lifetime has created will be lost. Regardless your wishes, don't let that happen to you and just give away your financial worth—make sure you have your say!

Legacy gifts—gifts through your will / estate—are the key to ensuring that WCRA has a strong and sustainable future. It is about a way that all of us can help ensure that our railway

heritage remains preserved for those future generations that we so much care about.

If you are a supporter of WCRA and feel so inclined to consider us for support now or in the future, we have several ways that you can make a difference to the future of railway preservation including:

- Leave an outright financial gift to the West Coast Railway Association in your will for use in a project or in just sustaining the organization and our railway preservation work
- Participate in our new (and now under construction) Telegraph Memorial Park where you or your loved one can be permanently remembered in a heritage railway setting
- Make gift to our West Coast Railway Endowment Fund (Vancouver Foundation) which will generate annual interest in perpetuity helping with WCRA's long term sustainability

Any of these generate a charitable receipt, reducing taxes payable and helping a charity that you believe in and support. For more information, contact Don Evans at 604-988-3435 or <don_evans@telus.net> re WCRA's options and talk to your financial planner.

We encourage you to let us know if you do make such future gift provisions, as these help in both our planning as well as in our future financial sustainability. We are happy to report that we now have seven identified legacy gifts for our future—gifts that will help ensure the survival of our collection and its preservation at the Heritage Park we created.

Each and everyone of you have the same opportunity—to be part of the WCRA of the future, preserving, educating and providing the history and story of the railways that created our country and our Province.

TELEGRAPH MEMORIAL PARK CONTRUCTION STARTED

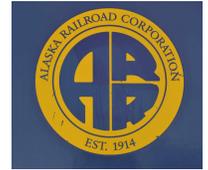
Work has commenced on the ground preparation for the construction of our new Telegraph Memorial Park, a lovely new permanent memorial location for railroader and railroad families to remember loved ones in a very special way. The landscaped area for Telegraph Memorial Park will be beautifully done and maintained, a fenced area with trees and lawn. The heritage crossing signals (traditional flashing lights and the wig wag) will be located into this location and will be powered up so they can be operated.

The centerpiece will be a short section of track with a speeder trailer car containing secured spaces for a limited number of memorials, each will identify the individual and tell that person's unique railway story, and each will have a private locked compartment to contain personal items special to the person and the family.

There will be a finite number of spaces in the Park (currently we are thinking 60), and we are delighted to report that the first three spaces have now been spoken for. We'll keep you

posted as the building continues. If you are interested in securing your spot, it is by charitable donation; contact Don Evans at 604-988-3435 for more information.

FEATURE ARTICLES



RIDING THE ALASKA RAILROAD—PART TWO

Story & photos by **Don Evans**

In our last issue, we covered our first week in Alaska, and rode the southern end of the Alaska Railroad with all its features. In part 2 we will venture north from Anchorage, become part of the 25% club (the number who actually see the summit of Denali (Mount McKinley), and reach all the way to the railroad's northern terminus at Fairbanks.

This is the longest stretch of the line—from Anchorage at MP 114 all the way to Fairbanks at MP 467 and, at least in the summer, the busiest stretch of the line as there are several cruise line trains (their cars, Alaska RR locos and crews) operating every day. We are travelling on the Alaska Railroad's **Denali Star** train—a daily service that sees one trainset depart from each end of the line on a 12 hour journey, meeting in the middle and exchanging crews at that point. We are on board in Gold Star service—a Rader built double deck coach as we had on the earlier trips to and from Seward.

Tuesday, May 22 and we are once again at the Anchorage station. The **Coastal Classic** has already departed for Seward and our **Denali Star** train is at the platform. Our consist is SD70MAC's 4326 and 4323 with baggage / two Gold Star double deck cars / Gallery bistro



car / coach / dome coach / and two Wilderness Explorer (private cars, used by cruise lines other than Princess and Holland America which have their own cars (photo left).

We board the train and depart on time at 0815 for the 12 hour journey through, and leave

the Anchorage station behind



Right away we get a sense of how busy this section of line—between Anchorage and Denali—will be, as right behind us, a cruise ship train enters station to follow us to Denali - SD70 MAC 4320 with two Holland America cars and two Princess cars (all double deck).

As we leave town, we meet an inbound freight behind SD70MAC 4012 and a sister—a long train, with lots of Trailer on Flat Car, containers, coal and tank cars. We pick up speed and enjoy the nice ride with CTC and welded rail in this area, a dispatching shift to Track Warrant operation takes effect further out. Our train about 1/3 full at this point. We enjoy the spectacular mountain views once again—they are everywhere in Alaska!

Soon it is our call for breakfast, and we again enjoy a fresh breakfast service in the downstairs dining room. Nothing beats the sheer enjoyment of good food in the rolling setting of a dining car, with the constant changing views out the window and the fun of meeting other travelers and sharing stories and experiences.

After breakfast I take a tour of the train, as I wanted to see the former SP Gallery commuter car turned into a bistro car. It is an amazing job as the photo on page 18 shows—open high ceilings, large windows while retaining the upper level gallery windows, and pleasant seating booths and serving counter area. It is not very busy, but the load increases as we board passengers along the line into Adventure Class (coach).



Behind the Bistro are two Adventure Class cars—one of the Korean built coaches and a classic Budd Dome coach. Following this are the two Wilderness Explorer cars, these are off limits to us as they are staffed and served exclusively by their own team.



Our first station stop is at Wasilla, MP 160, where we board 26 more to Adventure Class at the classic looking station, then continue north.

We pass a northbound gravel train with SD70 MAC 4016. (photo)

Continuing north through very pretty country, and following the Susitna River, we start to get spectacular views to Mt McKinley (now Denali) on this beautiful sunny morning. It is here that we become members of the 25% club—just 25% ever get to see the top of the mountain as it tends to be cloud covered more than it is visible. The highest mountain in North America at 20,320 feet, it is truly a site to behold and we relish the views (and photo them) from the outdoor deck on the upper level of our car.



We arrive at our next station stop, Talkeetna (MP 227) at 1105. (population of 826). There are lots getting on and off here in both classes of service, as this is the stopping off point for the adventurous—climbers and flightseers to Mt Denali.

We depart Talkeetna at 1120, and pass the *Hurricane Turn* Train here (its home base, 4 times weekly) with Non Powered Cab car #31, (ex Amtrak F40 #244) / Baggage / coach / dome coach and a GP40-2. This train handles flag stop service north between Talkeetna and as far as Hurricane (55 miles) in a remote part of the state. It is one of the last flag stop trains left serving a remote area population.

Continuing north, our next meet is at Gold Siding with a southbound Cruise train—SD70 MAC 4317 and eight Princess Cruises double deck cars—photo on bottom of back cover. The scenery continues as we cross the mile 264 Susitna River Bridge.

We continue north, passing through the many flag stops along this route, serving residences with no road or other access than the railroad. Mountain and river views predominate this area, there is always something to see. Ahead lies the largest bridge on the line and certainly the most famous—the steel bridge over Hurricane Gulch, built in 1921. The name comes from this area which experiences consistent heavy winds. The train curves around to the left—and suddenly we are high above the rivers and land below. (photo)



The bridge, at MP 284, spans a length of 914 feet and is 296 feet above the river. The gulch itself spreads to the west and is lined with a range of snow capped peaks—the Alaska Range of mountains. The train crosses at 10 mph to allow all of us lots of time for both photos and the experience itself—the views are spectacular.

After the bridge, we head downstairs for a nice lunch in the dining room, and then return to our viewing deck on the upper level. Things have changed now! We have been climbing steadily and are now into a snow and ice scape all around us. At 1400 we pull into the siding to meet the southbound *Denali Star* with SD70MAC's 4318 / 4321 and same train consist as we have. Here we change crews—we are at the halfway point to Fairbanks. (photo, back cover top) - the siding is called Honolulu, but the snowscape doesn't fit the name!

By MP 304 we really have snow and ice all around as we cross the Continental Divide and

Summit (2363 feet), is the lowest crossing of the Continental Divide in North America. Waters here flow south to Cook Inlet and the Pacific, and then north to the Yukon River and the Arctic. As we cross over Windy Creek we enter Denali National Park, and follow the Nenana River north. Nice views of mountains and some wildlife sightings (moose) continue; we cross Riley Creek (another substantial bridge) and then we arrive at Denali National Park Station at MP 348.

This is a very busy station, and most passengers get off here—replaced by a new contingent heading north to Fairbanks. The Cruise Ship trains terminate here, but our *Denali Star* continues north. The town of Denali sits across the river and is a Jasper or Banff type of place from what we can see (lots of accommodations). Fleets of tour buses meet the train and we are here almost half an hour.

Now we enter another spectacular part of the journey, the ride down the Nenana River Gorge, and we follow the ledge watching rafters, crossing over bridges and passing through tunnels for the next several miles. The main Highway joins us for this segment



We are also entering coal country and see many coal seams and coal mines. We learn that the coal mined here is used in the coal fired power plants in this part of Alaska—the mined coal is loaded in coal cars, the railway takes them to the power plants, and power is generated for the communities—a home grown operation for the state.



The land has cleared of snow and ice, and the forests have given way to tundra, as we arrive at the next substantial scenic highlight at MP 411 Nenana. Here we find barges, pusher tugs and a significant service facility as the river is navigable north from this point.

Passing through town we can't help but notice an old heavyweight car on the ground serving as a business. (photo) From here we enter a grade and a long loop, which ends us up on the



deck of the Mears Memorial Bridge (MP 413.7) across the Tenana River—one of the longest single span railroad bridges in North America at 702 feet in length. It was the final link on the railway, and was completed in 1922 to connect the railway. Just west is where President Warren Harding drove the gold spike to officially complete the railroad on July 15, 1923.

From here it is a fairly routine ride the rest of the way to Fairbanks, where we arrive right on time at the Fairbanks station (photo page 22) at 2015. As we pull in a southbound freight is ready to depart behind five units—four 40xx series SD70MAC's and one 3000 series GP 40-2. We have reached the end of the line'

Wednesday, May 23 and after a good sleep, we are back at the Fairbanks station to board our ***Denali Star*** train south for Anchorage. We have the same consist as yesterday, but with only a single Gold Star car today. Before boarding, at the station, we enjoy the fabulous model railway which is operating in a room at the west end. The Alaska Railroad provides the Fairbanks Model Railroad Club with the space, and they have to open and operate the layout for railroad passengers at 0700 each morning until the train departs! Of course, they run HO scale Alaska Railroad models!

Boarding is called, and we are back into our Gold Star car, and depart in sunny weather at 0815. The trip starts with a giant loop all around the Fairbanks yard and shops, connecting



back into the mainline that we arrived in on the west end of the yard. There are lots of units around and freight cars, we see SD70MAC's, GP40-2's and a GP 38-2.

Soon we are retracing our route of yesterday, and heading towards the Mears Memorial Bridge and Nenana (photo page 23). Today we have a much lighter load on board, and lots of room to roam. The weather is good again, although much cloudier than yesterday. We will not see Denali today!

At 1205 we stop at Denali National Park Station - again lots of passengers on and off the train. We continue south and start what will be a busy day of meets, the first comes at MP 298 - Colorado Siding - where we meet the northbound *Denali Star* with SD70MAC's 4318 / 4321 and an identical consist to ours—complete to the two Wilderness Explorer cars. (photo below) Here our crews change (as yesterday) so crews on both passenger and through freights get to work out and back on their assignments between Fairbanks and Anchorage.



Next, in just a few short miles at MP 289 - Honolulu Siding - we meet a short northbound Holland America train with SD70MAC 4312 and just two double deck cars. These cars appear to be newer than the more common Rader built cars, and have a sculptured end to the dome sections instead of the flat face of the Rader domes (photo page 25). One thing we do notice is that the cruise ship trains are all very full—not the room to roam around that we have been afforded on the Alaska Railroad train early in this summer season.



MP 284 and another awesome view as we cross the Hurricane Gulch bridge, and then into the hole again at MP 282 - Hurricane Siding - to meet a northbound Princess Cruises train with SD70MAC 4328 with six cars—one Alaska RR Gold Star dome / five Princess Cruises Domes.

Back on track we are now behind schedule, but we continue to enjoy the scenery even though cloudy now and a bit cooler. One thing we cannot get over are the telegraph poles along the route—they are still standing and although no longer connected with wire they have pretty much all their insulators!

The ride back to Anchorage is at a good pace now to make up time, we are told we have the senior engineer on our train and he doesn't like being late. However a spare

crew is summoned from Anchorage in case our crew runs out of time—the crew roundtrip schedule is that close! We have been really rolling on the welded rail for the last 50 miles, and we were 30 minutes behind about an hour and a half ago. Anchorage is in the distance now, and we come across a grade crossing where a hi rail and a crew are waiting—but we don't slow down, just roll right through. Arrival at Anchorage station is at 2005—just five minutes late. The senior engineer got us there!

Thursday, May 24 and its time to head home. We have a morning to kill, so we walk around Lake Hood—the World's Largest Seaplane Base—where the green road sign proclaims “AIRCRAFT HAVE RIGHT OF WAY ON ROADS”. Here there is one airplane for every seven Alaskans, and in addition to the seaplane base there is also a gravel strip runway for wheeled aircraft. All this just a couple of city blocks away from the Anchorage main airport, with its fleets of cargo 747's landing to refuel and lots of commercial traffic. Checked in for our Air Canada flight to Vancouver, we look out the window to see a venerable DC-3 lifting off on a commercial flight. Seems the perfect cap to our trip, after all—this is Alaska.



FROM WCRA NEWS JUNE 1982

Thanks to Craig McDowall

Association News

WCRA Poolside Party

Make your plans now to attend the WCRA BBQ to be held at Phil Pool's house in North Vancouver on July 24th. BYOB&S&SW (booze, steak & swim attire).

E & N Trip

Although a smaller crowd of 25 rode our repeat of the April 17th E & N excursion, those that were on board had a most enjoyable day. Bernie Tully was our conductor and this time both RDC-1's were operating on the train. The net to the Association from both trips was approximately \$300 with a total of 76 passengers over the two days.

Mount Garibaldi moves back to North Van

Our open observation car moved back to North Van following its overhaul at the BC Hydro's Carrall Street yards by Railway Appliance Research. The car was delivered to the CN station by BC Hydro and BN. Then came the fire on the bridge at New Westminister forcing a change in plans. The car left the CN station at 0030 hours in a special move over the second narrows bridge direct to NV's Lynn Creek yard via Willingdon Junction. Consist was a pair of SD40's, the Mount Garibaldi and a caboose. She was ready for the Royal Hudson excursion and is now the best looking coach in the consist.

CN

The Fraser River Bridge at New Westminister has suffered another major outage. A fire struck the centre span at 17:35 hours on May 29th. The fire destroyed the wooden support structure for the swing mechanism, spread to the ties warping the rails and then engulfed the operator's shack on top of the span. During the fire, there were several explosions caused by gas barrels and propane tanks under the centre span. The fire was extinguished in 2 1/2 hours but the span was locked in a closed position so all rail and ship traffic was shut down. Initial estimates state it will take 30-60 days to repair. Detours over the CP track between Mission and Sapperton commenced almost immediately, That Sunday CP handled 12 CN freight transfers. BC Hydro also had to use the newly established detour. BN is now operating into Vancouver through Sumas.

CP has agreed for the duration to handle 10 CN, 1 BCH and 1 BN trains each way per day. This is the third time in recent years that the bridge has been out of commission

BC Hydro

BCH has changed the assignment of power on its Kits turn to an MP15 unit. The consist has been a single MP15 and 5-8 cars. Having the larger unit on the point makes a dramatic difference on the speed of the train up the long grade from Marpole to 41st Ave.

BCH removed the spur that used to serve Jones Tent & Awning (west 11th and Arbutus) March 22/23rd. Fewer and fewer spurs now remain on the BCH line.

The Hon, Hugh Curtis from the BC Provincial Gov't has signed over to Burnaby Mayor, Bill Lewarne, title to two BC Electric interurbans long stored at the BCH property at Boundary and Lougheed. It is reported that the trams will be moved to the Heritage Village in Burnaby where they will be displayed in a specially constructed building. Mention has been made of dismantling #1223, already on display there for parts to aid in the restoration of the

other two. The two trams were part of a group of three purchased by the Provincial Government in the early 1970's. The third, #1231, was sent to the National Museum in Ottawa. Meanwhile the others languished in storage until now. Still in storage are steeple cab electric #962 and the Siemens LRT bought for demonstration purposes that never happened.

BCR

There is trouble in the tunneling on BCR's new Anzac spur line to the northeast coal mine project. \$32.5 of the \$34M contingency fund has been spent as of mid May and the project is just starting. Apparently the tunnel project has run into a big problem with crumbling rock and in one case the tunnel site had to be changed!

Charges have also been made that the books have already been 'cooked' as a special \$45M warrant passed by cabinet in late 1981 is apparently to be used to write off BCR debt not for capital costs on the northeast project.

CN

CN announced on May 19th that it will temporarily layoff 3,150 workers this summer, over half its repair force. This move follows CN's worst financial performance and its first loss in five years. The layoffs in locomotive repair operations will last six weeks beyond the normal four week shutdown and those in freight car repairs will last an extra eight weeks. The employees affected are located in Moncton NB, Pte St. Charles in PQ and Transcona in Winnipeg

The Mountain Region's 1982 capital spending has been set at \$265M although the current economic outlook as indicate above may reduce the amount. Besides new welded rail track improvements and replacement of six wooden trestles, there will be terminal expansion at Vancouver, Kamloops, Jasper and Edmonton.

There was an interesting lash up of power on CN's 'hotshot' piggybacked #201 that left Winnipeg on May 28th for Edmonton behind SD 40 #5147, GP #4217 and F7A #9172

CP

CP will spend \$137M this year in the Pacific Region - \$97M of it in BC including a \$22M start on the Rogers Pass tunnel and 68 miles of new welded rail in the Selkirks and replacement of the double track bridge over Second Ave in Kamloops and ten miles of double track between Revelstoke and Twin Butte.

CP has purchased 30 new crew boarding cars at a cost of \$2.5M. The mobile units mounted on flat cars feature AC and heat tracers to prevent winter freezing.

As fossil fuel prices escalate, CP is now once again examining the idea of electrification in the Rockies. CP stated it may take 30 years to electrify due to the cost and savings determination based on fuel pricing.

CP's two remaining Baldwin DS4-4-1000 switchers have been stricken from the roster. Both #7070 & 7072 finished their careers on the E & N and are stored in Victoria 'unserviceable'. Both units are destined for Ogden.

In an apparent experiment for future operations through the new Rogers Pass tunnel, a SD-40-2 has been equipped with 'tunnel ears'!

CP has ordered 50 new locomotives - 30 SD-40-2's and 20 GP38-2's. The latter are to be classified as 'lightweight branchline switcher units'.

RAILWAY NEWS



GATES LAKE DERAILMENT

CN train L 57051, southbound for Squamish, derailed several cars mid train along the shores of—and a couple into—Gates Lake near Birken at MP 114.18 of the Squamish Sub. on July 11. The cars involved carried forest products. The derailment caused Rocky Mountaineer passengers to be bused to Whistler. The track was reopened for service on Saturday, July 14 at 1054. (J.M.)

RAIL WELDING IN SQUAMISH

CN has set up a rail welding operation at the Squamish yard on Track Seven. 80 foot lengths of rail are arriving by ship at Squamish

Terminals, and are welded into quarter mile lengths then shipped out on a welded rail train—this one ready to depart for North Vancouver on May 10, 2018.



(photo Trevor Mills)



CANADIAN RESCHEDULED

VIA'S Canadian has been rescheduled to allow for better timekeeping. The lengthened schedules show Train #1 now departing Toronto at 2200 on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday then arriving Vancouver on day 4 at 1800, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Train 2 eastbound now departs Vancouver at 1200 on Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays arriving Toronto at 1400 on Day 5, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

OTHER NEWS

BCSME CELEBRATES 25 YEARS AT CONFEDERATION PARK

Congratulations of the BC Society of Model Engineers on their celebration of 25 years at their Confederation Park location in Burnaby. Their last link on their 7 and 5.8" gauge line was put in place July 1, 1993 after they relocated from the Burnaby Heritage Village location. (WHISTLE)

KETTLE VALLEY STEAM RAILWAY SEEKS BRIDGE HELP

The Kettle Valley Steam Railway, home of the #3716 locomotive, needs help in funding the needed repairs to the Trout Creek Bridge—their landmark feature after the steam loco itself. The massive bridge needs to be opened up, have a section replaced as well as receive a new deck and tracks. Estimates for this work run in the \$600,000 range—beyond the ability to generate the funding from revenues earned. Donations would be gratefully received and charitable receipts are available. (M.C.M.)

**Visit Our
New Location
Just 83' West of
our Old Location
2825 Grandview Hwy in Vancouver**

CENTRAL HOBBIES

Your One Stop Scale Model Train Shop on the West Coast

2825 Grandview Hwy., Vancouver, British Columbia V5M 2E1

(604) 431-0771 Fax (604) 431-9855 ORDERS (888) 7trains (787-2467)

Web Site: www.central-hobbies.com



*We also stock a
large selection of
books and magazines!
Open Daily at 11 a.m.
Monday thru Saturday*

CREDIT LINES

ISSN 1204-07

Editor Don Evans
Distribution Jeremy Davy & Donna Simon

Vol. 58 Issue 8

Contributors:

G.B.	Gordon Bell	S. B.	Singh Biln
T.C.	Tammie Cassettari	J. D.	Jeremy Davy
G. G.	George Game	J. M.	Jim McPherson
T.M.	Trevor Mills	M.C.M	Craig McDowall
M.McG.	Mike McGaw		

WHISTLE BCSME

Send contributions to the WCRA PO Box, direct to the editor at #28 - 2133 St. Georges Ave., North Vancouver, B.C. V7L 3K5, on the Internet to <news@wcra.org>, phone news to (604)988-3435(res) or fax to (604) 986-7660. Check us out on the Internet at <www.wcra.org>

**Contact us: 604-800-722-1233 Heritage Park 604-898-9336
CN Roundhouse & Conference Centre 604-898-9336
wcra.org**

BACK COVER

Meets on the mainline of the Alaska Railroad were many—and with other passenger trains. On our back cover top we see the crew change between the two Alaska Railroad *Denali Star* trains, and (bottom) passengers exchange waves and photos as our northbound *Denali Star* meets a southbound Holland America cruise train. (Don Evans photos, story on page 16)

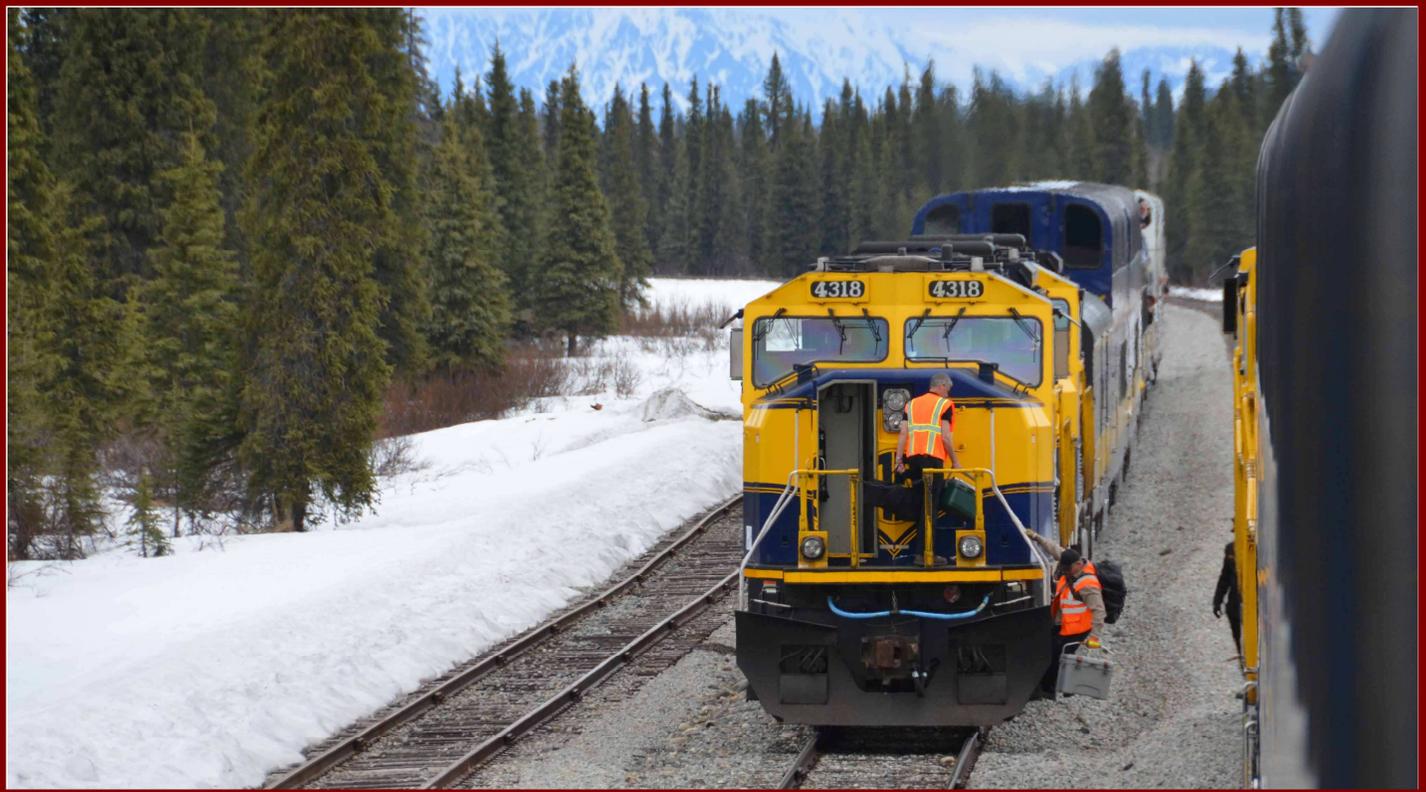
TRIVIA ANSWER

She is a concrete and broken tile mosaic sculpture beside the railroad station in Wilson NC. She is the creation of artists LaNelle Davis and Virginia Bullman (who produced 25 'Ladies' over a span of 15 years that sit in several parks and public spaces around the area). The station next door was built by the Atlantic Coast Line in 1924 by architect A. M. Griffin and was bought by the city from CSX in 1996 and extensively renovated to service Amtrak's Palmetto and Carolinian trains. The location is 401 East Nash Street, Wilson NC.



**CANADIAN COUNCIL
FOR
RAILWAY HERITAGE**

WCRA News acknowledges the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia



Published monthly by West Coast Railway Association
PO Box 2790 Stn. Term., Vancouver, B.C., V6B 3X2
www.wcra.org

ISSN 1204-072X
Vol. 58 Issue 8

Canada Post, Canadian Publications Mail Sales Product Agreement #40007853