



# **WCRA NEWS**

## **FEBRUARY 2018**

### **BOB PHILIP NAMED PRESIDENT & CEO**

**DAY OUT WITH THOMAS TICKETS  
NOW ON SALE FOR MAY 2018**



## GENERAL MEETING

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

Please make plans to attend as nominations for two board positions will be held.

Entertainment will be a show by **Don Evans** of the recent HeritageRail Alliance Conference in Minnesota and other topics.

## ON THE COVER

WCRA's Polar Express 2017 train pulls out of the West Coast Railway Heritage Park onto the CN Squamish sub. on a beautiful winter morning. Leading the train is "stealth" ex CN FP9A #6520 (which acquired its black primer paint for a movie shoot). Photo by Christian Vazzaz.

## FEBRUARY CALENDAR

- **West Coast Railway Heritage Park is closed January 1 to March 15, 2018**
  - Bill Miner Escape Room open by reservation every Friday, Saturday and Sunday (see page 10)
- Wednesday, February 7—Newsletter deadline for the March 2018 issue
- Tuesday, February 27—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](http://www.wcra.org) or mail to WCRA, PO Box 2790 Stn. Term., Vancouver, B.C., V6B 3X2.

# EDITORIAL

## MOVING FORWARD INTO A NEW ERA

The announcement of our new leadership changes, with Bob Philip as President & CEO and Gordon Bell as Vice President & GM, are significant ones for our organization. They signal next steps to rebuild WCRA's visibility and presence in the Vancouver market, where most of the charitable dollars that we need are to be found. Bob brings both significant experience and contacts working in this market over the years, plus a solid knowledge and background of our organization, having been a past board member and Chair for several years.

At the same time as we work to build forward our charitable base, we also need to continue the terrific work that has been done in Squamish to solidify and grow our operations there. Gordon Bell is the ideal leader for this, having proven capability in this area as evidenced by the successful special events we have held recently, the growth and development of the Heritage Park as a filming site, and the work to establish and grow activities utilizing the CN Roundhouse and Conference Centre.

And so, WCRA enters the year 2018 with a solid leadership base, and a financial growth plan that is needed to get things on the right track with both our facilities and collection. To this writer, this is good news for all involved.

*Don*

# ASSOCIATION NEWS

## FROM THE DECEMBER DINNER AND AWARDS EVENING

Tuesday, December 19 was the Annual Christmas Dinner and Awards Night and a good Crowd of almost 50 members and guests were in attendance. **Jeremy Davy** acted as the meeting chair. Due to the poor road conditions in Metro Vancouver on Tuesday (Dec 19<sup>th</sup>) the event was moved to the following day when, in spite of the change, our group gathered for a social hour and sumptuous turkey dinner and presentation of the 2017 Awards. It was especially great to have some of our long time members whom we do not see regularly, including **Ken Doiron, Dorothea Matewish, Patricia Marchant**, and many others — thanks to everyone for coming in less than ideal conditions and to the Hotel for accommodating, without penalty, our change request.

Director & Board Secretary **Jeremy Davy**, M/C for the evening, welcomed everyone to the dinner with a few opening remarks and then turned things over to **Donna Simon**, who looked after getting each table up to the buffet. The buffet was lovely—with an assortment of salads and cold cuts, and then a sumptuous turkey dinner with vegetables, mashed potatoes and turkey dressing. Yummy!

Following dinner the evening it was time to present the 2017 awards.



**Corporate Support Award -**

was awarded to long-time supporters of the Railway Heritage Park as a Film Location, **Industrial Works Ltd.** of Burnaby. The Award was made in recognition of the many years of hard work and support they have given to the making the Heritage Park a popular venue for Film Production. Always there to show Location Scouts the potential of our site and our hidden benefits, IWL continues to be our” Public

Face” to the film industry and we count them as true friends of the park. The award was presented to **Pat Doiron** and his father **Ken** by Gord Bell.



**Newsletter Contribution Award -** Don Evans took the stage presenting this one. Our winner, **George Game**, is a regular contributor who according to Don. “Has never missed an issue and his always reliable monthly reports from the Locomotive 374 Pavilion arrive before the newsletter deadline”. Continue on in this issue to page 13 and you will see for yourselves.

**Preservation Award –** When **Blaine Thompson** started volunteering in the spring of 2016 he took on one of our longest running restoration projects - the Colonist Car. Since then, the results of many hours of his time and talent he has devoted are plainly visible. While Blaine denies he has any extraordinary skills, looking at the car calls that into question (see photo last issue). Craig McDowall presented the award to Blaine.



**Volunteer Award** - Gord Bell presented the Award to long time member and always active volunteer, *Interim President and CEO Craig McDowall*. Craig, who has in the past served as a Director and Board Chair, has recently stepped up to fill a variety of Executive roles while continuing as marketing lead for our major events. Thanks for everything Craig.



**New Generations Award** –



Craig presented the award to sisters **Ashlee Simon & Hailey Simon**, WCRA Family Members and regular volunteers. They have been determined to follow their sister Kayla's footsteps and each have volunteered since they were 7 years old. In addition to offsite WCRA events they can be found at the Heritage Park volunteering at *Day out with Thomas, Polar Express* and High Teas ...

In fact this year they both worked all 36 PEX trips as lead Hero Girl and a Chef.

**Media Award** - this year's winner is **Max Sheppard**, Promotions Manager at *Mountain FM* in Squamish. *Mountain FM* has been a Major Media Partner in the Sea to Sky Corridor for many years including for our two major annual events ... 'Day Out With Thomas' and 'The Polar Express' with packages including free exposure on their Community Calendar and other promotional components. But where they have really have 'come to the table' in the past two years was for our smaller events, where we don't have the budget as we would with the Polar Express, they have offered their Community Calendar without us having to make a normal large media buy. This was much appreciated by the WCRA in order to minimize our advertising expense. Gord Bell will make the presentation on air at a mutually agreeable date.



**Special Award** - This award recognized **Gordon Quon**—”*For ongoing website support* “. The support ranges from day to day maintenance to uploading information — thanks Gordon. Jeremy will arrange to present the award in the new year.

With the Awards wrapped up a 50/50 draw was held and then the evening finished up after a couple of announcements.

- **Next General Meeting** is January 30, 2018 @ Rainbow Creek Station;
- **Board of Directors vacancies** – There are two positions open this year for WCRA Elected Directors. The candidates are elected by the Members ... Nominations will be taken at the **January Meeting**. One vacancy was created by the resignation of Matt Robson, and the other as the result of incumbent Christian Vazzaz completing a 3 year term, but he is eligible to be elected for a further term.

Jeremy thanked Jenn and Bonnie / George for their help with the evening. He then thanked everyone for coming and in closing, wished all a Merry Christmas and a Happy & Safe 2018.

#### **WCRA TRIVIA #348 - By Ryan Cruickshank**

Why is Pennsylvanian Railroad 4-4-2 #460 called the "*Lindbergh Engine*" ?

(Answer on page 23)

#### **NEW MEMBERS**

We welcome to membership:

- Yvonne Chow and Family of Burnaby;
- Kevin Estok of Burnaby;
- Christina Kiperchuk & Blair Johnston and Family of Squamish;
- Jes & Mike Youwe and Family of Squamish (J.D.)

#### **MEMBER NEWS**

A sad news month indeed as we report:

- The passing of long time member **Norm Shepherd** on December 6, 2017 just short of his 93rd birthday. There was no service held per his request.
- The passing of long time WCRA member **Alan Cruickshank** on December 20, 2017. Alan was an aficionado of Toy Trains as well as an active member of WCRA for many years. A memorial service was held January 13, 2018 at Queens Park Church in New Westminster.
- Condolences to board member **John Day** and family on the passing of his mother this past December 19th.
- Our sympathies to board member **Marian Robson** on the passing of her husband of more than 40 years, Michael Robson, on January 1, 2018

## **PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP**

If your label reads 12/31/17 it is time to renew your membership.....if it reads 10/31/17 this is your last issue of WCRA News. We need all of you as members, please renew today.

## **BOARD AND LEADERSHIP CHANGES**

As you have already learned, the Board of Directors of the WCRA made some changes to the Association's leadership at its December 13, 2017 Board Meeting. Specifically the board:

- Appointed **Bob Philip** as President & CEO of WCRA effective January 1, 2018. Bob will be based in Vancouver and will focus on the development of our board of directors, re-establishment and growth of WCRA as a charity, and leadership responsibility to WCRA's staff team
- Named **Gordon Bell** as Vice President and General Manager. Gord will continue to be based at the West Coasts Railway Heritage Park in Squamish, where he will directly lead the staff and volunteer team and all operational aspects of the Association.
- Appointed **Don Evans** to the WCRA Board of Directors, filling a vacant position until the next Annual General Meeting
- Named **Craig McDowall** Chair of the WCRA Board

## **NOMINATIONS FOR BOARD POSITIONS**

Nominations will be accepted at the January General Meeting for the following two WCRA positions on the WCRA Board of Directors:

- Director **Christian Vazzaz** is ending his first three year term on the board. He is eligible to be nominated for a second term; and
- One position left vacant by the resignation Matt Robson. (J.D.)

## **VOLUNTEER HOURS Reporting – Time is running out!!**

**As part of the supporting information provided when seeking funding from other organizations the WCRA relies heavily on the hours that our volunteers generously donate while carrying out the activities of the Association.**

Everything you do for WCRA counts - except attending monthly General meetings ... Volunteering at the Heritage Park or as Custodian at the 374 Pavilion, Serving on a committee, Attending Board of Directors meetings or working on Association related projects at home; — all hours are important and all hours count.

*WCRA is required to report Volunteer hours given annually at the Heritage Park to the BC Safety Authority and to include them in the Park's Safety Management System statistics. Please separate your hours into **Time spent at the PARK** and **OTHER** when you report them.*

Please submit volunteer hours for 2017 as soon as you can as they need to be included in the Annual Report.

**Donna Simon** tabulates the hours that are donated. You may let her by email to [hours@wcra.org](mailto:hours@wcra.org) or by calling 604.815.0812 (604-484-2791 toll free from Vancouver calling area) – both phones have voicemail. If you prefer to send your information by Canada Post you can address it to Donna at PO Box 2535 Garibaldi Highlands BC V0N 1T0.

Thank you to those who have already submitted their hours.

## **VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES - Mileage**

Don't forget that all mileage incurred while doing the Volunteer activities you report is eligible for a Tax Receipt. WCRA will reimburse for mileage driven in 2017 for Association activities at \$0.55/km. This year again, with the assistance of our bank, the process requires only that Volunteers endorse the WCRA Mileage reimbursement cheque back to WCRA rather than having to send in a cheque of their own cheques.

The Association books will be closing at the end of January. Donations finalized after that date will not be lost but we will be required to issue 2018 Tax Receipts. For assistance contact Jeremy at [membership@wcra.org](mailto:membership@wcra.org), or calling either of the numbers above. (D.S.)

## **COLLECTION**

Not much to report this month....our locomotives have been winterized and are all indoors for the winter weather. Bart continues on staff and is working principally on the Northern Summit project.

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

**POLAR EXPRESS** (photos page 9 and covers, Christian Vazzaz)



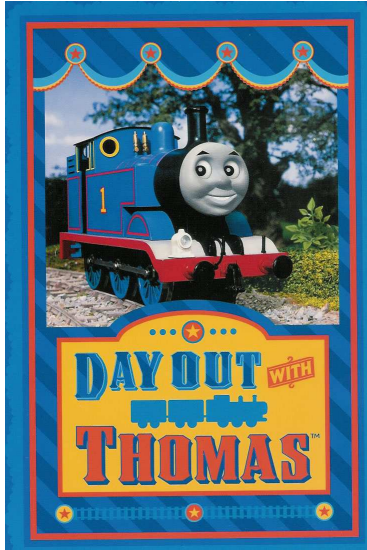
The 2017 edition of WCRA's Polar Express is over, and we had record attendance as well as revenues this year. Around 14,000 attended the event which was sold out for the final three of four weekends, with only limited space available the first weekend. This continues to be our largest and most well received major event. While your editor does not yet have the final results, we can say that the event was great in every regard and we offer sincere thanks to all who volunteered and helped make it the success it was.







## DAY OUT WITH THOMAS 2018



Thomas the Tank Engine will return to the West Coast Railway Heritage Park in May—five dates again this year, May 19, 20 and 21 (Victoria Day Weekend) and then May 26 and 27. Tickets will go on sale the week of January 15, 2018 and prices this year will again be very reasonable at \$26 (off peak) and \$29 (peak).

The Day Out With Thomas “Big Adventures Tour” will see the full size Thomas perform for crowds all day, providing one ride on a scheduled departure time with each ticket. But tickets are good for all day admission to the site, and the train ride is just one of more than ten feature attractions to take in. These include Thomas videos and storytelling, a store with special event only Thomas merchandise, photos with Thomas, live entertainment, bouncy castles and more.

Also available will be the famous West Coast Mini Rail rides (extra charge), great food and lots and lots of fun.

Tickets are available on line through [wcra.org](http://wcra.org)—order yours today!



## BILL MINER ESCAPE ROOM INTRIGUES

Finding your way out of the vintage CN bunk car is proving to provide intrigue at the West Coast Railway Heritage Park as we enter 2018. It's not that you are locked in physically, rather you are presented the problem and have to develop a strategy and plan to successfully escape.

To date the **Bill Miner Escape Room** has had around 200 people try to escape generating revenue over \$3,000. Guests are enjoying the challenge with some groups escaping but the majority coming close but not quite making it. At press time momentum is building with participation.

The Escape Room is open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday throughout the year and reservations can be made by calling 604-898-9336. (G.B.)

# **CN ROUNDHOUSE & Conference Centre**

**Hold your event surrounded by Canada's railway heritage.**

Impress your guests by holding your next event at the West Coast Railway Heritage Park surrounded by Canada's railway heritage. Your options include the CN Roundhouse & Conference Centre, one of our restored dining railcars, or the Mac Norris Station (heritage train station).

The CN Roundhouse & Conference Centre is the largest event venue on the Sea to Sky corridor. It holds up to 8 heritage trains that can be moved in or out customizing the size of your event space from larger to more intimate. The historic Royal Hudson is the pride of our collection and a permanent fixture in the Roundhouse. There is also an upper indoor/outdoor patio with spectacular views that can hold up to 100 guests for a dinner or evening hors d'oeuvres. (photo) We can also cater a private dinner in one of our restored vintage dining cars such as the 1890 vintage British Columbia or 1929 vintage Alberta.





Our Mac Norris Station (heritage train station) is also available for special occasions and meetings. There are two sides to the station; the Heritage Tea Room and the Station Waiting Room. The Waiting Area can be set up boardroom style while the tea room is ideal for a sit down meal or buffet. On a nice day we can even hold a meal on the outside station platform.

Be sure to consider the West Coast Railway Heritage Park when planning your next event. Contact Jennifer at 604-524-1011 or [jenn@wcra.org](mailto:jenn@wcra.org) for pricing and availability. (J.C.)

## **CANADIAN INTERNET MARKETING CONFERENCE**

Recently purchased by the owners of Sky Helicopters the, Canadian Internet Marketing Conference is returning in 2018 for the third consecutive year. Speakers at the Conference will be flown from Vancouver directly to the West Coast Railway Heritage Park where they will land adjacent to the turntable. We are anticipating five flights in and out each day. The CIMC event takes place in the first week of April 2018. (G.B.)

## **NEW EXECUTIVE CHEF COMES ON BOARD**

The CN Roundhouse and Conference Centre now has a new chef. Executive Chef **Ryan Leitch** is joining the team along with his Pastry Chef and wife **Melissa Leitch**. Ryan and Melissa also run a successful catering company as well as “The Venue” in Whistler BC This dynamic duo will be key players in the execution of many key events over the 2018 season including weddings and conferences. (G.B.)

# **FUNDRAISING**

## **ANNUAL DIRECT MAIL CAMPAIGN**

A big thank you to all of you who have supported WCRA with a donation to our Annual Direct Mail campaign. WCRA will be closing off its 2017 books shortly—any and all cheques received with a December 31, 2017 date or earlier will be receipted for the 2017 tax year. (K.T.)

## **SPENCER ESTATE DONATION**

A huge thank you to the estate of the late **Bob Spencer** for a bequest received in the amount of \$20,000. Bob was a long time and active WCRA member and this bequest gift to the Association is very much appreciated and will be used in support of our projects and long term sustainability.

Leaving a gift to WCRA in your will is something we ask all members to consider.

## COLLECTION PROJECTS NEED YOUR HELP

A number of ongoing restoration projects currently underway can always use your help. Active currently and supported by grant funds (which need some matching funds) are:

- Pacific Great Eastern *Northern Summit* business car—with funding from Heritage BC in place to support this project
- Great Northern Transfer caboose X-180—with grant funding from the Great Northern Railway Historical Society in place

Also worthy of your support is the construction of the Garden Tracks Pavilion project, with funding from Canadian Heritage—the building of a roof to protect restored railcars and locomotives on the Garden Tracks north of the Mac Norris Station.

The Preservation of BC's Railway Heritage is our core mission and our charitable purpose. All donations are tax receiptable and funds go directly to the preservation and protection of our core collection.

## LOCOMOTIVE 374 PAVILION

Our visitor count for December was 1,725. We had 353 more people than last December. The total visitor count for 2017 is 44,737, 4,927 more than 2016. This was our second highest Visitor Count after 2015 when we had 47,040 guests.

I am writing this Newsletter item on January 1. I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and all the best for 2018. Boy, did 2017 go by fast. The last few months just zipped by. I am hoping for a slower pace this year.

I would also like to thank our excellent CPR 374 Volunteers for their time and commitment to maintaining the 374 Pavilion and Locomotive. They are the Downtown Vancouver Area spokespeople for The "West Coast Railway Heritage Park" in Squamish. They keep our visitors, locals and public informed of the Park and its events throughout the year. Being a volunteer at the 374 Pavilion is a very satisfying endeavour. You are always meeting interesting people.

Many people over the years have asked about the caboose near Mainland and Nelson in Yaletown. Here is a summary from Jillian Ong from the Yaletown Business Improvement Association:

*The caboose is owned by the YBIA. It is an authentic decommissioned railway caboose that was installed as part of the "heritage street furnishings" program undertaken by the Yaletown BIA to commemorate Vancouver's 125th Anniversary in 2011. It is not open to the public but we are hoping to activate the caboose in the next year. This caboose is an icon*

*and a landmark, recalling the railway history of Yaletown and the connection that Vancouver has long had with rail transportation.*

And from Keith Anderson:

*Built August 1914 by Eastern Car Co., Trenton, NS as Canadian Government Rys. boxcar #81487. Became Canadian National boxcar #407667.*

*It was rebuilt to CNR caboose #78743 by CNR at their Fort Rouge (Winnipeg) shop in 1950. Became McDonald's Restaurant at 3695 Lougheed Hwy in 2010. Now owned by TRAMS; (Transit Museum Society) and loaned to Yaletown Business Improvement Association. The Cupola has been removed,*



If you would like to volunteer at the 374 Pavilion please drop by to check us out or give me a call at 778-875-3573 for more information. Any time given will be appreciated.

We are located at the corner of Davie St. & Pacific Blvd. Just across from the Canada Line Yaletown/Roundhouse Station. Street and Underground Parking is available. The Pavilion is on Winter Hours (Dress Warm) - 11 AM to 3 PM. Enjoy the Winter everyone. (G.G.)



# **FEATURE ARTICLES**

**FROM WCRA NEWS—OCTOBER 1976**

**Thanks to Craig McDowall**

## **WCRA**

We wish to thank Railwest Manufacturing, BC Rail's railcar building facility, in Squamish for a tour of their plant on October 2nd. Thanks also for the provision of printed material from the tour which we have extra copies and have included in this issue's mailing. And finally thanks to member Fritz Lehmann for providing the fine slide show of Indian railways at the Sept. meeting. As we had no formal programme arranged, Fritz jumped in at the last minute and save the day re: entertainment.

## **BC Hydro**

The three remaining GE 70 toners: #940/41/42 still have a future on the railway although #942 was out of service recently. She was working the Carrall Street yard when she was replaced temporarily by SW 900RS #900. And sister unit #943, which was sold to equipment dealer Andrew Merrilees in Toronto in May, remains in storage at Hydro's Trapp Road yard in New Westminster. (Ed note—#941 is on display at the Heritage Park)

## **BC Museum Train**

The train, which ended its 1976 tour on the BC Hydro line at Chilliwack in early September, is stored at CP Rail's Drake Street yards in Vancouver. Some of the cars have been barged to Vancouver Island for storage at Victoria to facilitate the addition of display material by the Provincial Museum for a future project.

## **BC Railway**

RDC-3 BC #31, purchased from Amtrak (originally GN #2350) and refurbished by BC Rail, was built with the stylish end fluting and was one of a few Budds that had this feature applied. The unit has experienced a few minor electrical problems but is still in service.

The third successful season of the Royal Hudson excursion train to Squamish ended on October 11th. The train including our leased 'Mount Garibaldi' open car was returned under tow to CP's Drake Street yard for storage on October 13th.

## **VIA**

Effective Oct. 1st, new VIA round-trip excursion coach fares were introduced and will be valid until May 31st, 1977. Sample round trip adult fares from Vancouver to Edmonton: \$47.30, Winnipeg: \$78.10 and Toronto : \$129.80. A full page ad is on the last page of this newsletter and the ad campaign states: VIA invites you to travel in the off-peak season and save. For a round trip, you only pay the standard one way Blue fare plus 10%!

CN and CP will issue a joint timetable under the VIA banner effective October 31st. There

will be no changes re: arrival and departure times. Until the two railways finalize their efforts to co-ordinate and integrate their respective passenger services. the joint timetable is the only example of possible future arrangements.

### **Canadian National**

CN has leased 94 diesel units to Conrail: 26 M636's, 21 C424's, 1 GP-35, 14 GP-40's and 32 GP40-2's.

A \$40 million order for 1.5 million concrete ties was placed with Con-Force Costain Concrete Tie Co. to be delivered over a 5 year period. The ties will be manufactured in Edmonton are to be used on the mainline line on curved sections between Capreol, ON and the West Coast.

The first unit to appear on the West Coast in the new VIA passenger paint scheme was F9B #6613.

### **Canadian Pacific**

The railway has appealed to the Federal Cabinet asking it to rescind the Canadian Transport Commission's order to rebuild the condemned trestles on the abandoned section of the E & N railway between Parksville and Courtenay. CP says the traffic revenues will not cover the \$2 million cost to rebuild the line despite the opinion of the CTC that 90% of the traffic would return if the line was restored.

RS-23's #8020 & 8044 arrived in Vancouver from Montreal in mid-October for switching duties. They are here on a trial basis and will not replace the Baldwin DS 4-4-1000 switchers. Eight Baldwins are still currently working here with sister units #7068, 7071 and 7073 now retired. The Baldwins were built for assignment on the West Coast and replaced CPR's steam switchers in the early 1950's.

CP FP7 #4037 is the only F unit still carrying the old maroon and grey colour scheme.

### **Canadian Forest Products**

CFP 2-8-2 #113 was officially retired in early July after a farewell day of operation out of Woss Camp on Northern Vancouver Island. The long-boilered locomotive had been kept as standby power to the diesel roster. In that capacity, it only was operated once, in the fall of 1971, when one of the diesels derailed and another broke down. She hauled logs for a week during that period. The purchase of a fourth diesel (an ex Georgia Pacific SW 1200), in August 1972 made #113's usefulness limited. However, the railway employees, under 30 year veteran George Lutz (now Trainmaster), persuaded CFP to keep the engine maintained and that was approved until major boiler work became necessary this year. On October 12th, a crew of men were observed laying track from the rail yard at Woss Camp to across the road where a site was being prepared for #113's future display and the engine was moved on Oct. 13

to her final resting place. Great to see rather than having her meet 'Mr. Torch'!

### **Miscellaneous**

The Federal Commission on Grain Handling and Transportation recently held hearings in Vancouver and one of the topics was the establishment of a terminal railway to be set up in Vancouver to expedite the shipping of grain. All the railways (CN, CP, BN, & BCH) were opposed to this proposal as they stated that it would impede shipments due to extra switching and thus additional costs.

The Ogden Point grain elevator at Victoria will be closed in December due to the high cost of renovating the structure to meet fire safety standards. Owned by the Alberta Wheat Pool, the facility received grain on cars barged to the island by CN from Tilbury Island in Delta. The elevator stands on Crown Land leased through the railway.

### **AMTRAK CASCADES—A RECENT RIDE**

- by **Don Evans**

A recent trip to Eugene, Oregon allowed me to choose Amtrak for the journey, and sample the offerings of the train. In all regards, this was a most pleasant journey and my first time riding the train for a fair bit. I had almost forgotten how relaxing and enjoyable it can be just to sit back, relax and enjoy the passing scenery from the window of a train.

The trip actually started from Seattle on Sunday, January 7 as I checked in for Amtrak Cascades train 505 at King Street Station. Outside on Track 5 was our consist, which consisted of new Amtrak Siemens Charger locomotive #1401 (pushing), the *Mount Hood* Talgo trainset, and an ex F40 cab car in the lead. Business Class check in was handled at the ticket window so was available on arrival at the station—no line up for seat assignment. I was assigned to Coach 001 so had lots of whistling and horn sounds as I was in the first car behind the engineer.

We departed Seattle right on time at 1420k and raced down the multi track BNSF line through Tukwila, Kent, Auburn, Puyallup to Tacoma. Here, due the tragic accident on December 18, we followed the old routing along the Tacoma waterfront, around Point Defiance and along the Tacoma Narrows—a bit longer, but much nicer from a scenery standpoint. The BNSF line was busy with freight trains, but the BNSF dispatching had us weaving around traffic and maintaining schedule very well. The train was well patronized—especially on the Seattle to Portland segment, but there were also many university students headed for Eugene.

Being January, it was dark by the time we got to Portland—and while that impeded the view, I was able to enjoy Ivar's clam chowder and a sandwich while we continued south on Union Pacific tracks. The freight traffic on this Union Pacific line was noticeably less and we cruised right along. We arrived Eugene just a few minutes behind schedule and found a taxi to the



hotel which would be home for the next couple of nights.

Monday, January 8 and Tuesday, January 9 were spent in Eugene, OR and a few rail observances were made, including the Coast Starlight in both directions. The Starlight is a long train even in January, and each had a pair of GE P42 units, a baggage car, three Superliner sleepers, a Pacific Parlour Car, Superliner Dining Car, Superliner coach, Superliner Sightseer Lounge, and three Superliner coaches.

One interesting rail spot in Eugene is the Oregon Electric Station restaurant, which is a great spot for dinner. The restaurant is based in the restored Oregon Electric Railway (interurban) station in Eugene, and incorporates some rail passenger cars and cabooses into its structure. While not original cars, it is railway themed and you can dine in one of the former heavyweight passenger cars.

Wednesday, January 10 was the trip back, and it was an early start as Amtrak Cascades #500 departs Eugene at 0530. At 0510 the train backed into the station—we had an F59PHI for power, the *Mount Olympus* Talgo trainset, and a cab car on the rear.

It was dark and wet on arrival at the Eugene station, but we settled in and got a breakfast bagel and coffee from the Bistro car to get us started. The trip to Portland was in the dark most of the way, but light broke just south of the city and the rest of the wet day would at least be in daylight.

Although I was on Train 500 all the way to Seattle, there was a physical change of trains in Portland. This created some wonderment, as what would happen to seats (at Eugene, it was just take whatever seat you wanted as the load was light). However it all worked out well, as we arrived into Portland before the boarding there opened and we had an across the platform transfer with instruction to take any seat we wanted as the load out of Portland allowed for lots of space as well. I boarded an empty train and took the seat I wanted—a single window on the water side—for the trip to Seattle.

Now I am on the *Mount Bachelor* Talgo trainset, one of two newer versions in service. The rest of the passengers boarded and we departed Portland right on time. Up front was Siemens Charger locomotive #1407 which provided spirited acceleration. As we progressed north towards Seattle the train continuously filled and was near capacity into Seattle area.

The run north on BNSF was most enjoyable, and again the line was busy but dispatching good with few delays. Once again we wove around many freight trains (many high speed crossovers) of both BNSF and Union Pacific, and also passed three other Amtrak trains—two southbound Cascades and the Coast Starlight. We had a slight delay at the tunnels at Point Defiance in Tacoma (the single track bottleneck on the line), but then bounded into Tacoma and on to Seattle arriving just a few minutes off our 1150 schedule at 1204.

The last leg of the journey was on the Amtrak Thruway bus connection (just didn't want to lay over six hours for a train ride all in darkness). The service, operated by CanTrail was efficient and we arrived at Pacific Central Station on time at 1700k even with Vancouver rush hour traffic.

Amtrak Cascades service makes for an enjoyable ride and it is right here for us to use—if you haven't done it, the ride is lovely and the service good. All aboard!

## **RAILWAY NEWS**



### **MOTIVE POWER UPDATES**

CN continues to drive traffic growth and has suddenly found itself with a motive power shortage. This has led the railway to re-activate some stored units, lease some power from others, and now place orders with GE for new locomotives. The first leases were showing up in early December, word came later in the month that CN would lease 130 short term lease locomotives and also order 200 new locomotives from GE with deliveries starting in 2018.

First leases noticed were CREX 1501—1525 which are GE ES44AC units lettered Citirail, and PRLX 201, 204 which are SD75M units from Progress Rail Leasing.....CREX 1509 was the third of three units (IC 2708 / CN 2156 / CREX 1509) on Train 834 December 8 out of Thornton.....next came a group of ET44 units from GECX (General Electric Leasing) in the 2000 series—GECX 2033 was seen late December. This was later clarified further and twelve of these GE units were purchased by CN—they are GECX 2029 and GECX 2033 to 2043—and they are expected to become CN 3121 to 3132. Also noted on the way is a group of CITX's SD70M-2 fleet, CITX 140—142 had moved to CN in early January and another group of GECX C40-8W units (ex CSX) in the 91xx series. Watch for these and more as they will make spotting interesting over the next few months. (J.M.)

At the end of December, CN announced that its board had approved the purchase of 200 new locomotives from GE Transportation for delivery over the next three years. The first 60 of these Evolution Series units are expected to be delivered in 2018. This order will include both Tier 4 and Tier 3 certified units (so likely both ES44AC and ET44 series units, although the breakdown has not yet been released. (CN)

### **GROWING HUMAN RESOURCES**

In addition to adding locomotives to the fleet, CN also announced that it will be adding crews

to handle increased rail movements across the system. The railway noted that it added 3,500 new employees in 2017—including 265 newly qualified conductors. In 2018 they expect to qualify another 415 new conductors as well. CN notes that its rate of growth is unique among all North American Class 1's as it copes with a 10% year over year traffic growth.



## MOTIVE POWER UPDATES

CP is active in motive power upgrades currently, although through refurbishing locomotives rather than purchasing new units. Currently ten SD40-2 units are receiving overhauls, new electronic air brakes, remote control and are being released as #5100—5109. Also in progress is the overhaul of eight former SOO Line SD60 units, these will emerge as CP 6300—6307. And showing up these days are the first of the 30 AC4400CW units being rebuilt by GE which will emerge as AC4400CWM's numbered 8100 to 8129—they are easy to spot in their shiny new red paint! (TJ).....The CP locomotive wrecked in the rock slide collision near Hell's Gate in the Fraser Canyon recently was CP AC4400CW #9736.



## SRY Rail Link

### “NEW” LOCO HERE

SRY's newest locomotive acquisition should now be on the property. SRY Rail Link SD35 #385 joins the roster, coming here from Montana Rail Link—also part of the Washington Group of Companies.

In other Washington Group news locally, the old rail ferry *Seaspan Doris* has been towed



south to Mexico late in 2017—it is not known if it will see service there or meet the scrapper's torch. (photo Robert Etchell)

Lastly, the old Royal Hudson coach *Alexandra* was seen on a log barge recently in North Vancouver. (R.E.)



ROCKY MOUNTAINEER

## A TASTY POP UP!

Rocky Mountaineer, always creative, has entered the annual Dine Out Vancouver event by creating a pop up restaurant.....who wouldn't want to hop aboard a Gold Leaf dome and be wined and dined! The event was marketed for January 31 and February 1, 2018 and sold out in mere hours after ticket sales were launched at \$88 per table seat!



VIA Rail Canada

## WINTER WOES PLAGUE THE CANADIAN

The woes of a super cold Canadian winter have caused major headaches for VIA's Canadian over the past month or so. These have ranged from major delays (in excess of 24 hours) to a major freeze up of equipment causing significant damage causing a need for repairs and changes to typical consists.

After a freeze up in sub zero temperatures on the Prairies, VIA assembled a "hospital train" and sent it west to deadhead equipment and get the cars into repairs in Vancouver where reasonable temperatures were present. This resulted in many unusual spotting of a VIA train operating at strange times with a dark consist. It arrived Vancouver on December 31 at 0620, with locomotives 6456 / 6551, sleepers Monck Manor, Allan Manor, Elgin Manor, Grant Manor, Skylines 8510 / 8507, sleepers Chateau Iberville, Chateau Marquette, baggage 8616, coaches 8119 and 8129, sleepers Chateau Rigaud, Douglas Manor, Christie Manor, Prestige Sleeper Chateau Jolliet and Prestige Observation Prince Albert Park. Most of these had broken pipes and water damage to be repaired. The damage to the Prestige Park car meant that a non Prestige observation—Yoho Park—ended up bringing up the markers of The Canadian on January 2 as no Prestige observation car was serviceable in Vancouver.

A reader from Vancouver Island took The Canadian east on January 2—

"I was on VIA #2 departing Vancouver on January 02, heading to Toronto, expecting to arrive on Saturday morning. Just in case of a very late arrival I booked a flight back to the west coast for late Sunday. As we approached Winnipeg we were 14.5 hrs late with severe winter cold weather forecast for the passage through northern Ontario, temperatures below -30. Rather than deal with an even later arrival in Toronto, I left the train in Winnipeg and flew back home as I had a major warm weather holiday departing on Tuesday.

I had an excellent trip! Lots of snow and full moon made evening viewing from the Park car worthwhile. The passage up the Fraser and Thompson Canyons was spell binding; I was not the only person up in the dome! We saw wild life many times during the day, Northern Lights across Saskatchewan. The food and service were excellent; the crew could not have been better, and to a person kept smiling although very late getting home. Fellow passengers were



interesting and from around the globe.

A bit of tension arose over the reserved Prestige seating in the Park car. 8 seats were reserved but there were not that many Prestige passengers. I always sit in the back row, so I was not bothered but a few Australian passengers had a bit of snit. The non Prestige Park car, Yoho Park, was no discomfort at all.

Freight Traffic delays occurred—5 minutes before we left Kamloops a freight left. It was a heavy train with many cars of kiln dried lumber. We followed that train all the way to Blue River at 40-60 kph. Once past we travelled at 80-90 kph. Had the dispatcher held that freight for 5 minutes we could have travelled at a much better speed. As a result, our engineers ran out of hours and had to be changed off 20 km west of Jasper, causing a 45 minute delay in getting a fresh crew aboard to take us into Jasper. The other example was in Saskatoon. where a freight was on the track that serviced the VIA station. We could not reverse into the station until it left. We waited 4 tracks over from the station for 3.5 hrs.”

(Last reports on this train had it 25.5 hours late out of Hornepayne, Ontario.)

Observation car *Yoho Park* operated a second round trip on The Canadian and is still out there at press time. VIA #1 of January 9 arrived Vancouver 30 hours late January 14 behind four locomotives—6457, 6404, 6418 and 6458. (T.M.)

January 5's #2 out of Vancouver experienced the former routing of #2 out of Vancouver. Due to a minor derailment at the east end of Thornton Yard, VIA #2 routed by way of CP's Westminster Sub, connecting with the CP Cascade Sub at Coquitlam at MacAulay (Mile 112.4 CP Cascade Sub) then joining up with the regular routing in Mission at Mission Jct. Since the flag stop would require a reverse moment from the CP Cascade Sub to the CP Mission Sub, #2 picked up it's passengers this night at the Mission West Coast Express platform. (T.M.)

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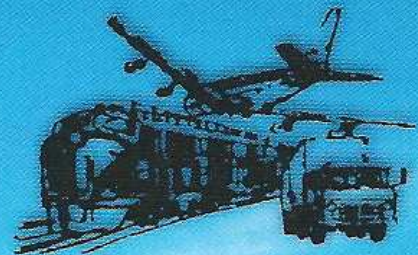
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**ISSN 1204-07**

Editor Don Evans  
Distribution Jeremy Davy & Donna Simon

**Vol. 58 Issue**

**Contributors:**

G.B.	Gordon Bell	J.C.	Jennifer Chisholm
J. D.	Jeremy Davy	R. E.	Robert Etchell
G. G.	George Game	J.M.	Jim McPherson
T.M.	Terry Muirhead	D.S.	Donna Simon
K.T.	Ken Tanner		

CN TJ—Tempo Jr.

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](mailto: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](http://www.wcra.org)>

**Contact us: 604-524-1011 / 800-722-1233 Heritage Park 604-898-9336 Office 604-681-4403  
CN Roundhouse & Conference Centre 604-898-1082  
[wcra.org](http://wcra.org)**

**BACK COVER**

It is a lovely winter morning at Squamish as WCRA’s Polar Express accelerates on its way to the North Pole. Behind the 6520 are FP7A #4069, HEP car and eight passenger cars for a record year of our event (Christian Vazzaz photo)

**TRIVIA ANSWER**

The class E6s engine, built in 1914 by PRR in their Juniata shops ( s/n **2860** ) became famous after racing an aircraft to New York City while carrying news reels of Charles Lindbergh's return to the U.S. after his solo transatlantic flight in 1927. The train departed Washington D.C at 1314h and arrived 2hr56min later at Manhattan Transfer outside NYC, the final leg under the Hudson River used an electric DD-1. Even though the plane arrived first, the film aboard #460 was in theatres hours before the other thanks to a film processing lab on board the baggage car. 460 was retired on 11Jan1956 and is the only survivor of its class of 80, it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on 17Dec1979 and just had a cosmetic restoration completed in 2016 at its home in the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania.



**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](http://www.wcra.org)**

**ISSN 1204-072X**  
**Vol. 58 Issue 2**

**Canada Post, Canadian Publications Mail Sales Product Agreement #40007853**