

The Railway Museum of BC Newsletter

April to June 2022 Issue

Day Out with Thomas sells out in Advance!



RAILWAY MUSEUM
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

This is the first issue in our new format for the RMBC Newsletter, The name is a bit mundane so if you have a suggestion for a more appropriate name for the newsletter, please submit your suggestion to the editor at iloverailroads@me.com The association will vote on any submissions at their September meeting, and if the members vote for a 'name change', I will award you a full year's membership in 2023.

Since the last issue of the newsletter, we hosted Day Out with Thomas, after a two year hiatus due to covid. We changed the dates and for the first time, didn't run over the long weekend in May, but rather the last weekend in May and first weekend in June. We sold it out in advance and also had very good results in merchandise sales, mini rail rides, food services and parking lot charges.

I want to take this opportunity to salute our regular (and some new) volunteers and staff, who, without their assistance, this event wouldn't take place. It is our second biggest fund raiser, with only the North Pole Express surpassing it in terms of gross revenue and 'bottom line'

All these photos were taken by Nora McDowall (who now has volunteer photo albums going back to 2010)!



Jeanene Gruber & Polly Prozny



Ashlee Simon & Dai Yates



Arveen Sekhon, Hardeep Khangura & Judi Rhodes



Ryan Kreschuk & Aaron Gruber



Gordon Hall & Joe Enzing



Michelle & Henry Richardson and Karen Hall



George Game & Moe Prozny



Barb Stover & Nora McDowall



Jean & Bill McEnery



Chrissy Stephen & Kenny Clark



Grayson, Craig & Carter McDowall



The mobile kitchen 'food crew'



Jeremy Davy



Dustin Blundell



Tom Arnott & Aaron Gruber



Bob Phillip, Margaret Hope & Gord Bell



Donna & Hailey Simon



Chris Manuel & Zoe Nelson



Celine Quesnel & Rob Payette



Singh Biln & David Walmsley

Editor's Note: Since 2022 was the 16th time that the WCRA hosted Thomas, I thought it would be interesting to go back to the first year we bought Thomas to the park. Details are included in the August 2004 Newsletter.

WCRA NEWS -AUGUST 2004

July Meeting Notes

Bill Marchant requested volunteers to assist at the Canada Day event at Waterfront Park in North Vancouver and 'Making Tracks' on July 25th in NV. Jeremy will be organizing Mini Rail participation at 'Making Tracks' and is looking for volunteers for set up.

Gordon Hall reminded us that the WCRA will have a booth at the NMRA Convention in Seattle on July 9-11th and also is looking for volunteers

Ron Anstey reported that #4069, #1404 and power car #9622 are deployed on the 'North Coast Explorer'. #1404 needs major electrical work upon its return. A GMD 1 has been leased from CN to provide as emergency replacement. Open car #598 is receiving replacement trucks and will be going to Prince Rupert to join the train asap.

Bill Johnston gave a tours update and stated many tours are operating at break even or better.

The 'Elite North Country Tour (repositioning of the 'North Coast Explorer') has received 150 enquiries.

Don Evans presented the Executive Directors report:

-Washington Marine Group ask for \$35k mini rail support has been received and the WCRA will purchase a GP9 painted in SRY colours (#124) and a train set from Carr's Locomotive Works in Port Coquitlam. This will provide a much needed second train set for our mini rail operations. Many thanks to WMG Chair Kyle Washington and Ken Doiron at SRY for making this very significant donation.

The first payment from the Western Economic Diversification Fund is scheduled for June 30th and will 'back fund' work already done on the Royal Hudson for booster pipe fabrication. Funding ask to the Squamish Community Foundation for \$5000 to complete the Eagle View area

Association News

The West Coast Mini Rail will debut at a new venue on BC Day on Monday, August 2nd at Government House thanks to Her Honor Iona Campagnolo (our Lt. Governor of BC) when she holds an Open House on BC Day.

Our Collection

The WCRA donated a tank car (BCOL #1902) to the Kettle Valley Steam Railway and it traveled by truck earlier this year and will be added to their steam train carrying water as part of their fire safety plan. We also donated the coach 'Alexandria' to the KVR.

Our Operating Fleet

Work continues on S3 #6503 to bring her back into operation. A loading problem occurred but was solved when it was found a broken wire on series-parallel contractor #2. Since this and other work was completed, it has been making regular test runs in the park.

A free standing crane purchased from BC Rail for our car shop arrived by flat car to Squamish earlier this month and was pulled into the park by our #561.

Update on our 'North Coast Explorer' train set. We had new batteries installed on #4069 but #1404 has major electrical problems as the 'push and pull' rear engine. We sent an electrician in from Prince George but it was determined it would need shopping and no facilities in Prince Rupert to do this so we leased a GMD 1 from CN. And our open car 'Henry Pickering' has had major surgery at SRY as it required significant spine work and 'new' trucks installed. The entire car has been re-glazed with laminated glass to meet standards and should be heading to Prince Rupert via the Rocky Mountaineer on July 13th.

Canada Day at the Heritage Park

Over 200 people showed up on Canada Day (free admission thanks to a \$450 Canadian Heritage Celebrate Canada Day grant. Free cake was provided and thanks to Darcy and Megan Nelson for operating the mini rail and Barb Stover who staffed the Brightbill House.

Day Out with Thomas

We hosted our first DOWT for six days in June over two weekends (from June 11th to June 20th) and drew a total of 17,243 paying customers. The four Saturdays and Sundays sold out and the two Fridays drew around 2000 people each. Attendees parked in the BC Rail shops parking area and then bussed in thanks to two vintage busses provided by the Transit Museum Society and augmented by volunteer transportation provided by John Day. Tickets were taken when they crossed the bridge or, if picked up or purchased on site, they were directed into the Wilkie Station to the right of the park entrance where the guest services crew managed by Craig McDowall took care of processing the orders.

The Thomas train consist featured Thomas on the head end, then RDC-1 BC #21, coaches Porteau, Chasm, Paul D Roy and RSC-3 #561. The route (this first year was very short) as it departed the station and headed out to the end of the tail track along the dyke, then down the RIP track past Sweet Apple station and out to the WCRA/BCR spur and then back to the station. Our #561 had some problems the first weekend and thanks to CN, they loaned us CRS-20 #612 until #561 was repaired for the last four days.

On June 12th on the 3:45 departure, we had a derailment when a rail rolled over just north of Sweet Apple putting BCR #612 and one coach's wheel set on the ground. There were no injuries (due to the very slow speed). Passengers were disembarked and escorted on foot back to customer service where refunds or rebooking were offered on this trip and the two remaining ones. Once again, BC Rail came to the rescue and with their crew and our staff, all was repaired in time for the first departure the next morning.

Several outside food vendors were brought in and located in the park grounds. The Beanery was also opened operated by Olga Junkin. We also had a BC Mining Museum exhibit set up up where the children could 'pan for gold'.

Our mini rail train set was augmented by several guest train sets shipped up from the BCSME in Confederation Park. At the busiest of times, we had six train sets operating simultaneously with 5 cars each, including two live steam powered trains.

Letters to Thomas resulted in 4300 letters and cards 'mailed' to Thomas in our Railway Post Office car managed by Fred Danells who organized this with the Canada Post Heritage Club.

Special thanks to Donna Fourchaulk and Matt Christianson, who together scheduled almost 200 volunteers over the six day run.

Financial Results

Ticket sales grossed \$332,000 with merchandise sales of \$141,000, food vendor sales of \$50,000 and min rail ticket sales of \$23,000. All our costs are not in (and were quite substantial - getting ready for an event of this size) but we are now in a better position to host this event next year. This included grading and gravel for the dirt floor in the car shop and removing 25 cars to BC Rail for temporary storage to allow a route for Thomas.

RAILWAY NEWS

Amtrak

Five 'private varnish' passenger cars, including three domes, traveled to Seattle on the Coast Starlight, as part of a trip to the NMRA Convention and on Sunday, July 4th, they made a Seattle to Vancouver round trip with the Cascade. Another special trip was over Stampede Pass to Cle Elum WA and back on July 6th.

Another private car, the Scottish Thistle (in CN colours), came north on the Cascade in mid July and went all the way to Prince Rupert on the Skeena.

Amtrak celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the 'Empire Builder' on June 11th with events across the route of the train and special souvenirs for the onboard passengers. The first Empire Builder was inaugurated on June 10th, 1929.

BC Rail

This will be the last section here on BC Rail as CN has finalized the long term agreement with the BC government.

Watch for unit coal trains into Neptune Terminals off BC Rail as a contract for coal from the Willow Creek Mine in the north has been finalized. The deal will see two trains weekly from July 2004 through May 2005.

A test run of a passenger train to Whistler was operated by CN on June 16, 2004 with participation by both contenders for the future rail passenger service franchise: Canadian Railtours and Whistler Rail Tours. The consist included BCR Dash 8-40 CM #4620, a VIA Rail Canada F40PH-2, a Rocky Mountaineer coach, a VIA Skyline dome and CN business car Pacific Spirit.

Following the last run of the BC Rail Cariboo Prospector on Oct. 31st, 2002, the railway proceeded to dispose of its Budd car fleet. Almost two years later, the BCR Budds live on in BC with two at our Heritage Park. Three more were sold to operate as the Lewis and Clark Explorer train in Oregon which run from Portland to Astoria and return and over it's first two years has run with sold out crowds. Two other cars, BC 30 and BC 15, are working in a small tourist operation in New England at the Wilton Railway in Wilton NH.

CN

CP will be detouring 8 trains weekly over CN between Edmonton and Mission (4 each way) to alleviate westbound congestion to allow for track work blocks. CP units will lead the trains but be crewed by CN.

CN's operation of the new Rocky Mountaineer station has the train arriving by traveling straight through the CN yard, then backs into the station track.

CP

The best 'on time' performance in the Amtrak system has been achieved on the Milwaukee corridor, thanks to the dispatching efforts of CP. The corridor, which handles the Empire Builder and the Hiawatha between Chicago and Milwaukee, achieved a 95.5% record for the period of Oct. 2002 to September 2003.

CP and Norfolk & Southern have announced a plan to share both yards and trackage in a move to streamline operations and save costs, while also improving service in the Eastern US. The agreement will see CP close its Buffalo, NY yard and move in with NS, while NS will shift to CP's yard in East Binghamton.

VIA

Via Rail's 'Malhat' northbound Dayliner hit a gravel truck at Ladysmith on June 16. The lead car of the two car train, RDC-1 #6148 received considerable front end damage and there were apparently some injuries. The second unit, #6135 returned to Victoria that evening while the damaged #6148 was parked overnight at Chemainus and brought down to Victoria on June 18th with the Rail America freight train and put into the shops for initial assessment.

VIA's 'Canadian' is running summer length consists again, with normally two F40 PH-2 locomotives and 20 to 22 cars, including four domes.

Canadian Museum of Rail Travel

The CMRT will officially open its new site in Cranbrook on the Labour Day weekend with gala celebrations planned for Sept. 3rd and 4th. Canadian Pacific's restored Hudson #2816 will participate and excursions are offered from Fernie to Cranbrook on Sept. 3rd and Cranbrook to Fernie on Sept. 4th. Special activities including concerts, will be held on both days.

Fraser Valley Heritage Railway Society

The FVHRS has made a deal with the Orange Empire Railway Museum in Perris, CA that will see BC Electric interurban #1225 return to Canada. The Cloverdale society has made a 10% down payment on the \$200,000 purchase price for the car and now must fundraise the balance before the car will be shipped north. Car #225 was built by the St. Louis Car Company in 1913. It served the BCER until the end of operations in 1958, making the last run on their line. It was then sold to OERM and travelled south on its own wheels in a freight consist. It made some operating appearances en route! The car requires some considerable restoration but remains operational currently. The FVRHS is also working to acquire former BCER #1304

Our Collection

Restoring the Marajatta

It was back in early March when Bob Philip asked David Walmsley to review the condition of the artifact display car Marajatta. This car was restored many years ago by Paul Roy to showcase some of his railway antiques. Over the years' time and the rather damp weather of Squamish, both have taken their toll on the North Vestibule of this 1920's coach. Bob wanted David to replace the stairs and cleanup the area so our museum guests could walk through the car and exit at the North end.

As with most rail car restorations, things are always worse than they appear. The floor was totally rusted through, the corner posts had major holes that had been filled with body fill. The end plates also had various holes that required attention. The original stairs of what was left were removed, the decayed floor or what was left, was peeled away. Extensive needle scaling was performed on all the rusted areas of the entire vestibule, followed by sand-blasting to clean and prepare the steel for the primer. Proper metal prep is paramount! The steel has to be clean and free of all rust, and in damp conditions in Squamish, all sandblasted areas had to be coated right away with primer.

Photos of both sides fo the vestilble (Photos by David Walmsley)



The replacement stairs came from a retired sleeping car that was scrapped many years ago. The previous paint upon those stairs was removed by needle scaling, and followed by sandblasting. The end sheets of the car also had all the old paint removed by needle scaling and final sandblasting, several coats of primer were applied so as to protect the exposed steel.

The many holes in the corner posts were filled in by custom made steel patches, extensive body filling smoothed out these repair areas making the original defects disappear. The entire restoration area was then coated with another special two part primer specially designed for the final topcoat of CNR olive green. Nearing the time of painting, the rains were not letting up, thus i had to extend my scaffolding and place a tarp covering off the entire work area. After all the previous primer being sanded, the finish colour coat was applied. Given the quality and type of paint used, this restoration project should shine and look great for the next 25 years! (Article & Photos by David Walmsley)



Late News!

Tickets for our 2022 North Pole Express are going on sale right after Labour Day. We sold out three weeks in advance in 2021 . . check our website: visitrmbc.org for updates!

KidSafe Program

Thanks to a generous grant, we have been hosting underprivileged kids up at the park each Wednesday starting in July, and will run for the rest of the summer. They arrive by bus around 10:30 and we load them on our Budd car and take them for a short ride across the road to MP2 and back. For the vast majority of these children, this is the first train ride they have ever had. Then we split them into two groups and take them for a ride on two mini rail trains around the park. They break for lunch (lunch is provided by KidSafe) and we give them ice cream bars for dessert. Then we separate them again into two groups and take them on guided tours around the park including ringing the bell in the Royal Hudson. The feedback has been very positive, both from the children and the program leaders.



CURRENT RAIL NEWS

CP

Six-axle cowl locomotives purchased for freight service have been rostered continuously on Class I railroads since Santa Fe first purchased EMD's F45 model in 1968. More than a half century later, the industry is down to a single Class I railroad operating this locomotive design: Canadian Pacific.



CP SD40-2F No. 9010 is fresh from rebuild and repaint as it poses on the turntable in St. Paul, Minnesota on June 4, 2022. (Chris Guss photograph).

Although cowl locomotives have been hauling freight since the 1960s, production of the locomotives came in two distinct periods, 1968-1974 and 1981-1994. The F45 was the only freight model built during the initial period, though three passenger models built during that time were converted to freight service. The rest were produced in the latter period and include EMDs SD50F, SD60F, and SD40-2F, General Electric's C40-8M, and Montreal Locomotive Works HR616.

Though Canadian Pacific is the last cowl unit operator among Class I railroads, though Canadian National still has a few inactive left on its roster. CN is actively working to eliminate General Electric's Dash-8 model from its roster, so it is doubtful any remaining cowl locomotives will pull tonnage again for the railroad. CP's roster consists of 10 SD40-2Fs that the company retired beginning a decade ago and were sold to Central Maine and Quebec Railway in 2015. The units returned to CP's roster following its acquisition of the company in 2020. One SD40-2F has become a hydrogen fuel-cell test locomotive with new model designation of H20EL, while others have been placed in work train service. Recently several have been routed through a rebuild program for lower horsepower locomotives and assigned back to work train duties after their release. (TRAINS)

CN

CN has announced a new 'Grain Plan'. The continued addition of more new grain hoppers, along with the addition of new locomotives and ongoing hiring efforts, are key elements in Canadian National Railway's 2022-23 Grain Plan, released last week.

The plan outlines CN's preparations for moving up to 27 million metric tons of grain from western Canada in the crop year, a rebound from the 18.2 million metric tons moved during the drought-plagued 2021-22 season.

Preparations include introduction of 57 new locomotives, 500 new grain hoppers in 2022, and 500 more in early 2023. While CN, like most railroads, has faced hiring issues, the railroad projects that it will have sufficient operating crews for grain movements during the crop year. It also calls for moving more grain to Eastern Canada ports to provide "corridor balance".

VIA

VIA has averted a system wide strike by reaching tentative agreements with Unifor's Council 4000, the union representing some 2,400 VIA Rail employees working in its stations, on board its trains, in its maintenance centres, the VIA Customer Centre, and administrative offices.

These tentative agreements are subject to a ratification vote by VIA Rail's Unifor members. Once ratified, the collective agreements will be retroactive to January 1, 2022 and in effect through December 31, 2024

British Rail

Passenger trains of British operator Greater Anglia near Thetford, England were disrupted for about an hour Monday afternoon, August 2nd because of an escaped giant tortoise on the tracks!



The animal, about 2½ feet long, had escaped from a pet and aquarium store Swallow Aquatics on Sunday. It was injured after being struck by one train, with photos showing damage to its shell. Two trains were terminated early and one was delayed by about 20 minutes. The tortoise is expected to make a full recovery.

AMTRAK

A fatal collision occurred at 12:42 PM on June 27th, when the Southwest Chief hit the rear end of a 2007 Kenworth dump truck that was obstructing a railroad crossing of County Road 113, a gravel road located approximately three miles southwest of the small town of Mendon, Missouri. Mendon is 100 miles northeast of Kansas City. Three train passengers and the truck driver were killed at the 'passive' crossing (only 'cross bucks' designated the crossing).



According to telemetry data, the engineer of the Southwest Chief began blowing the locomotive's horn approximately 1/4 mile from the crossing at a speed of 89 mph, below the speed limit of 90 mph, and had slowed to 87 mph at the moment of impact. Both locomotives and all eight railcars derailed after the collision; seven of the eight railcars came to rest on their sides and the dump truck was pushed into a ditch northeast of the crossing.

Agawa Canyon Tourist Train



Watco, a major shortline freight operator, have just taken over the Agawa Canyon tourist train, their first every passenger train service which commenced on August 2nd..

The train departs from downtown Sault Ste. Marie on a 366-kilometer round trip tour to the Agawa Canyon. Designated a Canadian Signature Experience by Destination Canada, The Agawa Canyon Tour Train is hailed as one of the most innovative and unique experiences offered anywhere in Canada as it travels through Northeastern Ontario.

The trips will run through to Oct. 10th and during the last 3-4 weeks, will feature the fall colours..

E&N Division of the CRHA aquires an ex CPR SW8

Ex CPR SW8 diesel switcher, that until recently operated on the Grand Forks Railway, has been donated to the E&N Society in Victoria. #6703 was built for CPR in Nov. 1950, and was the oldest commercially operating diesel electric locomotive in Canada.

Talks between the GFRR and the society have been going on for over a year. The unit operated on the CP system across Western Canada, including time on Vancouver Island in the 1980's, which was the main reason the society wanted to return it to be located in the former E& N roundhouse in Esquimalt.



The locomotive will be moved by rail via BNSF through Washington state to Seattle and across the border to New Westminster, then be barged to Vancouver Island. (GFG)

Union Pacific 'Big Boy' #4014

The 'Big Boy' departed Cheyenne WY to Denver on Thursday, July 28. The Big Boy was on display in Denver on July 29th, along with the "Experience the Union Pacific Rail Car," a multi-media walk-through exhibition that provides a glimpse of the past while telling the story of modern-day railroading. Admission was free.

On July 30, No. 4014 pulled the 2022 'Museum Special', a charter passenger trip from Denver to Cheyenne hosted by the Union Pacific Museum. This excursion is the annual gala fundraiser for the Union Pacific Museum. Before returning to Denver via motorcoach, passengers had the option to visit Sherman Summit via motorcoach.

Note: RMBC will receive a commission for bookings below. Mention you saw this in our Newsletter.



HUDSON BAY 'BUGGIES & BEARS - 7 Day & 6 Night Rail Tour

Late October 2022 (call for dates) – ROUND TRIP FROM WINNIPEG, MB
Travel round-trip from Winnipeg to Churchill by rail to take part in the annual Polar Bear Migration on a 7-day, 6-night tour that features train travel with sleeping car accommodation (2 nights each direction) that you will see the prairies, Canadian Shield, Taiga and Arctic biomes from the windows of the same train! Enjoy 3 full days and 2 nights in Churchill, Manitoba and region to experience the heritage and wildlife of the region. A highlight will be the day tour on the world-Famous Tundra Buggy along the shore of Hudson Bay to view the migrating Polar Bears. The tour also includes station to hotel transfers, a town orientation tour featuring a visit to the Cape Merry National Historic Site for stunning views of the Churchill River where it empties into the Hudson Bay. There is also a half day tour along the shoreline of Hudson Bay to the former rocket range to learn about the ecology and look for more wildlife with local guides sharing their passion for the region. Visits to local attractions include the Itsanitaq Museum, heritage & cultural presentations, most meals, a detailed tour information kit with maps and rail route guide, and more to experience the amazing heritage and wildlife of Northern Manitoba. In Winnipeg, pre and post tour nights (suggested to make connections) at Winnipeg's grand railway hotel, the Fort Garry, with our partner rate, can be booked, depending on availability, on your behalf.

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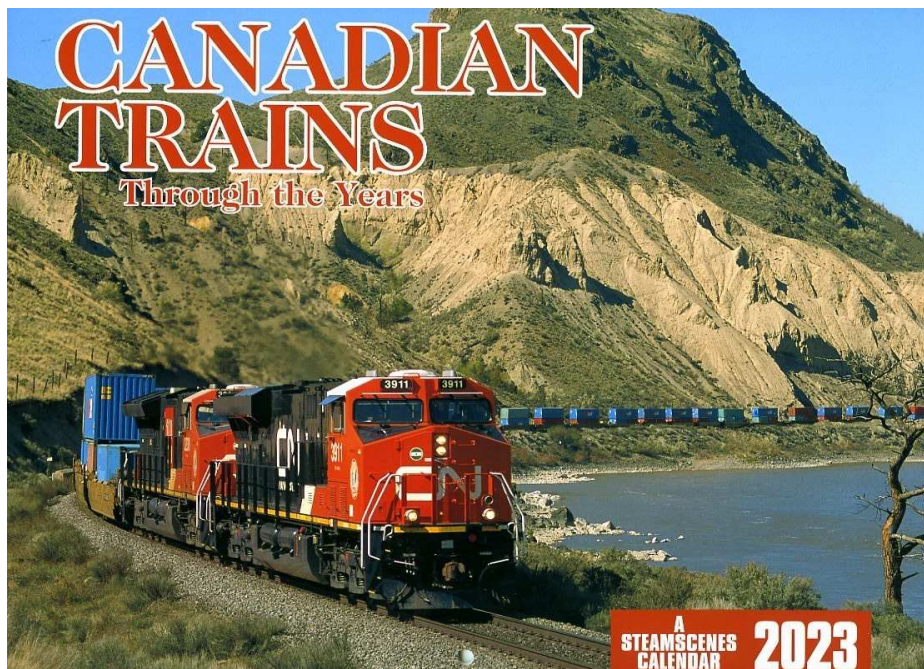
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To order the reknown Nils Huxtable calendar for 2023 (and the WCRA
receives a commission), email Nils at karl@steamengines.ca



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