

# The Railway Museum of BC Newsletter

January to March 2023 Issue  
North Pole Express sells out in advance!



**RAILWAY MUSEUM**  
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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## **The North Pole Express was a Complete Sell Out!**

Our second annual North Pole Express (formerly named the Polar Express) sold out two weeks in advance. This event is our our single biggest fund raiser each year and the 36 departures over four weekends from Nov. 26th to Dec. 18th drew over 14,000 happy attendees.

We made a number of major changes to the event by hiring a well known children's entertainer who wrote a new theme with different music but retaining the overall Christmas theme. The frequent question from aware children was "why are we stopping" (when we get to the Estuary and start to return). So the audio track on the train had the train stopped by a giant mouse named 'Lulu' who told the engineer that he was lost and we had to turn around and she would take us to the North Pole.

And once again the mini rail ride inside traveled around the North Pole and into the Car Shop through a Winter Wonderland featuring our 'Two Spot' steam engine as the central highlight.

One of the major improvements was moving the Royal Hudson outside on to the turntable (care was taken to shelter her as best we could) from the elements without covering her from the elements.

A special thanks to Jeanine Gruber and her volunteers who started initial preparations over three months in advance in August to ensure all decorations and the overall theme was a total success.



Photo:  
Kyle  
Miller



As in the past issues, I want to acknowledge the many volunteers, who without their participation, we wouldn't be able to host NPX, the largest revenue producing event each year. It generates sufficient revenue to assist in a major way to get us through the succeeding months till late spring when Day Out with Thomas arrives, as the park is closed due to very few visitors which doesn't warrant being open.



Photos: Kyle Miller



Here are photos of many of our regular volunteers who set aside time to make NPX possible. I am sure we have missed a few of our regulars and I want to apologize as it is difficult to get to everyone when the event is so well attended



Donna Simon & Jeremy Davy



Hailey Simon



The Hall Family - Karen, Gordon, Tim and Amy



Gary Kreschuk



Nora McDowall & Barb Stover





Celine Quesnel & Rob Payette



George & Bonnie Game



Bunker C Bear & Tom Bruvall



Ryan K., Bill M., Tom A. & Aaron G.





Donald Lawton & Karl Jacob



Dai Yates & Kyle Miller



'Lulu' the Mouse on the NPX



Dinah Stephen & Bella Gardner



Grace McDougall & Steffi Dennison

## Updates from WCRA

Starting in this issue, reports will be provided from the five major departments at the Museum to better understand how we are doing, the successes (and perhaps the occasional challenge) that occur during the previous three months.

### **Gordon Bell - General Manager's Report**

Railway Museum of British Columbia - Business Operations Report  
Business operations are off to a successful start in 2023 at the Railway Museum of British Columbia and Blacksheep Event Rentals. The museum has already been host to two film productions since the beginning of the year with a total of eleven days of production between the two contracts. These opportunities provide significant financial benefit to the museum, particularly in the lean winter months. Another huge thank you to Patrick Doiron of Industrial Works and his professional team for facilitating these important and complicated business transactions on behalf of the West Coast Railway Association.

In addition to the film business, Gordon Hall, Tom Arnott and the rest of the Sea to Sky Train & Hobby Show team have been working hard to pull off the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Train Show taking place March 18 & 19, 2023 at the CN Roundhouse and Conference Centre. Following the train show, the museum has the busiest spring event schedule since 2019 with the Bespoke Market, several weddings, and the Howe Sound Secondary School Dry Grad. Day out with Thomas is coming back to the Railway Museum of British Columbia on May 27/28 and June 3/4 with the "Let's Get Colourful Tour". This is a great time for children of all ages to come out and enjoy a wonderful day of games and activities and, of course, meet Thomas and Sir Topham Hatt. Tickets are now available through the W.C.R.A. website. Chrissy and Tom will be looking for lots of volunteers to come on out and lend a hand in the production of this important fundraiser for the museum. Please reach out to Chrissy or Tom if you're able to help ([volunteer@wcra.org](mailto:volunteer@wcra.org)).

Blacksheep Event Rentals had a very successful 2022 event season that saw business grow exponentially resulting in a net profit for the museum of around \$100k. The 2023 year has started strong with a support role in the supply chain for the Nordic Junior World Championships held in the Callaghan Valley in February which is normally a month that Blacksheep does not generate revenue. In addition, a tremendous amount of work has gone into streamlining the warehouse operations and building S.O.P's for the growing product offerings Blacksheep is carrying. As of mid March, Blacksheep has around sixty-five weddings booked for the May to October season, and we are currently projecting over one hundred event contracts by the end of 2023!

Business development continues to be my major focus for both the Railway Museum of British Columbia and Blacksheep Event Rentals. The goal of generating enough operation cash flow to permanently stabilize the museum's finances and allow it to be sustainable long into the future is always top of mind. This goal is achievable through our growing network of business collaborations, event and film productions as well as museum visitation. All of these important revenue streams are critical in the success of our core purpose of restoring, preserving, and displaying B.C. Railway Heritage.

## **Tom Arnott - Museum Operations Manager's Report**

### **Overview**

It has been a busy 3 months in the museum. We had a lot of support tearing down the NPX in the Roundhouse, cars, station and Carshop. We had an average of around 12 volunteers on a Monday to help and thanks also to the staff for all the work put into clearing all the staging, lights, mini rail and all the other items required for NPX. We filled a box car and did so in record time this year.

### **Royal Hudson**

There was a lot of concern about pulling out the Royal Hudson onto the turntable during NPX but she came back in devoid of years of dust and after a total clean of the stainless steel boiler cover and a clean and oiling of the cranks, rods and wheels. As a result, the locomotive is looking really good. Further work is planned to repaint the cab floor this spring.

### **Mini Rail**

We received a donation of \$3500 this year towards mini-rail costs and we plan to use the funds to repaint three of our mini rail locomotives. We also had new wheels manufactured for our locomotives, which will significantly reduce derailments. We were gifted 8 new trucks to be used with the new cars, which are currently being built. Aaron and his team have started track work in preparation for Thomas and the summer season.

### **Gift Shop**

The Gift shop was redecorated in February and new shelving and a better layout created, which we hope will make our shop more interesting. STARK Architecture, a Squamish based firm have agreed, free of charge, to look at a better design for our reception and gift shop. They will design and work up plans to design stage, which can then be used if we receive a donation/funding for the work.

### **Second Floor Roundhouse**

This area has been a general miscellaneous storage area for many years with no real purpose. The area has now been cleared and the plan is to create an artgallery and three-dimensional display wall using many of the items currently stored in the museum archive. We need to try and create



more exhibition areas and where possible make them more interactive  
This area will be ready for our summer opening.

### **Car Shop**

As you will be aware the car shop was built in 1914 and is thought to be the largest wooden structure moved in one piece in Canada. The foundations of the building were built to earthquake standards, but the wooden structure and main doors are in need of maintenance and refurbishment. Heritage BC is offering up to \$50,000 to non-profit organizations toward restoration of existing heritage buildings. I think, that if we put a good case forward, we could qualify for a grant.

### **Archives**

We continue to receive interesting artifacts and historic items. We are privileged to have such an amazing archive and I recommend that you visit it and see for yourselves. Please contact me to arrange a visit.

### **Museum environment and buildings**

A lot of work has taken place over the past 6 months to tidy up the site and make it more presentable for our visitors. A plan to survey all our building will be undertaken this summer to look at the general condition and identify priority works and costs. The site now has an evening night security patrol to check that all buildings are secure. A security review is planned. We need to establish a Health and Safety group and review risks for staff, volunteers, and visitors to comply with our statutory requirements.

### **Volunteers**

All non-profit organizations are struggling to recruit and retain members. We are extremely lucky to have a team of very committed volunteers. This year we have a further 5 new volunteers. Chrissy and I are working on a welcome pack for new volunteers to give them an insight into the museum, its management structure, volunteer opportunities and other relevant information

### **Museum focus**

We are now called the Railway Museum of British Columbia and as such we need to try and focus more about telling the story of the building and the history of railways in the Province and Canada. It's a history that shaped Canada, created the city of Vancouver, and had a significant impact on the building and expansion of Squamish. We plan to create more exhibits and tell the history through updated story boards, digital media, and interactive displays.

### **Bob Philip - President's Report**

Since the last trip of the very successful North Pole Express pulled into the North Pole station on a very wintery Sunday afternoon, staff and volunteers have been planning for the 2023 season. The first order of business was the massive cleanup of the Roundhouse, car shop, station and the removal of decorations from all around the park. And after gradually shaking off the effects of pandemic interruptions, staff and volunteers began to plan for an expanded offering of events for this year. DOWT and North Pole Express will be back and so will the very successful summer Saturdays ( with some Sundays) at the park. For the first time since 2019, the museum will welcome participants in the Tourism Challenge program on select days beginning April 22nd. The summer Wednesday education program will move to Thursdays and be expanded to include more participants. In addition plans are underway to operate one or two evening dinner type trains and to hold a dinner dance event featuring live entertainment in the Roundhouse. Finally, thanks to a generous grant from the provincial government, a contract has been awarded to renew the track from the station to the CN interchange to the north and south to the crossing near MP2. Thank you to all the volunteers who continue to make the events possible and we are looking forward to, once again, working with you throughout the year.

### **Robert MacBeth - CMO's Report**

Both #4069 and #6520 operated satisfactorily through the winter for some switching moves and a movie shoot. Also plans are to have #561's fuel injectors rebuilt. BC-21 is in our service bay getting coolant line repairs to prepare for our summer operations.

We received a government grant for track work which is a first priority as it is key work needed on the MP2 lead and the main track to the north end derail.

Greg Robertshaw and Kirby Read have been working on improving the lighting in MP2.

### **Kidsafe Program**

The 'Kidsafe' Program that the Railway Museum hosted last summer for children from seven different school districts in the downtown core of Vancouver has been extended again this summer thanks to funding by the R. Howard Webster Foundation. A busload of children will arrive at the park every Thursday during the summer to experience all the park activities.



### **The History of #960: by Bill Marchant**

Our center-cab 60 ton electric locomotive #960 has had an interesting life. She was built by Alco (serial #51070) in New York and then completed by GE (#3890) in Pennsylvania in June 1912. She was the first of four bought by the Oregon Electric Railway to work freight trains between Portland, Salem and Eugene. They were Class 404E-120, numbered 21-24, in the typical Traction Orange paint scheme. The railway was a 1200 volt system with approximate 130 miles of track with overhead catenary.

The British Columbia Electric Railway had several electric locomotives on a 600 volt system but they were too small for the increasing and bigger traffic. They knew that it would take two years to receive new engines, so two employees from the mechanical department, Bill Rines and J. Nichols, went to Portland early in 1946 to check out the OER engines for sale. They were impressed, and arranged for #22 to be sent to the BCER shops first for a testing. She arrived there on June 2nd and proved to be excellent for their requirements.

The four engines from OER were then purchased by the BCER. By that date, they were painted Pullman Green and were part of the James J. Hill 'Empire'. The first to be painted was #22, painted 'signal red' and black with white trim and gold lettering on June 27th and numbered 960. She was put into service 'as-built' on June 30th.

The other three locos arrived later and two were painted red and numbered 961 & 962 in early August and September. They worked fine on the lower voltage for approximately two years. The fourth unit, OER #24 was not upgraded, but used for parts.

The railway then placed a large order for control and power switchgear from Westinghouse Traction Brake Co. (We have a copy of the material list!). Included were master controllers, compressors, a traction-motor blower and many other parts including 2 'Golden Glow' headlights and a brass bell. The brake systems were upgraded and work was completed in 1948. Two strings of NiFe batteries were added later for control power.

They worked freight trains from New Westminster out to Fraser Valley, serving industries in Surrey, Cloverdale, Abbotsford and Chilliwack with connection to US railroads at Huntingdon and Sumas. At Kitsilano, they connected with the CPR over the Kitsilano trestle to the Drake Street yards. They also shared switching at the Carrall St. yard. The 960 was the last freight locomotive to work for the BCER.

The loco's were stripped of valuable parts and 960 was stored at Dominion Bridge on Boundary Road and then later on Mitchell Island. The Royal BC Museum aquired her and later donated her to the WCRA.



She was trucked to to our Heritage Park by Arrow Transfer on Nov. 12th, 1993 and was the first piece of rolling stock to arrive at our new museum site.

Photo: Bill Marchant

### **COLLECTION COMMITTEE UPDATE**

The Collection Committee has been meeting on a regular monthly basis under Greg Robertshaw. Here are some highlights from the last meeting:

**Roy Family Update** – Tom met with the Roy family several months ago regarding their collection, has also received value of the Marjatta contents from Trevor and the value of mini-rail locomotive PGE #561 from Singh.

**Wilkie Collection Update** – After advising the Wilkie family that we will not be keeping their collection, Mike Wilkie called to express their disappointment for not doing a valuation. Tom advised him that we accept only third-party valuation for archival material exceeding \$1,000.

**Clinton Move** – Robert advised that he is unsure of the repair and certification efforts required for the overhead crane. A local crane company has offered to donate mobile crane time if we pick up the labour cost of operator and riggers. Singh agreed, as they will do it safely and efficiently. Robert will follow up.

**Speeder Disposal** – Singh Biln made up a list of speeders and parts that we no longer need - many of which were donated in the past couple of years. Singh did a complete inventory and we have put a number of different models (mainly two seaters -some in operational condition) up for sale and if interetested in more info: contact Singh at [jsbiln51@gmail.com](mailto:jsbiln51@gmail.com)



## RAILWAY NEWS

### E&N Corridor Update

Snaw-Naw-As (Nanoose) First Nation Chief Gordon Edwards stated in early March that the former E&N railway has served its purpose and now it's time to explore other opportunities instead of spending nearly a billion dollars to repair the line and tens of millions in annual operating costs. This is the same nation that filed a court case in hopes of winning its land back from the railway right-of-way. The line stopped carrying passengers in 2011 because of the poor condition of its tracks.

The federal government had until March 14 to decide whether it will put money into reviving rail service between Courtenay and Victoria, as a result of a 2021 decision by the B.C. Court of Appeal. That decision came after the Snaw-Naw-As Nation sought return of land in the corridor's right-of-way that was not being used for railway purposes any more. It lost its case, but appealed the decision.

The Court of Appeal set an 18-month deadline for the federal government to decide if it will fund infrastructure improvements on the corridor.

### US Federal Agency recommends tank car Advisory

A federal agency has issued a safety advisory recommending that shippers and tank car owners stop using DOT-111 tank cars in the wake of the February derailment of a Norfolk Southern train in East Palestine, Ohio.



“The safety advisory re-emphasizes concerns with the survivability of DOT-111 tank cars and encourages tank car owners and shippers of flammable liquids to voluntarily upgrade their tank car fleets to the DOT-117 by 2029.

specification tank car, the newest and safest available tank car design authorized for flammable liquid service,” the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration said. “The advisory also urges rail carriers to consider the risks inherent in the continued use of DOT-111 tank cars in flammable liquid service, and to take actions that could reduce the risks of hazardous material transportation by rail.

The tank cars that were carrying vinyl chloride – which were vented and burned on Feb. 6 – were DOT-105Js. But more than half of the 16 DOT- 111 cars involved in the East Palestine derailment released material as a result of the wreck.

DOT-111 cars are supposed to be phased out of flammable service by 2029 . The Rail Safety Act of 2023, filed in the Senate this month, would move up that deadline to 2025 . PHMSA said there is enough shop capacity to retrofit existing DOT-111 cars to meet DOT-117R standards and to build new DOT 117J tank cars to replace both the DOT-111 and CPC-1232 tank car fleets by the 2029 deadline. (TM)

### **FRA to conduct Safety Assessment of Norfolk Southern**

The Federal Railroad Administration announced on Tuesday, March 7, that it would conduct a 60-day supplemental safety assessment of Norfolk Southern Railway, joining the National Transportation Safety Board, which has announced its own investigation of NS safety practices.

“After a series of derailments and the death of one of its workers, we are initiating this further supplemental safety review of Norfolk Southern, while also calling on Norfolk Southern to act urgently to improve its focus on safety so the company can begin earning back the trust of the public and its employees,” US Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said in a press release. “This comes as USDOT continues its own urgent actions to further improve freight rail safety and accountability.” (TM)

### **AMTRAK**

Due to 'mechanical issues', the Empire Builder was terminated March 28th in Devil's Lake, ND. Local transportation was brought in to take the 90 passengers to the Spirit Lake Casino hotel in Devil's Lake for an overnight stay to wait for replacement power to arrive on the 29th. Following train #8 on the 30th was cancelled entirely due to no equipment making the same day turn on the west coast. ALC's #302 & 310 both failed to produce HEP which has become an issue in cold weather with the Siemens built units. (TO)



## Chicago's Metra Commuter Fleet Paint Schemes

Five engines, five variations at Metra's Antioch coach yard. From the top, Metra F59PHI No. 81 which is former Amtrak Pacific Surfliner with black underframe, Metra F59PH-3 No. 98 with an all-black roof and fading white to blue section, Metra F59PHI No. 91 which is former Amtrak Cascades with brown underframe, Metra F59PH No. 94 with silver roof and fading white to blue section and Metra F40PH No. 109 in the original Metra scheme. (M)



Metra has 21 F59PHIs which are all ex-Amtrak units used on the west coast on Pacific Surfliner and Cascades use.

The latest power to arrive in yet another scheme is the recent order placed with Progress Rail for 15 SD70 MACHs which started to arrive in late fall 2022.

## Norfolk Southern

NS CEO Alan Shaw surprised attendees at the railroad's 'investor day' in December when it took him just 10 minutes to demolish two of the things that have hurt rail service and put a lid on traffic growth: Excessive cost-cutting and an overemphasis on the operating ratio.

Shaw told a roomful of Wall Street analysts point blank that his railroad would no longer have a singular focus on its operating ratio. With the notable exception of Union Pacific, all Class I railroads have been heading in this direction. But Shaw publicly and forcefully explained why railroads need to turn the page in order to grow.

The really big news here is that NS is attacking the root cause of the railroad industry's recurring bouts with service problems: The practice of furloughing train crews at the drop of a hat, then acting surprised when they don't return to the railroad.

"Our traditional approaches for dealing with business cycles — by furloughing temporarily surplus employees and tightening other spending when demand falls off — did not work well," Shaw says. "When the time came to rebuild our ranks as freight transportation demand returned, we were unable to rehire quickly enough to operate fluidly. Today, we are still recovering from the disruption of the pandemic. Our service has turned the corner, but we are not yet at our

level of staffing, or at the level of service that our customers expect".

The Class I railroads get caught short of crews every three or four years. In the short term, this creates congestion, increases costs, and means railroads can't handle all the freight that wants to move on rail.

To break this cycle, NS will hang on to its engineers and conductors during downturns. The railroad will take advantage of having surplus crews to qualify them on new territories and to train conductors to become engineers. The idea is that NS will be able to attract and retain its skilled workforce, provide consistent service, and be able to handle a traffic rebound without skipping a beat.

This will inevitably raise the operating ratio in the short term. That's been a no-no on Wall Street for investors who can't see beyond the next quarter. Shaw says enough of this because in the long run, furloughs backfire.

Shaw outlined a hypothetical downturn in which NS would normally furlough 5% of its conductors and engineers. Having those 375 people off the payroll for a year saves \$35 million. But when it comes time to recall them, only 175 return. So NS has to hire and train 200 new conductors, which costs \$10 million and takes months. Meanwhile, service suffers, and with operations in the ditch, costs go up \$160 million for the year. Then figure that NS misses out on 5% of the potential traffic volume due to poor service. That's at least \$600 million in lost revenue.

In other words, furloughs, intended to save the railroad \$35 million, actually end up costing it \$770 million, and far more if you factor in shipper frustration.

## **CN**

Canadian National, logistics firm Kaptan and Montship Inc., Canada's largest steamship agency, have announced plans for an intermodal transload facility to be built in CN's Calgary Logistics Park.

The facility, announced Monday, is expected to be operational in the third quarter of 2024. It will provide a location to transload imports into 53-foot domestic containers for shipment further inland and the reloading of international containers for export.

"This new facility will provide value to our customers and the regional economy



by leveraging CN's robust network and two options to Asian markets via the ports of Vancouver and Prince Rupert," Dan Bresolin - CN vice-president - intermodal, said in a press release.

Montship CEO Brian McDonald said his company views Calgary as "the next frontier in the transload market. It is ideally suited to serve both west coast gateways and will offer significant advantages to both import and export customers. (JM)

### **Rocky Mountaineer**

Rocky Mountaineer used RMRX 8020 & 8021, GP40-3's, and their regular train with no passengers on a training qualifying run from Denver, CO, to Glenwood Springs, CO, on March 26th in preparation for the coming tourist season. Train was to continue to Moab, Utah, on Monday, 27 March 2023. (TO)

### **VIA**

VIA is now offering a travel rewards plan called 'Preference'. For each dollar you spend you receive one point. For example, if you spend \$550 you would receive a one way economy ticket between Ottawa and Montreal. But in business class, that same trip would require 1625 points.



To Celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the RCMP in March, the Squamish Detachment had their photo taken by the Royal Hudson. Photo: Tom Arnott

## **VIA (continued)**

A report from Canada's Auditor General says VIA Rail Canada has taken steps to address barriers by travelers with disabilities, but additional work will be required to achieve the government's goal of barrier-free travel.

The report cited efforts to involve persons with disabilities in specific projects, such as VIA's accessibility and design plans for its new corridor passenger equipment.

But it also found issues with VIA's website, noting that information on services for passengers in wheelchairs was difficult to find and that a person using a screen reader would sometimes be given the wrong departure time.

## **Delays in The Canadian Departing Vancouver**

There have been some delays in recent weeks with The Canadian dropping behind schedule in the Lower Mainland/Fraser Valley region. Many times due to congestion with heavy freight traffic. But the departure of No. 2 on March 15, in particular, was substantially delayed soon after leaving Vancouver by a derailment on CP near Mission that blocked the north end of the Mission bridge for trains crossing northward to run either eastward or westward after crossing. No. 2 was caught in the queue of eastbounds that formed on CN on the south side of the Fraser River and didn't cross the bridge until it was five hours and 10 minutes late. It was six hours late at North Bend, but had fully recovered the lost time midway across the Prairies and was more than two hours early at Toronto!

## **CP**

The U.S. Surface Transportation Board ("STB") issued a decision on March 15th approving the CP and KCS joint merger application, subject to certain conditions, thereby authorizing the two railways to combine to form Canadian Pacific Kansas City ("CPKC"), the 1st single-line railway connecting the U.S., Mexico & Canada. The decision authorizes CP to exercise control of KCS as early as April 14 of this year, at or after which point CP and KCS would combine to create the new CPKC. CP is reviewing the full 212-page decision in detail and in the coming days will announce its plans with respect to the creation of CPKC.

"The Board expects that this new single-line service will foster the growth of rail traffic, shifting approximately 64,000 truckloads annually from North America's roads to rail, and will support investment in infrastructure, service quality, and safety.

## A LOOK BACK

### WCRA Newsletter - March 1978

#### Association News

For the benefit of our 'out of towners' members, here is some basic information of our current status. We currently have 46 members, 28 active and 18 associates. We meet on the last Tuesday of each month on the mezzanine floor of the CN Station in Vancouver. The association owns two pieces of equipment, locomotive #16, the former Comox Logging & RR 2-8-2 and it is currently leased to the Victoria Pacific Railway and is presently stored at Crown Zellerbach in Ladysmith. The loco has not operated since 1972. The second piece of equipment is former CPR open observation car #598 and is currently leased to the BC Government for use on the Royal Hudson excursion train on its daily summer runs to Squamish.

#### Update on Association Activities

WCRA's 16th Annual BCR RDC Excursion to Lillooet took place on Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 18th & 19th. Overflow crowds caused a third day to be added a week later on Feb. 25th! And again, a very gracious thank you to 'Winnie' Oliver (Gary's mom) for taking all the reservations on her home phone!

The association has received approval to operate a steam excursion on the BCR, scheduled for Sunday, May 28th and Sunday, June 4th. We will run a 'double header' with locomotives #3716 and #2860 on the regular Royal Hudson train to Squamish, where the train will split. Our party, using #3716 and several coaches and our open car, will continue on to Pemberton and return to North Vancouver, preceded by the regular arrival of the Royal Hudson.

The association is attempting to acquire one or more pieces of rolling stock, with the main purpose of the car, be it a business car, combine or even a baggage car, would be to properly house our archive collection. With this in mind, we are exploring the formation of a foundation (for tax purposes). The first step was becoming a member of the Heritage Canada. Initial enquiries have been made to both CN and CP with initial reaction being positive. The wooden Port Mann combine, the pipe fitter's car, was recently up for sale, but was determined it was in too poor condition for our needs. The association is also in negotiation with Terry Ferguson of the Victoria Pacific Railway with regard to repurchasing of the car 'British Columbia'. This former CPR business car, built in 1890 by Barney and Smith, was formerly owned and restored by the WCRA.



## RAILWAY NEWS

### CP

The recent transit strike at BC Hydro for six days mid March resulted in up to 30 commuters a day using The Canadian from Mission and Coquitlam to Vancouver . The arrival of #1 in Vancouver at 08:25 and #2's departure at 17: 45 was almost perfect for those who worked downtown. The round trip fare of \$6 was considerably more than the 70 cents bus fare but you could get a beer on the homeward bound trip!

March 29th, 1978 will mark the 90th anniversary of CPR's first passenger train into Victoria and a special tribute will be held in Victoria to mark the occasion. The E & N Dayliner will be decked out in streamers and bunting after its arrival in Victoria and its crew will be dressed in Victorian attire. The Dayliner will be eased across the Johnston Street bridge and come to a halt at the foot of Pandora Street at the same spot where it ended its first run into Victoria 90 years previously.

### CN

The Federal Government has announced that a multi-million dollar port expansion at Prince Rupert has been finalized. Two new grain terminals and renovation to the existing plant and a coal loading dock are planned. This will add a tremendous amount of tonnage to CN's northern BC line.

CN's ex Calgary station will be converted into a 1000 seat theatre at a cost of almost \$65 million. The theatre is expected to be completed by summer 1980.

CN has two of its 'Skyview' (ex Milwaukee 'Skytops') up for sale at Winnipeg. They are CN-1901 'Malpeque' and CN-1903 'Trinity'. The coaches are offered 'as is, where is' and, according to members Jeremy Lambert and Jim McPherson, who saw them about three months ago, are in very poor shape - basically gutted. CN states it will cost about \$800 to restore the cars to interchange service to remove them from Transcona Yard.

The sand tower from the former CN Vancouver shops was sent this month to the equipment foreman at Prince Rupert for use there. It was disassembled and loaded into gondolas.

Due to the recent BC Hydro strike, which, as mentioned already in this issue, has affected CN's automobile delivery and storage. Thus, during the middle of March , the tri-levels were brought into CN's Vancouver yard and a mobile ramp was used to unload them. The cars were then sorted in the Piggyback storage yard and loaded on to auto carriers to their destination.

CN Intermodal is trying out a radical method of handling goods requiring a temperature controlled trailer. CN ordered 25 'Supertherm' trailers from Pullman Trailmobile Canada in Brantford Ontario. They have approximately 8" thick insulated doors and walls and thicker ceilings. They don't require heat in the winter or re Fridgeration in the summer to protect perishables. Once loaded, the interior adjusts to the temperature at time of loading and maintains that temperature for up to two weeks. As a test, two car loads recently made a 6 day trip from Ontario to the west and the temperature at unloading had only varied by one degree! Time taken at division points to service current re Fridgerated cars, will be drastically altered if proven successful over the long term

CN is currently leasing a large number of units to US railroads with 15 SD-40's to the Milwaukee Road, 20 units to the C&NW, 4 GP-38-2's to FAST track in Pueblo, CO and 3 GP40-2's to Ford Motor as mobile generating stations during the recent coal strike.

### **BCR**

A new concrete overpass has replaced the old timber trestle over Wesport Road in West Vancouver. The precast prestressed concrete spans were installed using a 50 ton American and the 150 ton Squamish auxiliary crane both on rail. The installation took 5 days.

BCR #615 is currently in the re-build shop for a complete overhaul and rebuild following wreck damage.

### **VIA**

VIA Rail is now running ads in the local daily papers on various VIA Rail tours. One such example is a 21 day Newfoundland tour leaving Vancouver with visits to Montreal, Halifax, the Cabot Trail, and seven other towns in NFLD. Cost is \$1085 per person/double occupancy.

### **WHITE PASS & YUKON**

Due to the upcoming June 30 closure of the Cassiar Asbestos mine at Clinton Creek, YT, WP & Y's narrow gauge railway (Skagway to Whitehorse) will lose a significant portion of its business. Last year, 50,000 tons were hauled by truck to Whitehorse and then by rail to Skagway for transfer to

Vancouver on WP&Y vessels. As well, Cassiar's other mine at Cassiar, BC has shifted to an 'all truck' movement to Stewart BC and again by barge to Vancouver. This business is worth \$14 million or 18% of their business. Their two ships will also be affected by this loss of business and plans are to use only one, and modify the other to a 'barge' thus reducing to one crew.

## **ROYAL HUDSON**

The Royal Hudson's 'Discover BC' Tour 1978 has been finalized. The train will travel across Canada to Toronto to publicize BC's Tourism. #2860 did make a 'shake-down' run on March 21st pulling the Coquitlam transfer and was mu'd to two SD40-2's. This gave the crew a chance to test the new MU system which was installed over the winter. The next day, the train's consist was open for the press at the Drake Street yards. The train will then be on display on March 30th at the CP station on the Vancouver waterfront from noon to 2 PM just prior to her departure east.

## **LOCAL NEWS**

Delta Alaska Terminal's Baldwin switcher will be sold in the near future due to the dissolution of Alaska Trainships.

An early SW-1 (former BN?) switcher painted in light blue with UGG #001 (for the United Grain Growers) has been in the Drake street yards for the past week.

## **MISC. MUSEUM & RR NEWS**

The Puget Sound Railway Historical Society's YVT trolley began operating in February from Snoqualmie Depot to the Falls on Sundays and holidays through to April 30th.

The 1928 Baldwin Baldwin Skagit River Railway's 2-6-2 #6 is finally going to enter tourist service on the BN branch line between Concrete and Sedro Wolley, WA starting in late May. Three Milwaukee Road passenger coaches will be used for the operation.



## Day out with Thomas returns to the Railway Museum of BC!

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Note : Don 't forget for WCRA members to keep a record of your 2023 volunteer hours for Donna Simon and submit at the end of December 2023.

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Very rare 'over/under' shot at the Fraser River Bridge on Feb.4/2023.

Photo: Ken Storey



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