

1945 “Hayes” Logging Truck

“Big Red” was bought new by the McLean Lumber Company in 1945. It was custom-built by “Hayes Manufacturing”, the well-known Vancouver builder of heavy trucks for the forest industry. It was assembled with extra-large brake drums (water-cooled) for log-hauling on the steep slopes of the Beaufort Range above the Alberni Valley.

It is very rare to find a 1945 truck as industrial production had been directed to fighting the Second World War for the previous five years. The auto industry concentrated on building army trucks, tanks and other military vehicles. The McLeans were only able to order a new logging truck because lumber production was designated as a 'strategic industry'. That is how they got permission to buy a new truck when other businesses had to make do with their pre-War vehicles.

“Red” was abandoned at the McLean Mill site, along with its sister 1947 “Hayes” - “Yeller” - after the closure of the operation. Whereas “Yeller” was restored to 'factory condition', “Red” was just fixed up to “as found” or “working condition” by members of the Western Vancouver Island Industrial Heritage Society. That is why “Red” looks dowdy in comparison with sister “Yeller”.

This truck spent its whole working life in the Alberni Valley, only leaving home once, in the 1990s, to star in the 1940s-era movie “Snow Falling in Cedars”, which was filmed in Greenwood, BC.

Date of Purchase:	June 6, 1945
Cost:	\$10,944
Original Engine:	6-cylinder “Hercules”
Truck Serial # :	504 – 911
GVW:	25,000 lbs.

From the Industrial Collection of the Alberni Valley Museum

The Alberni Valley Museum conserves, strengthens and shares the unique heritage of the Alberni Valley.

The Western Vancouver Island Industrial Heritage Society preserves local heritage through an active volunteer program of restoring, operating and displaying heritage equipment.