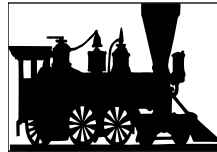


SPOT NEWS

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Western Vancouver Island Industrial Heritage Society

Issue 46



February 2011



"Two-Spot" at SteamExpo '86
Photo: Rob Mah

WILL THE "TWO-SPOT" RUN AGAIN?

See P. 4

***REMINDER:** Annual General Meeting: February 22, 2011 at Echo Centre at 7:30 p.m.
Guest Speaker: Ray Baron—"Logging Speeders". Renew your Membership!!

ALBERNI PACIFIC RAILWAY NEWS

The "Number Seven" was put to bed for the winter after the most successful 'Santa Runs' ever on the weekend of December 4-5. More than 1500 passengers and what seemed to be every small child in Port Alberni came to ride with Santa and his elves. The APR offered two Sunday morning runs this time, as well as the Saturday runs. The Sunday trips were the first to be 'Sold Out' so, that is an experiment to be repeated.

2010 was a slow year for "Steam Excursions" for cruise ship passengers as few visited Nanaimo. This year is more promising, with 8 bookings already. Last year, there were 14 train charters (two for cruise ships) , as well as 30 group bookings.

In November, two more BCIT Conductor Training groups did their Practical training with the APR and I.H.S. personnel. The classes were run back-to-back over nine days. Rollie Hurst (Engineer) and Irv McIntyre (the "Rules Guy") were the 'point men' in this enterprise while other APR Conductors shared ground and cab duties each day, keeping an eye out for the BCIT students. *[right: photo of RS-3 and BCIT group]*

BCIT has scheduled three more Training Sessions for student Conductors before summer: one in mid-February; the others in April and May.

The 1954 "ALCO" RS-3 diesel performed well but developed a radiator leak afterwards. This is a great worry as we have no back-up, unlike the West Coast Rail people at Squamish. Removing the rad is horribly onerous and replacing it would be very expensive. Mechanic Dan Gledhill has at least temporarily solved the problem. All the more reason to re-assemble the "11" - the former 'Alpulp' GE locomotive. It is proposed to move it up to the I.H. Centre to facilitate the job and free up space in the Roundhouse, on the "Two Spot" track.

The "Mcdonald's" caboose (ex-CN) is now under shelter while Dan and Rollie are fabricating and installing platforms and steps at both ends. The interior has some rot in the floor and in the walls. Frank Holm is working on that problem.

The 'CL&R" big speeder is receiving final tweaks and touches, such as painting the interior. It is hoped to be on the rails soon but storage at the Roundhouse is now at a premium.

The "Lobster" - the flail mower has now logged more than 50 hours with no breakdowns and the right-of-way has been cleaned from the Station to Kitsuksis Trestle.



R. Lord (l.), Santa Rutherford and helper Elves ready to board the first 'Santa Train'.



The "Lobster" clears broom off the right-of-way by Stamp Ave.

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

Another incredible year in 2010!

The most visible restoration last year was in the Logging Department. The dream of presenting a 1940's logging "show" is now a reality.

Jack James and his crew, - "J. J. Logging"- have performed miracles. In 2009, the wooden spar and steam donkey became operational. Last year, they built and restored a gas-powered "Heel Boom" loader. Now, there is a complete old-time yarding and loading 'show'. We can complete the demonstration by driving the logs to the "dump" at the Mill pond on one of our historic logging trucks.

Our 1929 "No. 7" steam locomotive continues to run flawlessly, thanks to the dedicated efforts of the train crew. The 'Beaufort Gang' continues to hold up the train and we are grateful they do! The year ended with the annual "Santa Run", more successful than ever in 2010, with extra runs on the Sunday morning.

Maintenance of the right-of-way has become an increasing challenge. Hand brushing has been the norm. Last year, the line to Parksville was again brushed out, with much effort supplied by the "East Side Gang". Shortly after, 'Motorcar Operators West' brought 18 speeders to enjoy the run over the "Hump".

Last October, volunteers finished building our own track-mounted flail mower. Known as "The Lobster", it has already performed admirably, exceeding our expectations. This is truly the only way we can control vegetation growth beside the tracks.

We continue our relationship with BCIT, hosting four Conductor Training courses last year, with 6 more already planned for 2011.

On Labor Day weekend, we hosted our fourth annual Antique Truck Show. It was an impressive event, with large industrial trucks on display throughout the mill site. Some of these trucks had actually supplied the McLean Mill with logs in their working days, 60 years ago.

The crew in the Industrial Heritage Center crew continue to amaze. Two donated "Internationals" - a highway tractor and a flatdeck - have been restored. Another donor supplied aluminum wheels. In spite of funding cuts, work continues on other vehicles. The City's first excavator is being restored to operating condition as well.

We continue to work closely with the City of Port Alberni, with the support of Mayor McRae, the Council and City staff. We truly appreciate your support.

Last year, we lost our Gaming funding, so financially 2010 was challenging. We had to curtail some projects and defer others. In spite of this, our volunteers persevered. I would like to thank them all for their work to restore the Alberni Valley's proud history.

Three years ago our Society passed a motion to limit the Executive's term in office. Like with other "non-profit" organizations, this was done to rotate new people and new ideas, into our Society. I fully support this motion. Since I have served 14 years as President, this will be my last month in office. I have thoroughly enjoyed my extended term as your President. The Industrial Heritage Society is by far the most amazing group that I have ever been involved in. Your dedication is truly inspiring and humbling. Thanks for the wonderful ride.

Thank-you
Kevin Hunter – President



**IF YOU BELIEVE IN YOUR FUTURE,
PAST**

TURE, THEN DISCOVER YOUR

EDITOR'S NOTES

Restoration of the "Two-Spot"?

The "Two-Spot" - the 1912 "Shay" steam logging locomotive that spent its entire working life in the woods of the Alberni Valley before being given to the City in 1954 by H.R. Macmillan - was the first restoration project of the I.H.S. in the early 1980's. After taking part in the 'SteamExpo' week of EXPO '86 in Vancouver, the little locie pulled a tourist train along the Alberni waterfront on summer weekends and for special events until 1994, when the Boiler Inspector said that it was no longer safe to operate without major repairs. This included a boiler replacement that would cost - in 1994 funds - up to \$250,000. Since then, the 'Shay' has languished in storage in the APR Roundhouse, while the "Number Seven" 1929 "Baldwin" has become the workhorse for the summer tourist railway operation.

Since December, there has been renewed interest in possible restoration of the "Two-Spot". The IHS received encouragement from the Provincial Boiler Inspector to restore the old locie, but to operate it at a lower steam pressure, thereby making a costly total rebuild unnecessary. This 'go-ahead' from the Inspector would make a restoration much more financially feasible. Member Sandy Macham is coming up with cost estimates for the project and is doing inventory of all of the strategic parts necessary for the restoration. We want the Inspector to come and say precisely what needs to be done, so that hopes are not raised only to be dashed.

So, there is a buzz of interest amongst "Two-Spot" fans, who are thinking, "What a Centennial Project"! as both the City and the "Shay" will be celebrating One Hundred Years in 2012.

Financial Situation:

First, a 'Thank you' to the 12 members who paid for multi-year memberships. That put an extra \$200 into the coffers. Other people have made big donations, in cash and in kind, in the last year, to help keep us operating. More than \$7000 in cash was donated, including \$2700 during our Tag Day. (Another will be held on May 28.) Donations through the AV Museum get Tax receipts in return.

The Ben Schievink family donated the 1979 highway tractor, which is now our main 'workhorse'. The Gerry Nelson family donated a flatdeck truck with "Hi-ab". Several local businesses have been generous with parts and repairs. Kingsley Trucking has been extra-kind to us.—check out the fancy wheels on the "International" tractor!

Our largest source of revenue in 2010 was from hosting the BCIT Conductor Training courses. We cleared about \$5000 for each pair of courses or, \$10,000 in total. After being cut by the Gaming Branch in March, we were approved for a "Community Gaming Grant" of \$9000 in August, 2010. (We had received \$36,000 in 2009.) These monies may only be used for restoring equipment belonging to the I.H.S.; it cannot be used for maintenance on the "No.7", the McLean Steam Donkey, the "Hayes" log trucks, etc.

A piece of good news is that Coastal Community Credit Union has again agreed to be the 'Community Sponsor' of the Antique Truck Show at McLean Mill, September 3-5, through their "Coastal Spirit Fund" programme.

There will be an old truck display this summer in the 'loading bays' at the Train Station, to give visitors more to see down there. The space badly needed the clean-up that took place on Jan. 26. The display will be ready for the public in June.

**Any member wishing to receive the "News" electronically should contact the Editor, who will panic, but try!

MEMBERSHIP in the WVIHS

\$15 / year. Cash or cheque to:
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'SPOT NEWS'

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LOGGING WITH JACK

Bunkhouse memories:

Jack's parents and brothers had moved from Saskatchewan to the CANFOR logging camp at Anetz Lake, in the Nimpkish Valley in the early 1940's. Jack's dad died suddenly when Jack was only 14. That was one reason why he had to start work then. His Mom moved back to Vancouver shortly afterwards.

The three James brothers needed accommodation and the Superintendent, feeling a bit of sympathy for the young fellows, allowed them to stay in one end of "Bunkhouse 35" - a bunkhouse that used to be the camp Surveyor's. The Office had been in one end; the bedroom in the other. Typical of many Camp buildings, it was designed for transport on a rail car to the next camp site - a rectangular shack with a bedroom for four loggers at either end and the services - wood stove, washing and drying area—in the center. That is also where the door was to outside.

Jack's first bunkhouse was 'deluxe' as there was a shower, even a toilet! and there were only the three brothers in their room instead of the usual four. When she left for Vancouver, Jack's mom left her gas-powered washing machine for the boys. Jack observed that the fellows at the other end of the bunkhouse were 'haywire bug-gers', which made it a bit harder to keep the place clean. There was Phelps - a faller and Dave Taylor - a mechanic— and 2 others

"Red Strap" jeans were popular in those days, both for work and after work. Dave Taylor used to say, as he headed over to the Camp 'Commissary' store, "I'm doing the laundry"... and he would come back with new clothes...and a new pair of 'Red Strap' jeans.

One Sunday, he said, "Well, I guess I've got quite a few pairs". A quick inventory revealed 10 to 12 pair of jeans laying in the corner with 20 or 30 pairs of shorts. As he was a mechanic in a dirty workshop, the shorts were any colour but white!

Mother James had left a big copper boiler for the boys, along with the washing machine so, Taylor said, "I think I'll do some laundry." He dumped all of his shorts into the boiler, Next, he dumped in bleach. "That should do it", said he, as he stoked up the fire under the boiler.

Over the next two weeks, he would periodically add a bit more bleach and water until finally on Sunday (six-day work week until 1946), he said to Jack, "They should be done now."

They were "done", all right! In the boiler was an glutinous, giant blob! Everyone in camp came to Bunkhouse 35 to check out "Taylor's laundry"

Bunkhouse 35 was "home" to the James boys until it burned down one night, when the stove over-heated. Jack was awakened by the sound of breaking glass. Phelps was throwing his bags out of the window. Jack called, "What are you doing?" Phelps replied, "I can't get out the door. The place is burning down." The faller had not even bothered to wake up his room mates!

Jack noted that the first man up was generally the best dressed. One time, he had to wear his "zoot" (town) suit pants to work as he was last one up! He said that you might end up with one caulk boot and a shoe, if you weren't careful!

FRANKLIN RIVER CAMP 'A' 1936

The first logging camp. Note the **bunkhouses** with big water tower in the middle. Note the empty 'skeleton car' and spare wheels at lower left. Loaded cars in the middle.

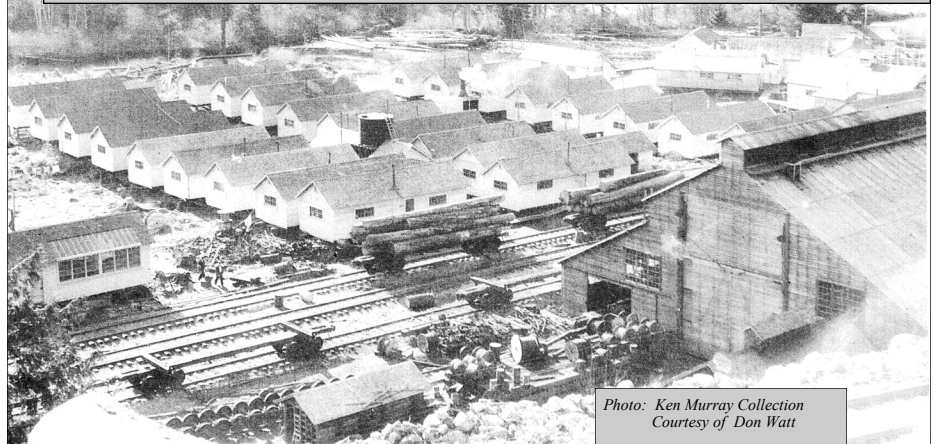


Photo: Ken Murray Collection
Courtesy of Don Watt



Photo: H. Thomson

HERITAGE COMMISSION AWARD 2010 - Jack James

The "Boss" with the crew of "J.J. Logging" (Ltd.) - winner of the award for the contribution to the preservation of heritage in the Alberni Valley.

Disappeared Communities in the Alberni Valley

6

BAINBRIDGE

At one time, Bainbridge was a thriving community in the Alberni Valley, just west of the McLean Mill. There was a school, a store, houses, a Community Hall, a sawmill, a railway logging operation - even a CPR station! The sawmill opened in 1917. It specialized in cutting very long fir timbers. The carriage in the mill could handle logs 120-foot long - producing timbers so long that they straddled three rail cars!

Long timbers meant that long logs had to be hauled in to the mill. "Disconnect trucks" were used on the early logging railroads as they could be spaced under the load, adjusted according to the length of the logs. The problem was that there were no air brake systems on the 'disconnects'. Brakemen were supposed to apply hand brakes on each 'truck' at the top of a grade.

In 1923, there was a 'runaway' near Stamp Falls, when a log train broke away from the Bainbridge Company locie. As was common in those days, the crew and some loggers were riding on the load. The brakemen could not get at the hand brakes quickly enough to stop the train. Two men were killed and two badly injured in the resulting derailment. The inquest found the employer at fault and the Workmens' Compensation Board ruled that the railway had to adopt new practices and equipment.

The owners had little timber left on the 'claim'. They decided to close down rather than comply. The Mill burned down in 1927. The school closed, houses were gradually torn down and rebuilt in other places like Alberni. A visitor to the site would have trouble knowing that a bustling town had once stood there.

Connections: Tom Maher's grandfather was blacksmith at the Mill, commuting every week to work by horse and buggy. Dave Tranfield grew up in a house on the mill site. His dad later took the house down and rebuilt it at Nanoose.



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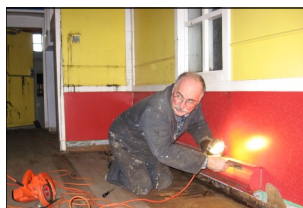
Advertisement in the July 1926 edition of the "West Coast Lumberman" the year before the Mill closed. Magazine kindly loaned by R. Hill, an I.H.S. member from Sooke.

* * * *

MORE MEMBERS AT WORK



Fabricating platform for the 'McDonalds caboose'.



CABOOSE WORK
Frank Holm (above) strips rotted floor.

(l.) Rollie Hurst & Dan Gledhill are building platforms and stairs at both ends.
Photos: D. Hooper

(r.) Clean up at Train Station - moving "Potter" car out to make space.
(below) Bill Cherwak works on skidder.



MEMBERS at WORK

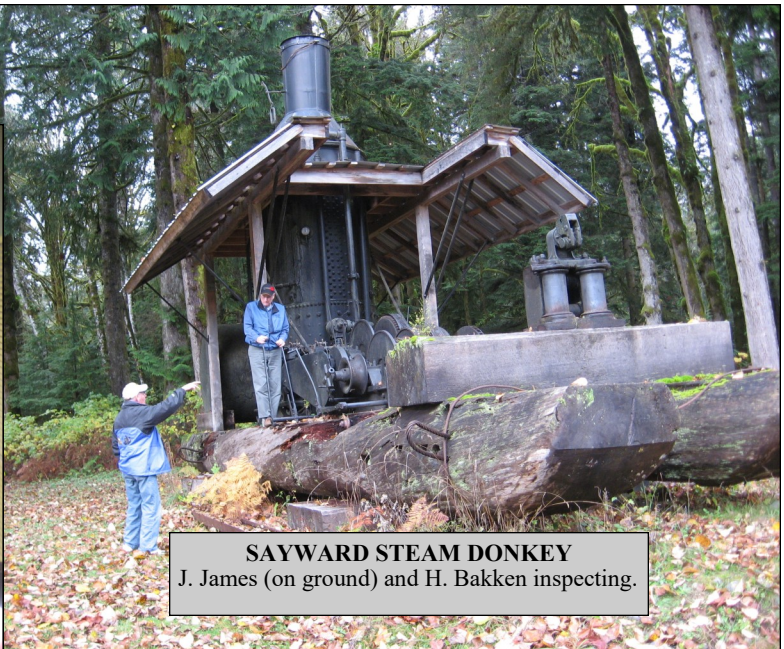


Unloading Rails Bee - January 29, 2011
(l.) R. Catto operates crane truck while Big Steve steadies the load.
(below) J. Jansma being trained by Sam while K. Fyfe moves concrete slabs into place.



Checking Christmas lights
I. McIntyre & G. Murton (r.)

B.C.I.T. CONDUCTOR TRAINING
(l. to r.) Instructor John Wetzel, Irv McIntyre and Rollie Hurst (Engineer) check in with the students before starting out with a day on the rails. The "Roundhouse Hilton" (trailer) is used as a classroom.
Photos: D. Hooper



SAYWARD STEAM DONKEY
J. James (on ground) and H. Bakken inspecting.

SANTA TRAIN 2010
(below) John Land (Engineer) checks decorations.



(above)
Bob East cleans up after log delivery.



(right)
'Soup' Campbell with almost finished water tank for the water tower at Mclean Mill.

TRUCKING NEWS

The Truckers have stayed busy this winter with several ongoing projects, log-collecting for the McLean Mill, as well as regular maintenance. Someone seems to be at the Heritage Center every day.

Les Stevens continues to work on the City's first excavator - a 'Byers' shovel. John Reeves has the 'C-cab' of the 1918 "White" pretty well restored so the rear deck is the next challenge. Tom Maher and Russ McCoy continue work on the 1944 "International" 6 x 6.

Lorne Bratt, (l.) recovering from his surgery, has been back finishing the exhaust system on the "Rowe" TD-14. Vic Laughlin continues work on the 1965 'Mercury

(Bracht's first truck), when he is not distracted by other projects. We are thinking of members Tony Super and Bob Dingsdale, who are presently undergoing medical treatment or just home from hospital. Get Better!!

Ben Schievink has taken on the 1955 "Hayes" (with the Rolls-Royce engine) as a project, working on finishing the cab and front end of the truck. (See photo to the right, below.)

An assorted crew has re-assembled one of the old, original hard rubber-tired "Ross" carriers from the McLean Mill so that it can be put back on display out there - part of trying to create space in the shop! Tony ("Find a bigger hammer") Super is shown below re-attaching one of the solid rubber wheels.

Last summer, Gerry Nelson donated his "International" flatdeck, with Hi-Ab, to the I.H.S. Gerry and his wife Mary are seen (below left) with Dave Tranfield when the family came by the I.H. Centre last month to check up on progress. They were very pleased!

(right) Joe Kalugin (l.) with Les Stevens
Joe came for a visit on his 84th birthday to see the machine that he used to use for ditching on his farm.



Crew with a load of prime fir from Echo cottages site (from left) J. Heid, R. Catto, D. Tranfield, H. Bakken.



Photos: D. Hooper