

SPOT NEWS

WESTERN VANCOUVER ISLAND INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE SOCIETY

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Issue 64



February 2017

Notice: Feb. 22, 2017 at 7 p.m.
— **AGM** at “Echo Centre”, Port Alberni
Guest Speaker: Dr. Jamie Morton
“General Jack Stewart—the “Stewart” in
“Bloedel Stewart & Welch”

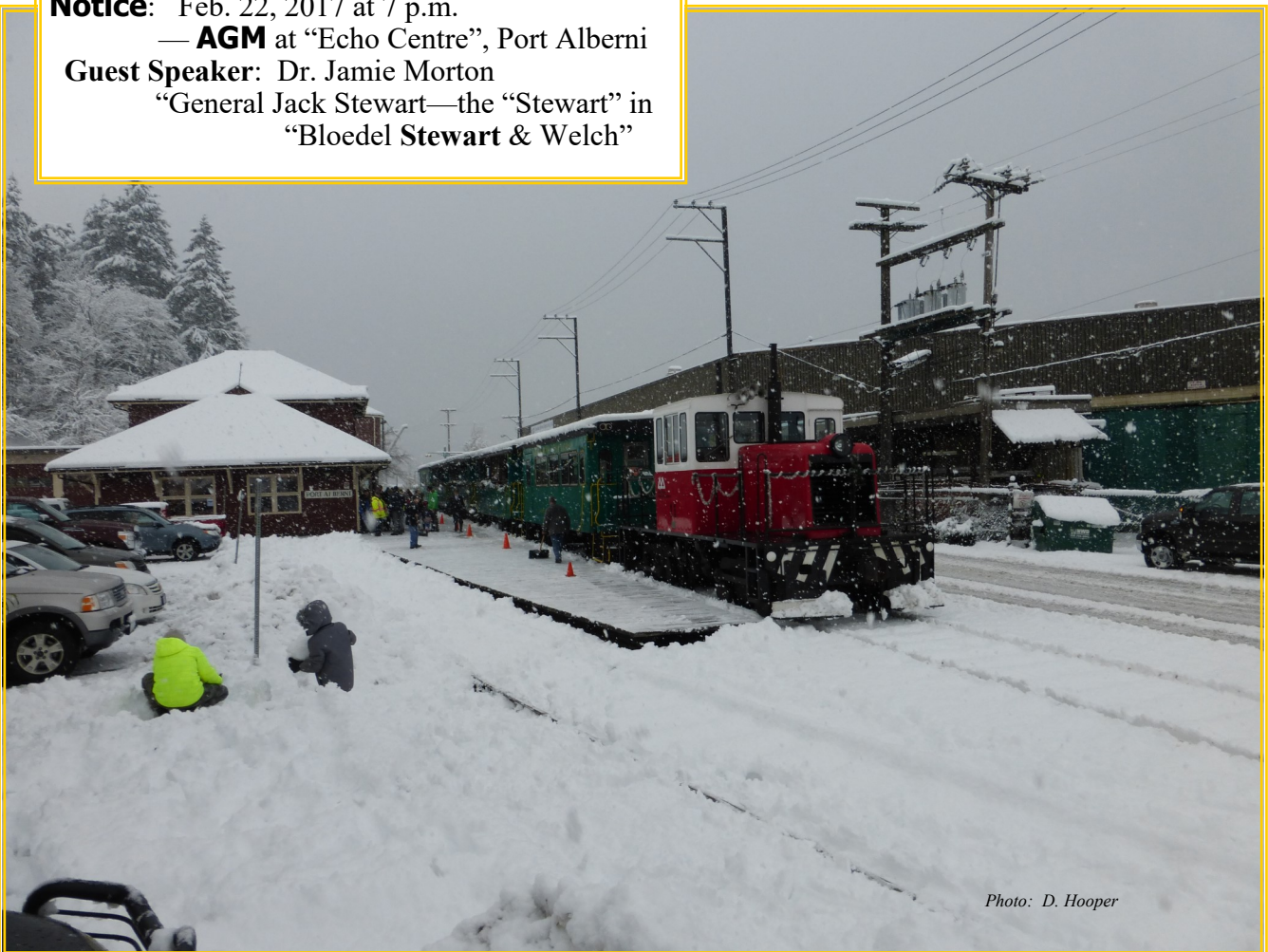


Photo: D. Hooper

PORT ALBERNI TRAIN STATION - December 2016
“MBL No. 11” - the 1942 GE diesel-electric pulled the “Santa Trains” this time. There were more than 1400 passengers, in spite of the harsh weather conditions.

ALBERNI PACIFIC RAILWAY

As is usual, this is the slow season for the APR—maintenance time and thinking of the coming season. “No. 7” is stripped for boiler inspection and ultra-sound testing. As you may be aware, the new “McLean Mill Society” is now responsible for the Mill site. The I.H.S. and the MMS are in negotiations re. what rail service they would like to offer this year. Things are complicated by the issue of track conditions on the line to the Mill. Stay tuned.

Another group of BCIT student Conductors were training on the APR in November.

The “Santa Trains” in early December hosted more than 1400 riders, in spite of the miserable cold, snowy conditions. On the Saturday, volunteers were shovelling steadily to keep the platform clear. (See photo P. 10). The “MBL No. 11” (left) did the work as “No. 7” was already stripped for maintenance.



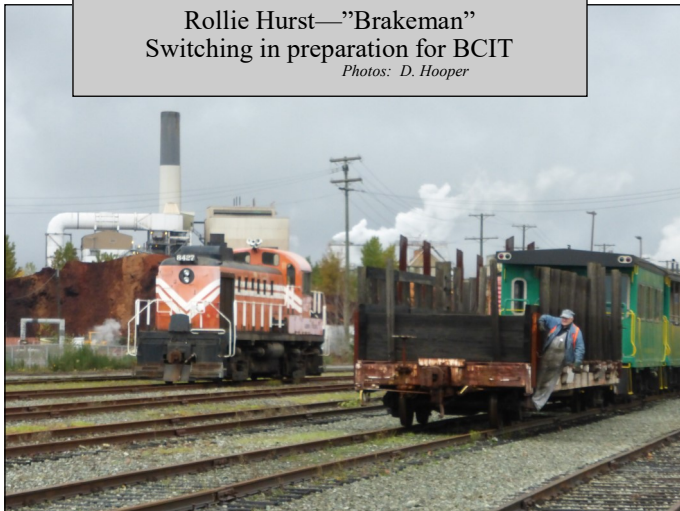
Engineer Ted Mollet is ready to depart.
(Below)
Waiting for the next train.



Work on the 1923 “Baldwin” - CANFOR ‘112’
Work progresses slowly on the loci collected from Beaver Cove in 2015. Above, the Brake cylinders are being re-installed after restoration. Below, a new rear bumper has been fabricated for under the cab. The pony wheels/front axle assembly have been straightened and will be re-installed this spring.



New planks—Pete Geddes at work



Rollie Hurst—”Brakeman”
Switching in preparation for BCIT
Photos: D. Hooper



GEORGE DINGSDALE—Logging Truck Driver

Ed. Note. This article is a continuation of the series on logging truck drivers. "Thank you" to George's son, Bob—also a log truck driver—for the use of photos and information.

George Dingsdale drove the family from Fernie to Vancouver Island when he was 14 years old – before there was a "Trans-Canada Highway". In 1940, he was working for the Mannings' "Sproat Lake Sawmill". They needed a "driver-mechanic" to keep their 1936 'Fords' running. As it was wartime, it was hard to find new trucks and they just had to find a way to keep the old trucks operational. By the end of the War, Mannings decided to replace these trucks as they wore out, with contract drivers and trucks.

In 1946, George borrowed the money to buy a new "Ford" 2-ton (cab, engine, frame) from 'Chatwin Motors'. It came with a "V-8" flathead (85 hp.), a five-speed transmission and hydraulic brakes. He sent the new truck to Vancouver, where "FABCO" set it up for hauling logs and added an 11-ton "Columbia" trailer, with 8-foot bunks. Total cost? - \$7000 – and he paid it off in two years.

[I asked Bob why "Fords" did not continue to show up in logging after the 1940's. His response was that "Kenworth", "Mack", "Hayes" and "Pacific" all came out with stronger trucks, with bigger engines and better transmissions. - *Ed. note*]

George drove his new 'Ford' for Mannings until they shut down their Sproat Lake operations, when they sold out their timberlands to "Bloedel Stewart & Welch". They moved their mill to Roger Street, in Port Alberni – between "Hetheringtons" and "J.W. Berry's" shops. They had timber blocks above Cherry Creek – on the "Hump" and above "Coombs

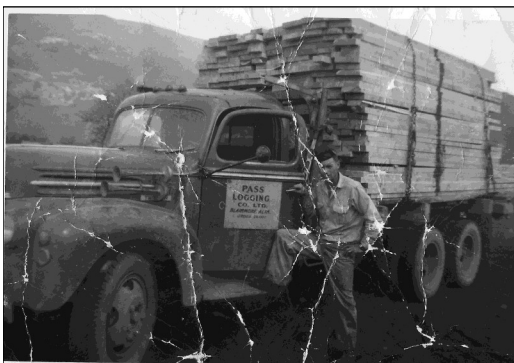
1946 "Ford" Two-ton - George Dingsdale (r.) A careful look at the passenger door shows how tall young Bob was then!

Country Candy".

George hauled timber from there down to Roger Street. In 1950, he got a second truck -- a used "Diamond-T".

In 1952, Mannings shut down their Alberni operations and moved back to the Alberta Foothills, at Blairmore, where they set up another sawmill. They invited George to come with his trucks to work for them. George put a flatdeck on the "Ford" - no trailer—for delivering lumber and kept the "Diamond T" for log hauling.

(*Cont. on p. 8.*)



(right) 1946 "Ford" as a lumber truck in Alberta.



"WHEN LOGS WERE LOGS!"

George (l.) with Bern Parker - hauling for "Valley Logging", down the "Export Road."

*Note the 'cheese blocks' holding the logs in place—No stakes!

Photos: from Bob Dingsdale Collection

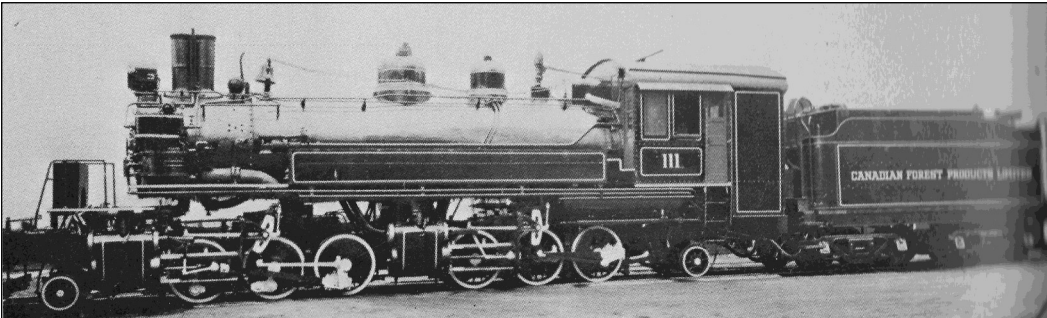
(left)

1942 "Diamond T" hauling logs in the Alberta Foothills. (Note the Rocky Mountains in the background. Note also the short logs—no trailer.

"MALLET" LOCOMOTIVES on VANCOUVER ISLAND

Only two "Mallet" locomotives worked in the BC forest industry. Both worked on Vancouver Island; one—the "1006" - a 1929 "Baldwin" 2-6-6-2T—at Franklin River Camp. They were big, heavy and powerful mainline locomotives, with tremendous traction.

The "111" - a "Baldwin" 2-6-6-2 as well - at 145 tons was the largest locomotive to work on Vancouver Island. CANFOR bought it from Weyerhaeuser" (Longview, WA.) to use as a mainline loci in the



CANFOR "No. 111" - fresh from its rebuild for service in the Nimpkish Valley

To improve visibility for the crew, the top of the saddle tank was lowered, with the remaining space filled with scrap iron to keep weight over the drivers. The back of the cab was closed in and the tender was added for fuel and water, to give more range. Note the twin smoke-stacks.

Nimpkish Valley. This locomotive is seen in the first photo (*left*).

"Mallet" steam engines were invented by a Swiss engineer, Anatole Mallet. You see TWO cylinders in each photo, meaning four cylinders powering twelve drive wheels.

The second photo shows the "1006". It had a "compound" engine, meaning that the steam gets used twice--high pressure steam goes into the first cylinder

(r.) 1929 "Baldwin" Mallet at Franklin River. At 120 tons, this was the biggest loci at Franklin River. It came to Franklin from the "Bloedel Stewart & Welch" railroad 'show' at Menzies Bay, (north of Campbell River), where it was the "No. 6". This was also an articulated locomotive, which helped on the rough track and tight curves typical of a coastal logging operation.

Photos: Ray Barron Collection

der before going into the second cylinder at lower pressure. In the photo, one can see the smaller, high-pressure cylinder under the "LTD" and the larger, low-pressure cylinder at the front—and TWO sets of drive wheels = a lot of traction, espe-

cially with the saddle tank over the drivers.

End of an Era

The MB "1006" was scrapped at Franklin, after the closure of the rail operations there in 1957.

The CANFOR "111" lasted a bit longer but this locomotive was scrapped in 1961, after that operation dieselized. In the photo at right, one can see the boiler being lifted off the frame.

The "113" and "112" remained in service through the 1960's but Steam's day was done in the Nimpkish Valley by 1971.

IN MEMORIAM—DAN GLEDHILL—1949-2016

It is with deep sadness that we report the passing of Dan Gledhill, the "Alberni Pacific" mechanic who has been caring for and maintaining our "No. 7" "Baldwin" steam locomotive since the APR began providing regular summer excursions from Port Alberni Station out to the McLean Mill Nation Historic Site in 2001. He worked for the APR two days a week and often volunteered a third day, as a member of the train crew or mechanicking. Dan knew the old steamer better than anyone else and his knowledge and experience will be sorely missed.

Dan was a Welder and Power Engineer by trade and worked in industry in many different places but, his first love grew to be old machinery and Steam. His son Rod recounts that his Dad fell in love with steam in the 1960's and '70's, when he got involved with the "Lake Whatcom Railway" group in Washington State, working on the "Northern Pacific" 1070. It was down there that he became interested in "Industrial Archeology—pulling old steam donkeys out of the bush for restoration.

Dan worked as a "Fireman" on the steam locies at the Forest Museum in Duncan and helped with the restoration of the "Mayo Shay" there. He also volunteered with the Ladysmith Rail Heritage group in the 1980's, working on their "No. 11".



(Below)
Checking the safety valve
on "Number Seven"



(Above) Dan in the cab of the "Plymouth"
Gary Murton (l.) and Gordon Blake.

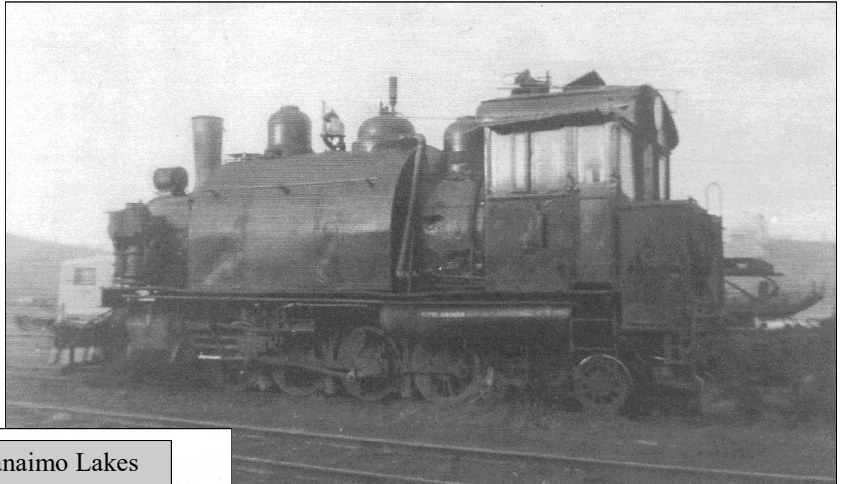
(Below) Dan & Rod working in the smoke-
box of "Number Seven".

(below) Dan in his "Office" - the Tool Crib at the APR
Roundhouse. This was the last photo taken of Dan.

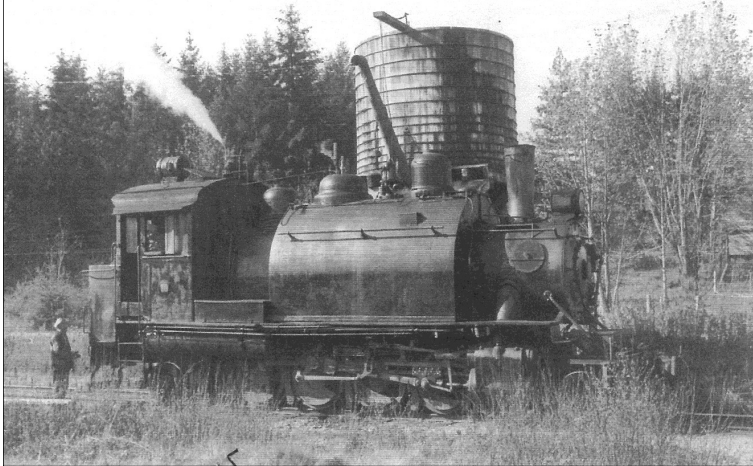


"ALBERNI PACIFIC" "NO. 7" AS "COMOX LOGGING" "NO. 18"

When rail logging ended at "MB" Franklin River Camp, most of the locomotives were scrapped. The 1929 "Baldwin" 2-8-2T (ex-APL "No. 7") survived and was moved to the East Coast of the Island, to "MB's" Nanaimo River operation. It was leased to "Comox Logging" for a short period, around 1960, before returning to "Macmillan-Bloedel" to finish its working life.



APR's "No. 7" as "CL&R No. 18" at Nanaimo Lakes



"Comox Logging & Railway" "Number 18"

Photos from the Ken Soderlund Collection via Ray Barron.

RAY BARRON COLLECTION

Ray has an interesting and varied collection of railroad photos and memorabilia and is well-known for his magazine articles on the rail-logging era. Below is an interesting document on the APR's "No. 7", when it was working as "1055" for "MB" at Nanaimo River—a copy of the monthly "Inspection & Repair Report". Check the details! Ray rode with Engineer Pete McGovern in the cab of the "1055". "Thank you", Ray!

BOILER FORM No. 1.

COMPANY'S MONTHLY LOCOMOTIVE WASHOUT, INSPECTION AND REPAIR REPORT
COPY TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE CHIEF INSPECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF RAILWAYS

Month of February, 1964 Type of locomotive Baldwin { No. 1055
 D.R. No. 265

Operated by Macmillan Bloedel + Powell River COMPANY MB
Nanaimo River at Nanaimo River, B.C., I inspected the boiler of locomotive No. 1055 and the appurtenances thereof; that all defects disclosed by said inspection have been repaired except as noted on the back of this report; that to the best of my knowledge and belief said boiler and appurtenances are in proper condition for use and safe to operate with a steam pressure of 200 pounds per square inch.

1. Is steam gauge reliable? Yes.
 2. Safety valves are set to pop at 200 lbs. 204 lbs.
 3. Are both injectors in good condition? Yes.
 4. Is blow-off cock in working order? Yes.
 5. Were steam leaks from all appliances repaired? Yes.
 6. Condition of air brake equipment Good.
 7. Condition of draw gear between engine and tender Good.
 8. Condition of draught gear on front and rear ends Good.
 9. Condition of driving and running gear Good.
 10. Was boiler washed out? Yes.
 11. Waterglass and gauge cock spindles cleaned out? Yes.
 12. Were all washout plugs removed? Yes.
 13. Condition of threads on plugs and in holes Good.
 Kind of fuel used Oil

14. Were leaks from boiler repaired? Yes.
 15. No. of staybolts broken None No. renewed 2
 16. Condition of firebox sheets Good.
 17. Was crown sheet examined with torch? Yes.
 18. Condition of flues Good.
 19. Was fusible plug cleaned? Yes.
 20. Condition of smoke-stack; spark arrester Good.
 21. Condition of ash-pan, dampers and netting Good.
 22. Is fire pump and hose in good condition? Yes.
 23. Condition of tender Yes.
 24. Is valid annual certificate on display in cab? Yes.
 25. Date of last hydrostatic test by certificate April 3, 1963

Signed Pete McGovern Examiner.
 Signed Jim Smith Officer in Charge.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that to the best of my knowledge and belief the above report is correct.

NOTE:—If necessary, use other side for "Remarks."

ORIGINAL OF THIS FORM MUST BE POSTED IN THE CAB OF THE LOCOMOTIVE. (PART III, RULE 65b)

6 (Over)

"RIDING THE WAVE"

Building Port Alberni in the Boom Years of the Forest Industry– John Reeves

John arrived in Port Alberni as a young man in 1947, when the Post-war boom was under way. The new "Bloedel Stewart & Welch" pulp mill was under construction and a lot of other building was happening, related to the Mill project: a camp for the construction workers, housing for the new families and the new "Woodward's" store uptown, for example.

John was an Apprentice Cabinet Maker and found work with "Arrowsmith Wood Products". One of his first jobs was making the showcases for "Russell's Jewellers" new store on Argyle Street. He built counters and fixtures for the new "Woodward's".

In 1950, there was already an expansion taking place at the Pulp Mill, under the big firm, "Dominion Construction". John was offered a job and he jumped at the opportunity. He observed that he should have paid "Dominion" for all that he learned on that project.

In 1953, an unusual job that came his way was cutting up equipment scrapped at the closure of the "APL Camp One" rail logging operation. All of the machinery had been hauled to the junction of the "APL" and "E&N" tracks at Bainbridge. John was set to cutting up the skeleton cars. Then, the boss told him to cut up a tank car into three pieces. Next thing he knew, there was oil oozing out of the cut. It had not been drained! Then, it caught fire! John did not work on cutting up the steam locomotives or yarders. That work was done in the "Somass Millyard". He remembers that the Japanese scrap buyers were quite particular about separating out the brass and copper fittings into barrels but that these "disappeared" off the dock. The Longshoremen knew nothing about it.

Opportunity continued to knock in the Alberni Valley. From the Pulp Mill, John went to work with "A&B Construction" of Nanaimo, working as a carpenter. They built the "Royal Bank" on Third Avenue. Next, he was offered the Foreman's job building the 125-man camp for the crew working on the new Ash River Powerhouse at Great Central Lake.

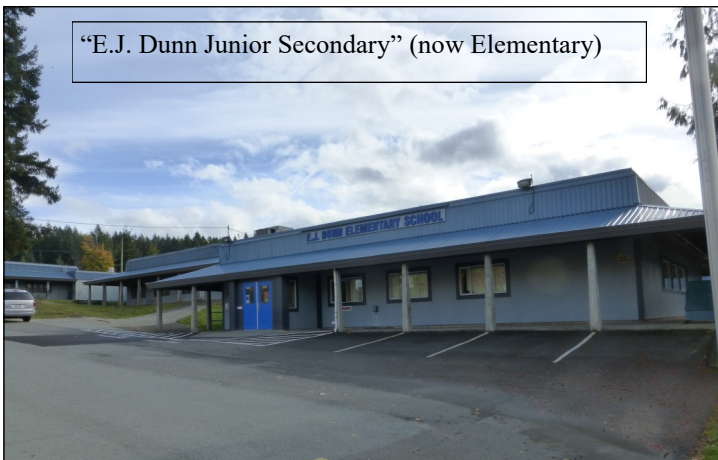
On the completion of that job, John was hired by "D. Robinson Construction" of Nanaimo to be Foreman of the 'Federal Building' (Post Office) project on Argyle Street. After two months, he was offered the position of 'General Superintendent' when the old 'Super' suddenly quit. A year and a half later, Robinson offered John the job of General Superintendent for the whole company. Once again, "Opportunity knocked."

The next project was a real challenge – building housing, helipad and the Light Plant at the Cape St. James lighthouse, off the southern tip of Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands.) This is one of the most exposed sites on the Coast. Several other jobs at isolated places followed but John started to feel that he was missing his family, especially the children in their growing years.

"Federal Building & Post Office on Argyle St.



"E.J. Dunn Junior Secondary" (now Elementary)



He took a job with "Souther Construction", a local contractor. They were looking for someone to supervise the construction of the new "E.J. Dunn Junior Secondary School". With all of the new families in town, the existing schools were bursting at the seams. (cont'd. on P. 8)

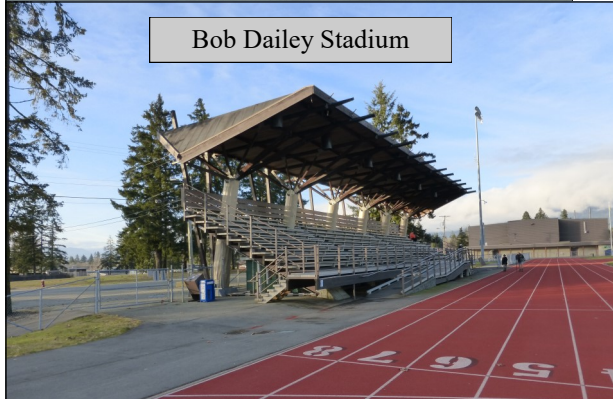
“Riding the Wave” (cont’d.)

In the Sixties, half a dozen new schools had to be built to handle all of the children. In 1964, Mr. Souther offered John a partnership. In 1970, Reeves became sole owner of the company and ran it for the next twenty years.

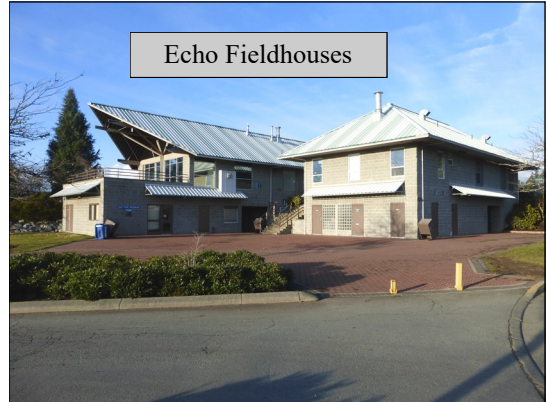
John actively sought out jobs in the pulp and paper industry. He liked the heavy construction projects although he was happy to take on the other jobs. One of the jobs was Bob Dailey Stadium and the 'field houses', built for the BC Summer Games in 1992. Two other structures built by John and his workers was the Bank of Montreal (3rd and Argyle) and the “Maht Mahs” gym at Tseshaht. One could say that John has left his mark on the Valley!



Bank of Montreal—3rd & Argyle



Bob Dailey Stadium



Echo Fieldhouses

*(Continued from Page 3—***GEORGE DINGSDALE***—Truck Driver)*

George came back to the Alberni Valley in 1954 and was hired to drive by Ken Mackenzie (“Stamp River Timber”) Mackenzie bought the “Diamond T” and asked George to drive it. In 1955, Mackenzie bought two brand-new 1955 “Mack B-60S”, with 15-ton “Columbia” trailers and 10 ft. Bunks. George’s first job with the “Mack” was hauling the timber from Emblems’ farm, at the end of Beaver Creek Road.

George drove for “Stamp River” till 1966, when he hired on at MB’s “Franklin River Logging Division”. There were openings at “Franklin” when the new “Cameron Division” started up with new “Hayes HDX” and “Pacific P-16” trucks. Many of the senior drivers from “Franklin” jumped at the opportunity, creating the openings for other drivers, like George Dingsdale, who stayed with “Franklin River” till his retirement.

(Below) George with 1959 “Hayes” “H-53” at Franklin River.

Photos: Bob Dingsdale Collection

(left)
“Two “Macks””
Young Bob on the fender of his Dad’s new 1955 “Mack” B-60S—“Stamp River Timber”.



MEMBERS at WORK—Hank Bakken & the model “Challenger”

The “Challenger” was the ultimate ‘off-highway’ logging truck and was built in Port Alberni by John Casanave. He incorporated all of the features that he could think of, to make it a better truck—for the driver, the mechanic and the owner.

The 1:6 scale model began as a project in Bob Waldhaus’ “Metalwork” class in the local high-school (ADSS) but, when the Instructor retired, the project stalled. When the old school closed down, Casanave collected the unfinished pieces .. and waited.

I.H.S. member Hank Bakken took up the challenge and has been working on the model “Challenger” for the past year.



(l.) Hank and the model ‘Challenger’ - Jan. 30

(r.) The real “Challenger” with driver, Don Watt.

Photo: Don Watt Collection

(below)

The model ‘Challenger’ on October 12, 2016.

(bottom of page)

Model on Nov. 29, 2016

Photos: D. Hooper



I.H.S. AROUND TOWN



TRAIN CREW AT STATION
 (l. to r.) D. Newman, T. Mollet, B. Walker
(below)
“Old-time logging site”—McLean Mill.
 “On Winter Shutdown”



“SPEAK OUT” EVENT at Echo Centre Jan. 21
 I.H.S. members joined other community organizations, showing what we do in the community.
 (l. to r.) T. Mollet, B. Simpson, M. Hobson.



(above right) **Snow Removal crew**—“Santa Trains”
(Below) D. Watt, L. Stevens
 1938 “Mack” and 1951 “Hayes” chain-drive at Echo.



Notes from the Editor

An increase in the Membership fee to \$20 appears imminent. The operations and activities of the I.H.S. in 2017 will be in a “fluid” situation until the negotiations with the new McLean Mill Society are concluded. For information on I.H.S. activities between “Spot News” editions, check the “Facebook” page for the “Western Vancouver Island Industrial Heritage Society.”

The Editor wishes to acknowledge the sponsors of pages of this Edition. Please let them know that you appreciate their support.

A special “Shout-Out” to Scott Robinson of “Kingsley Trucking” for his continued support. While our main workhorse, “Ol’ Bertha” - the highway tractor—is undergoing major repairs, “Kingsley Trucking” has loaned a 2000 “Volvo” tractor to keep us mobile.

“THANK YOU; THANK YOU!”
 See you at the AGM on Feb. 22

MEMBERSHIP IN THE W.V.I.I.H.S.
 \$15 / year Cash or cheque to:
 Barry Miller
 6601 Golden Eagle Way
 Nanaimo V9V 1P8
 Tel. 250-390-7508

“SPOT NEWS”

“SPOT NEWS” is published thrice yearly and is a benefit of membership in the I.H.S.... and you are supporting the preservation of Industrial heritage on Vancouver Island. Send queries or material for articles to D. Hooper
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