



Vancouver Island LOGGING MODELERS' MEET June 13, 2010  
McLean Mill, Port Alberni For Information, phone Ken at 250-724-4698



# SPOT NEWS

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## Western Vancouver Island Industrial Heritage Society

Issue 44



June 2010



Ex-APR "No. 6" visited by I.H.S. members at Woss Camp. Can we raise the money to "Bring "No. 6" Home? Photo: D. Hooper



### REPLACING TIES in front of A.P.R. Roundhouse, May 1, 2010

Volunteers dug out and replaced the ties on the second track into the lean-to beside the Roundhouse. Nearly all were rotten and the track could no longer bear the weight of a locomotive. Ken Fyfe's "Kubota" excavator was an invaluable tool for the job. One hundred fifty ties were removed; 100 were re-laid that day with the remainder laid on May 15. See more photos on P. 2 & 3.

Photo: D. Hooper



# ALBERNI PACIFIC RAILWAY NEWS

## REPLACING TRACK AT ROUNDHOUSE



R. Hurst (l.), K.G. Campbell, Eric Campbell pull spikes to start the project.



(above) Ken Fyfe lifts rails (still connected) to the side, to expose rotten ties.



Cribbing and some ties at the Dry Creek bridge were replaced during another work-bee in April. It rained, of course.

(right) H. Grist and Don Wigen inspect the bridge.

(left below) Ken Fyffe's excavator lifted rail to the side, to expose & remove the bad ties.

*Photos: D. Hooper*

## DRY CREEK BRIDGE WORK



(below) BCIT Conductor Trainees with I.H.S. members R. Hurst (Eng.), G. Murton (r.) & Irv McIntyre (lower left)

(above) "New" ties laid in the annex. (l. to r.) R. Gair, N. Malbon, Eric & K.G. Campbell.  
(below) "Singin' in the Rain" - Dry(?) Creek Bridge (l. to r.) Jonathan Peck, Don Wigen, Ken Fyffe, Bob the Welder.



The steam tourist season began April 30 with the arrival of 127 visitors from a cruise ship docked in Nanaimo. However, the season had already begun earlier in the month when the "Number 7" picked up a load of passengers at the Barclay Hotel platform. These were participants in the Island Corridor Foundation forum held in Port Alberni April 23.

The steam loci had just passed the annual boiler inspection earlier in the week so, the scheduling had been tight!

April was a very busy month that actually stretched the organization. As well as the steam trips, the RS-3 diesel was run nine days straight for two consecutive BCIT Conductor Training sessions with at least four I.H.S. members working each day. Irv McIntyre and Engineer Rollie Hurst worked the whole time. (The RS-3 has performed flawlessly since the repair of the motor-generator in January by Sterling Stump & Co.)

There was one hic during the BCIT courses, when the diesel started to de-rail at the McLean Mill switch. Fortunately, only one wheel went off-track and the loci was re-railed with relative ease by the students, under the direction of Rollie and other I.H.S. personnel. Did they think that this was just part of the course?

As noted on the cover page, one track into the Roundhouse annex has been re-laid so that locis can again use it. When the '113' arrives, secure space will be at a premium and this gives access. We are still trying to find funding for moving the "113" from Woss.



### MEMBERS at WORK



BEFORE

**Spring Clean-up at McLean Mill**  
 More than 20 volunteers spent the day at the Mill to ready the site for the summer. The big job was burning the collapsed annex to Kermit Green (the sawyer's) house. [See photos to the left.]  
 The annex was for the indoor plumbing for the house and it showed how accommodation for the workers modernized during the lifetime of the Mill.  
 Photos of the clean-up run down the left margin of the page.



#### Re-railing the RS-3

Rollie Hurst places 're-railer' in front of the lead wheels of the diesel to force the trailing wheel back up on the rail. BCIT Instructor observes the action.



Side view



#### Logging Crew at the Mill

The logging crew fired up the 'Heathcote' TD-14 to skid a log to the Machine shop, using the arch. There, they are making up a heel-boom to hang on the Spar tree, to demonstrate old-time log-loading this summer.  
 (above) Readyng the line on the arch; (above right) Jack James shows Tony Super proper technique for choker-setting; (below) Jake Heid supervises the skidding.



(above) **The Burn Pile**  
J. James, combustible materials specialist with assistant,

(right) **The Inspector**  
D. Tranfield, with assistant, Auburne, checks up on the crew.



Photos:  
D. Hooper

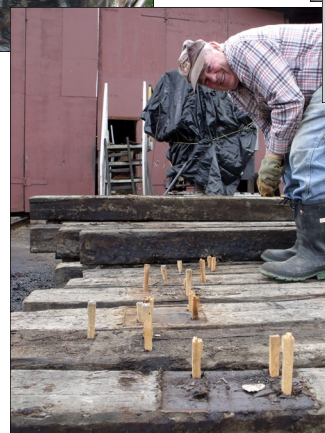


#### (1. below) Replacing Track- Roundhouse

Len Evans plugs spike holes to make ties last longer. (These ties were salvaged from the Barclay 'pole spur' in 2008.)



AFTER



**"It's all in the wrists, Eric."**  
 Uncle Soup gives pointers on the use of tie tongs to his nephew.





## Trucking Lives in the Alberni Valley

In the last issue, Ed and Alex Spencer recounted some of their earliest experiences driving trucks in the 1940's and early 1950's. Alex survived his first accident and Ed, his first brush with the Law.

### Ed

When Ed came back to Alberni (not Port Alberni) from the war in 1945, the first thing was to find a job. Business was booming. Bloedel, Stewart & Welch (BS&W) was going to build a pulp mill. There were the big mills: BS&W at Great Central Lake and the 'Somass'; H.R. MacMillan's "Alberni Pacific Lumber" and the "Plywoods"; and there were the railway logging camps at Franklin River, APL Camp One (Beaver Creek) and at Great Central Lake supplying the mills. Truck logging was about to take off as the last of the easily-accessible valley bottom forests were being logged.

The period 1945-60 was a period of great transition. It was the time of the formation of the really large integrated forestry companies such as Macmillan-Bloedel and the creation of huge forest holdings in TFL's (Tree Farm Licenses.) It was the end of the era of Steam.

The logging railroads shut down: BS&W's Great Central Lake rail operations were first to close, about 1948, followed by APL 'Camp One' in 1953 and lastly, Franklin River in 1957. The transition was a big challenge to management as it was critical that the log supply to the mills not be interrupted during the changeover. Ed noted that the BS&W conversion to truck hauling was a lesson to the other big companies of how NOT to handle the change.

Some former locomotive engineers became truck drivers but, Alex observed that it was quite a 'come-down' for men who been amongst the elite of the old-time logging fraternity. Spike Carson was remembered as being one of the A.P.L engineers who made the transition but others found it very hard.

In this time of great change, there were a lot of small logging and trucking companies trying to take advantage of the opportunities. Ed made a list of all of the local outfits that he could remember from that period. Some were full-time outfits while others only operated sporadically, including one that only operated two days a year because the year's production could be hauled in two days!

Here is the list:

Greenards	Shamrock Logging
Milligans	Powder Point
Greaves	(Nanoose)

Sproat Lake Sawmill	Lou Priest
Dyer Logging	Acker Bros.
Impey George	K.D. Robinson

Creelmans	Walter Harris
Grumbach Sawmill	Grieve & McIvor
Basil Walker	Shelley Bros.
Frank Delucca	T. Hamilton
Norm Baldwin	Ruttan
Valley Logging	McLellans
(McLean Bros.)	

Ed noted that many of these businesses had disappeared by the 1960's, as the big companies had either swallowed them up or forced them out of business.

Ed picked up several casual driving jobs before he got his first 'real' driving job with "K.D. Robinson" in 1947. Kel Robinson was based in Alberni and owned five trucks, having just bought two new ones. As most truck production had gone to the War effort for the previous five years, it had been almost impossible to buy a logging truck so, there was a pent-up demand.

Robinson would haul for anyone, big job or small around the Valley so, Ed got experience with all kinds of situations. Robinson's policy of giving the worst trucks to the best drivers has already been mentioned. Jack Mackamey (later with MB's 'Sproat Lake' and the first driver of the "H-34" Hayes HD) drove #1 – the worst truck- while Ed was given #2.

The job with Robinson was not in the Alberni Valley but north of Campbell River, at Sayward. Ed drove for 'Dyer Logging', a contractor based in Alberni. Dyers were expanding their camp so, they asked Robinson to do their log hauling. Kel Robinson sent three trucks and drivers up to Sayward, including Ed. He worked there the next 5



(above photo) Ed (l.) and Alex Spencer. May 2010  
(below) Ed (standing behind 1946 Ford) at Deep Lake  
Driving for "K.D. Robinson" Photo: B. Dingsdale





5 years, returning home every year during the 3-4 month winter shut-down. He would then drive for “K.D.” around Alberni, thus staying in touch with the local job scene.

There were three Dyer brothers - Tom, Dick and Harry. Old Mother Dyer lived up the 'highway' from camp. She had a big, late-model car that she used to drive... quite fast. Several truck drivers had close calls with Mother and were concerned.

They went to see Dick to explain their worries about crashing into the owners' mother. After a conversation with Mother, he came back saying, “Boys, I can't argue with her logic. She says that if she drives through at twice the normal speed, she is only in danger for half as long. Just keep an eye out for her.” That was that and, you will be happy to know that Mother Dyer did not die at Sayward.

**Alex:**

Alex has a collection of logging photos accumulated over a lifetime in the forest industry. Some of the photos come from an even earlier time, when the first trucks showed up in the woods in the 1920's. These pictures were taken by his father, Geoff.

Geoff Spencer was an experienced logger, too. He was a skilled ax-man and 'sled-maker' for the steam donkey engines that used to power the forest industry. He built the last sled for the McLean steam donkey before it was retired – for the first time. He hewed the sled logs, simply 'eye-balling' his work. He was one of the last skilled broad-ax men left when he built that sled.

Geoff worked at a logging camp in Quatsino Sound at the north end of Vancouver Island in 1929-30. He was hired by B.C. Pulp, owners of the Port Alice pulp mill, to build 'fore-and-aft' logging road at one of their new truck-logging operations. It was a float camp and Jack Gilbert (retired ADSS Principal) tells of spending his first two years there with a bicycle inner tube around his middle, in case he fell in the 'chuck'. Jack's dad Ralph was the Camp blacksmith before he moved the family to Port Alberni.)

BC Pulp offered Geoff \$6 a day to be in charge of building the hewn-timber roads. When the camp 'Super' learned this, he quit as he was getting only \$5. Geoff brought his crew with him from Alberni but did not bring his wife and young child (Ed) as he feared that the Company would cut his wages if he brought them, just to keep him there.

Hauling using 'fore-and-aft' roads was much faster and more efficient than the earlier oxen-skidding method. A truck could also haul farther than any ox-team, without tiring. Alex remembered his Dad saying that the road ran eight miles up the valley – a lot of hewing!! A level timber road gave a smooth run over rough terrain and the raised sides of the road acted almost like rails, helping to hold the trucks on the road! A well-built road was key to the success of the whole operation.



Several people asked about photos of Alex' accident above 'Coombs Country Candy'. Here it is. Photo: A. Spencer Collection



**“Fore-and-aft” Road in Quatsino Sound** made of hewn timbers laid on log cribbing to create a level hauling road.

(left) **Hauling a big Spruce** loaded on a hard rubber-tired “White” truck and trailer. Note the open cab on the truck and no other protection for the driver. Also note how the wheels are below the level of the sides of the road. Three men are with the truck. Photos: A. Spencer Collection



## Alberni Pacific Railway & McLean Steam Sawmill Special Events

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June	13	Beaufort Gang Train Robbery
	19	Fathers' Day Special
	20	Fathers' Day Wine Steam Train
	26	Summer Season begins
July	2	Teddy Bear Picnic
	10	Beaufort Gang Train Robbery
	17	7th Annual Antique Tractor & Engine Show
	18	7th Annual Antique Tractor & Engine Show
	24	Pride Ride (Evening Run)
Aug.	1	Grandparents' Day
	2	B.C. Day
	8	2nd Annual British Car & Motorcycle Run
	15	Beaufort Gang Train Robbery
	21	Starlight Express (Evening Run)
Sept.	4-6	Antique Truck Show at the Mill
	5	Beaufort Gang Train Robbery
	6	Labour Day
	7	<b>Fall Season</b> begins
	11	Fall Wine Steam Train
	12	Fall Steam Special
	19	Fall Steam Special
	25	3rd Annual Geo-cathlon



ALBERNI  
PACIFIC  
RAILWAY  
ESTABLISHED 1984



MCLEAN  
MILL  
NATIONAL  
HISTORIC SITE

### Important Information:

Steam Train runs **Thursday to Sunday**, departing Port Alberni Station at 10 a.m. & 2 p.m.

Steam Sawmill operates **Wednesday to Saturday**.

Steam Logging Demonstrations on **Sundays** (subject to Fire Hazard rating.)

Steam Wine Train on Fridays

Friday Night Desserts & Theatre Sports at the Mill

\*Train & sawmill operational on August 3 and September 6. (Mondays)

**RESERVATIONS ALWAYS RECOMMENDED!**    Tel. 250-723-2118 or 250-723-1376  
www.alberniheritage.com

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### Editor's Notes

As you know, the Gaming Branch cut off its funding to us in March. Last year, this was \$36,000 or two-thirds of our Budget. Now, our biggest source of revenue comes from hosting the BCIT Conductor Training Courses. We have also received some cash donations but neither source has replaced the missing Gaming Funds. The Tag Day on May 15 brought in \$2700, which was very welcome, but Tag Days alone cannot balance the budget either.

In recent years, approximately half of the Budget has gone to maintenance of the steam locomotive and the railroad and half to the restoration and maintenance of trucks and equipment at the Industrial Heritage Centre. Under this regime, the "Number 7" has developed an enviable reliability record. In the past three years, no less than twelve pieces of equipment—1920 "White", 1932 "Hayes-Anderson", 1944 "Rowe International", 1965 "Mercury", 1955 "Mack", "Lorain" crane, "Comox Logging" speeder, tie crane, tie inserter, cats and crane truck—have been restored or are under restoration.

We are trying to lower costs. Jake Heid, the electrician, re-wired the lights in the old Arena so that lights will be 'on' only where people are working. The "News" is back to half black and white.

The Alberni District Co-op has given us a credit for fuel to enable us to participate in at least some parades and to move some of our equipment around.

The Society is applying for a "Community Grant" from the Gaming Branch but, even if we are successful, funds may only be used to work on equipment belonging to the I.H.S., not the "Number 7" nor anything from the Museum Collection.

Donations, either through the AV Museum or through the Alberni Valley Community Foundation, are gratefully received and receipted. Donations towards moving the "113" are also welcome!



## MEMBERS AT WORK



(left) **In the 'Smokebox'**  
Dan (l.) and Rod Gledhill work on the bracket holding the air pumps to "Number 7".

(below) **The Bucker**  
"Soup" Campbell bucking logs donated from Fir Park Village.

(r.) **Logs for the McLean Mill**  
G. Blake (on truck) F. Bradley on rope, guiding the log—WCGH.



(below) (l.-r)  
G. Murton,  
G. Blake,  
D. Gledhill in  
"Plymouth."



**"Plymouth" Gas Loci**  
Members fired up the loci to see if it would be capable of pulling a boxcar up a 1.5% grade. (This was before severe weight restrictions were put on the Cameron Lk. Trestles. We had hoped to bring in the cars from Nanaimo.)



"J.J. Logging" consult with Keith Young (r.) by heel boom, under construction.  
T. Super (l.), H. Bakken, J. James

**"J.J. Logging Ltd."**  
- Report to Shareholders -

"J.J. Logging" is experiencing temporary down-time while the Boss has been off lolly-gagging at the Royal Jubilee, then "grounded" by higher Authorities for "light duties."

The Crew had been working on making a 'heel boom' for demonstrating old-time loading at the McLean spar tree, as a part of the steam logging demonstrations this summer.

They have also made a new sled for the "Murdie" gas yarder that used to power the 'gin pole' log dump behind the Machine Shop. [photo of new 'skids' at right.]

The Company wishes to re-assure investors that the assets are in good hands and that the "Boss" will soon be back, giving the necessary signals.

Signed: *the Management*



(below)  
**Firing up a 'Fairbanks-Morse'**  
Dr. Pete Geddes fires up small stationary engine that will be demonstrating this season.  
*Photos: D. Hooper*

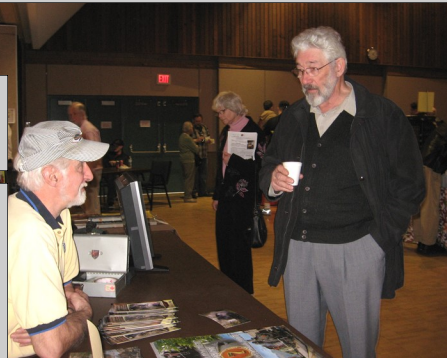


**Model Railway Show**—Nanaimo Beban Park  
Hugh Grist (l.) manning I.H.S. table. Dave Lowe pays a visit.  
Show was organized by K. Rutherford and R. Lord of I.H.S.



**CLEAN-UP**  
(above) J. Peck & Jan Jansma cleaning passenger car before first run of season.

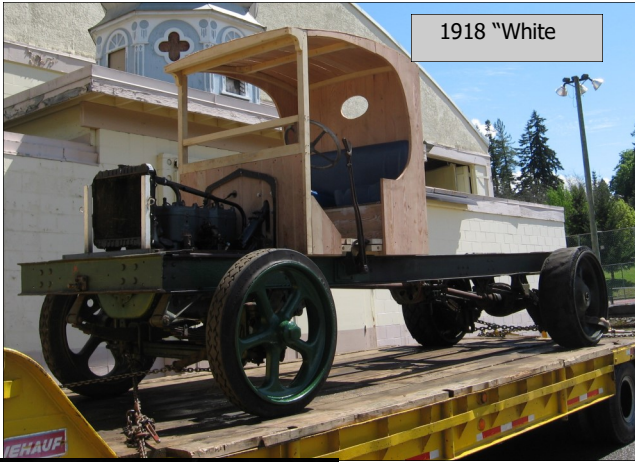
(l.) **Roundhouse**  
Frank Holm 'broom-bashing' at the Roundhouse. He also did the rail-yard.





# TRUCKS DEPARTMENT

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1918 "White"



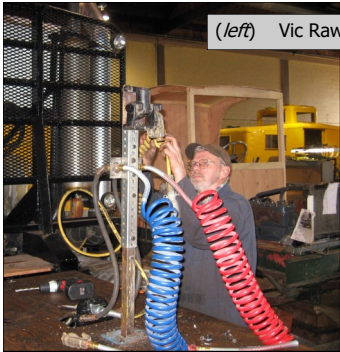
1979 International

There has been plenty of action at the I.H. Centre since February. We had our biggest group of visitors ever, in April, when more than 50 people from Campbell River, including the Club that gave us the circa-1920 "White" [above] came for a tour, which also included the Roundhouse. Freddie Meiers is seen above admiring the progress made by the I.H.S. in restoring the truck. It is also seen above left on the lowbed, about to go out for its first public display, on the May 15 'Tag Day'.

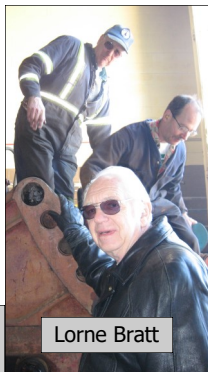
The 1979 "International" tractor (I.) is being prepared for painting. It is about ready for inspection and will become our primary hauling tractor. Donor Ben Schievink (r.) is seen here with Vic Laughlin, masking the chrome in preparation for painting. Randy Catto and Andrew did a lot of work on the cab, as did Vic Rawlinson, who is seen to the left rigging the brake and electrical harness.

The "Rowe" TD-14 cat that Lorne Bratt has been working on, was fired up when he came back from hospital. It is seen below, driven by Hank Bakken.

The 1955 "Mack" has been painted; the 1944 "Rowe" International all-wheel drive military truck has been stripped to the bare frame and is being painted, prior to re-assembly. Vic Laughlin continues to work on the wiring and 'plumbing' of the '65 "Mercury"- a "new truck around an old horn."



(left) Vic Rawlinson



Lorne Bratt



1965 "Mercury"  
Vic Laughlin



(r.) "Rowe" 1944 "International"  
T. Super (I.), Tom Maher & Les Stevens examine the motor.  
Ross McCoy puts a first coat of paint on the stripped frame.

(below) Bob Dingsdale preps the 1955 "Mack" for painting.



## MEMBERSHIP in the WVIHHS

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

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