



SPOT NEWS

Price on Newstand \$3.49

Western Vancouver Island Industrial Heritage Society

Issue 50



June 2012



100 YEARS OF RAILROAD in the Alberni Valley

Commemorating the Centennial of the
arrival of the First Passenger Train
December 5, 2011

(l. to r.) **Crew Photo**
K. Whiteman (City Councillor), H. Grist,
P. Williamson, G. Williamson, R. Lord,
K. Hunter.

Photo: H. Thomson

Crew Photo
First Passenger Train leaving
Port Alberni
December 21, 1911.
PN 03759
AV Museum



ALBERNI PACIFIC RAILWAY—Restoration Work—“No. 11”



“No. 11” at work in the Alberni Paper Mill
Photo: Frank Holm

The “No. 11” is a 45-ton General Electric diesel-electric locomotive built in 1942 for the U.S. military. It worked at Alberni Pulp & Paper (Macmillan-Bloedel) until 1987, when it was given to the APR. A rebuild began on it in the 1990’s but halted after the unit had been torn apart. It lay as a ‘hulk’ in the Roundhouse for the past twelve years or more, with parts scattered in several places.

The agreement between the BC Institute of Technology and the APR for the “practicum” part of their Conductor Training programme has provided the trigger for the restoration of this locomotive. BCIT wants a second locomotive to be involved in the training, to create more realistic situations for the students during their training here.

At the end of the ski season, ‘Soup’ Campbell took the lead on the project. The locomotive was pulled out of its stall for the first time this century (!)

and pushed under the lean-to for painting. The hoods were painted in “M&B” red and white over at Soup’s shop. The engine that had been removed for rebuild years earlier was lifted back into place; then the radiator and compressor. New windows have been installed in the cab. Several volunteers have been working with Soup.

The hoods and mufflers were lifted on to the loci by crane on May 18. Controls for the cab are being tracked down and re-installed.



“Hello, 21st Century!”
“No. 11” emerges from Roundhouse.



Conductor G. Blake guides loci into place for the installation of the engine hoods. K.G. (Soup) Campbell (r.)



Re-installing the controls & wiring in cab
Sterling Stump (front) & K.G. Campbell
Photos: D. Hooper



(above) Lowering hood into place

(Below r.) Another job done!
(l. to r.) G. Blake, Big Steve, K.G. Campbell, R. Hurst (on ground).



2

Both hoods installed.



McLEAN MILL — OLD-TIME LOGGING CREW



REBUILDING THE A-FRAME
"J.J." inspecting Ron Green's work.

By the end of May, the old-time logging crew had already done 5 demonstrations for visitors, including 4 for the 'Vintage Car Club of Canada', who hosted their provincial event in Port Alberni this year.

A lot of work was done to get ready for the shows: the "steam pot" had to be 'de-winterized', rigging checked, tools found and a myriad of other tasks completed. The crew was reminded that it is a **wood**-burning donkey so the firewood log had to be bucked and split. (The crew gives a big 'Thanks!' to Bob Nichols for loaning his wood-splitter.)

Log dump A-frame at McLean Mill

Due to repeated washouts at the Millpond dam the last two years, this is a problem area. The last washout made the dam road impassible and rendered the log dump unusable. Possible solutions are currently 'being studied'.

In the midst of this mess, a guy line holding the A-frame was clipped by a caterpillar and the structure fell to the ground.

The logging crew has built a new 'A-frame', which will be raised into place when the dam issue is resolved.



Swinging the base log into position



Al Green guides base log on to the 'sticks'.



(Above)
"DONKEY DOCTOR"
Ken ("I don't make lumpy steam.") Fyfe.



SWEATING IN THE WOODYARD
Bert Simpson (l.) & Al Greene bucking up the big fir for the splitting crew.

(Below) **Splitting Crew**
Using Bob Nichols' splitter, the crew make a big wood pile behind the donkey



JOB COMPLETED!
(l. to r.)
Hank Bakken,
Tony Super,
Jack James,
Ron Greene,
Al Greene
Photos: D. Hooper



ALBERNI PACIFIC RAILWAY

It has been a busy winter for the A.P.R. As well as the usual maintenance on the "No. 7", members have crewed for four BCIT Conductor Training sessions, repaired Dry Creek Bridge and begun the rebuild of the "No. 11" (See P. 2) Dan and Rod Gledhill strengthened the 'smoke box' of the steam loci as, after 82 years of steaming, the metal has been getting noticeably thinner in spots. Dan welded a couple of pieces of rolled plate into place to stiffen the smoke box. "No. 7" had boiler inspection in late April and was declared "Good to go."

Spring began busy. Ken Rutherford and Rick Lord organized yet another successful "Model Railroad Show" in Nanaimo. A 'Rules Review' was held for all A.P.R. personnel in April. Brushing has begun along the right-of-way, both in the Alberni Valley and on the East end of the "Alberni Sub". The steam train has already carried nine Charter runs: 5 busloads from one cruise ship in Nanaimo; two charters for the Vintage Car Club event; one for the Regional Heritage Fair and a Mothers' Day Wine Train. The regular season begins on June 30.



BCIT Conductors' Course—March 2012
I.H.S. members R. Hurst, G. Blake, D. Hooper

(r.) **Repair Dry Creek Bridge**
Hugh Grist, Rod Clarke (knees) and Bert Simpson replace deck planks on the bridge before the BCIT course began.



(l.) **WASHING THE STATION**
Jake Heid power washes the Station before the Vintage Car Club visit. (It is about 20 years since the big work bee on the Station. Anyone for a "Painting Bee"?)



(r.) **Brushing the Tracks**
Frank Holm on a 'Blackberry Search & Destroy Mission'. He has kept the Railyard clean for the past two years, as well as the track to Roger Street.



EAST END TRACK GANG at Work!
Ken Fyfe operates heavy duty mower to clear right of way. G. Grenon's speeder pulls the rig.

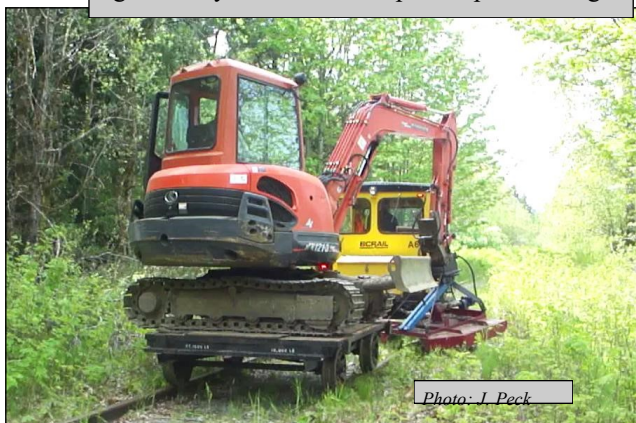


Photo: J. Peck

Photos: D. Hooper

RETIREMENT PRESENTATION
I.H.S. President Gary Murton presented a photo to long-time Engineer, George Williamson, to honour his retirement. The photo is of the crew of the 100th Anniversary Commemoration Run for the arrival of the first passenger train to the Alberni Valley. (That was George's last run. See photo on p. 1.)



MEMBERS at WORK

REGIONAL HERITAGE FAIR— May 4

Eight I.H.S. volunteers provided ‘hands-on’ activities for the 125 participants at the Fair. It was about “How did they do the job in the days before hydraulics and gas and electric motors?” The children tried ‘block and tackle’ to lift logs—one block or two—and cutting wood with a crosscut saw. The guys had a good time.

(r.) Tony Super and Jan Jansma (l.) help with the crosscut.

HF Photos: G. Klemstrud



(r.) Hank Bakken with the block & tackle.

(Below) April 1 “Hayes” trucks at Centennial “Kickoff” Event at ADSS. Members brought 10 vintage trucks to this event.



“GOOD TIMBER” Show (below)

This excellent show came to town in April and organizers asked for “Yeller” to be part of the backdrop to this show of Robert Swanson songs and poems from the old-time logging era.



Roofing 1918 ‘White’

(l.) John Reeves stretches the roofing material into place.



Members at Rest

Vic Laughlin & Les Stevens take a break from the 1944 ‘International’.

Photos: D. Hooper

(Below) The Victoria Day Parade is hard work so, Hank Bakken takes a break.



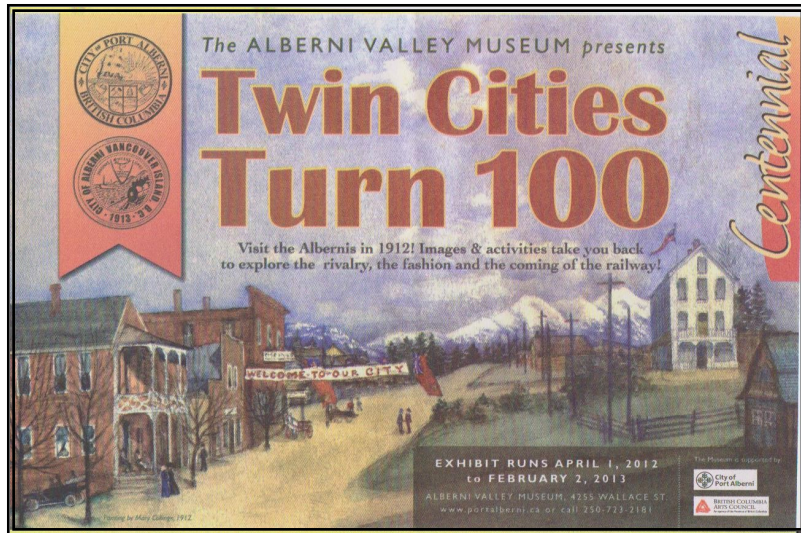
VICTORIA PARADE (below)

Darlene Coulson—in charge of the float—Thanks!! Dave Tranfield & Ben Schievink ready to unload the fire truck.

(Below right) Jack James test drives a new chair—part of the necessary equipment at the Old-time Logging site.



SUMMER SCHEDULES - 'Things to do in Port Alberni'



CENTENNIAL EVENTS

Exhibit at AV Museum
 "Hayes & Friends" Truck Show at
 Fall Fair Grounds—June 30 -
 July 2nd
 "Homecoming" Weekend
 August 4-6
 -Antique Cars & Trucks
 -Picnic Excursion - McLean Mill
 August 6
 Antique Truck Show at the Mill
 Sept. 1-3



RIDE THE TRAIN!

Summer Season— starting June 30th

Departures: 10 a.m.
 2 p.m.

(Thurs. & Saturday)

10 a.m.

(Friday & Sunday)

June-September Special Runs:

June 5 Wine Steam Train

June 16 Fathers' Day Wine Train

June 17 Fathers' Day Special

June 23 Summer Steam Special

Sept. 8 Fall Steam Special

Sept 16 Fall Steam Special

Reservations: Tel. 250-723-1376

Website: alberniheritage.com



Loading 1932 "Hayes-Anderson" at the Spar Tree.
 "J.J. Logging" *Print by Michael Dean*

STEAM DONKEY OLD-TIME LOGGING!

with
"J.J. LOGGING"

Every Sunday at 11 a.m.

from July 1st

and June 17

September 1, 2, 3, 8 & 16.

Steam yarding & loading demos at the
 Spar Tree

McLean Mill National Historic Site.

OLD-TIME LOGGING—"LIDGERWOOD" SKIDDERS

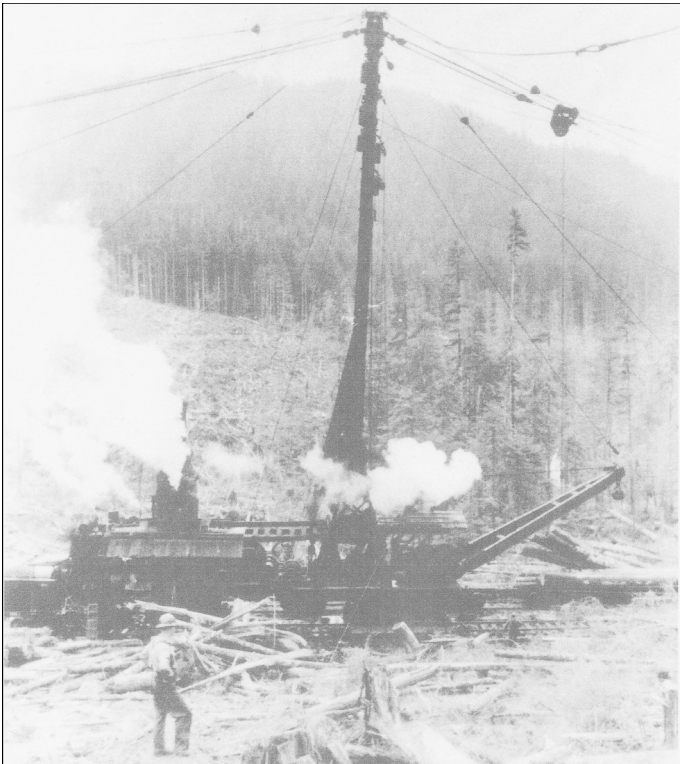
In the steam rail logging era, the steam locomotive provided the power to move the logs from the forest to the mills. It was steam "donkeys" and "skidders" that provided the power to "yard" the felled timber from the forest to a central collecting point beside a logging railway. Industrial demand required large volume production.

There were several manufacturers of the big yarding machines. These included "Washington Iron Works" in Seattle and the "Willamette Iron Works" in Portland but the real king of the big skidders was the "Lidgerwood" from Tacoma. Only the largest logging companies operated these monsters.

At more than 200 tons, the "Lidgerwood" combined the yarding and loading functions in one huge machine. It featured a 105-foot steel tower, which could be lowered when moving to the next setting. Although it was so heavy and cumbersome, it was mobile... but it took up to four locomotives to move it! It also had a heavy steel boom for loading the logs. There were up to 8.5 miles (13 km.) of wire rope on the machine, including 2500 feet of 2-inch 'skylines'. The boiler provided 400 horsepower at 200 lbs. of steam. Even when oil-fired, the skidder required a crew of 23 men.

Four "Lidgerwoods" operated in the Al-berni region in the 'glory days of steam' - all owned by the "Bloedel, Stewart & Welch" Company—one at Camp 9 on Great Central Lake and three at their Franklin River operations. One of the Franklin River skidders was used with wooden spars, rather than a tower.

The "Lidgerwood" faded from the logging scene after the Second War, along with the steam locomotives. Now, they are nothing but a memory.



"Lidgerwood" "YO-3" at Franklin River
Jack Watt in foreground. Note the 'turn' of logs coming in behind the loading boom.
All photos: Don Watt Collection

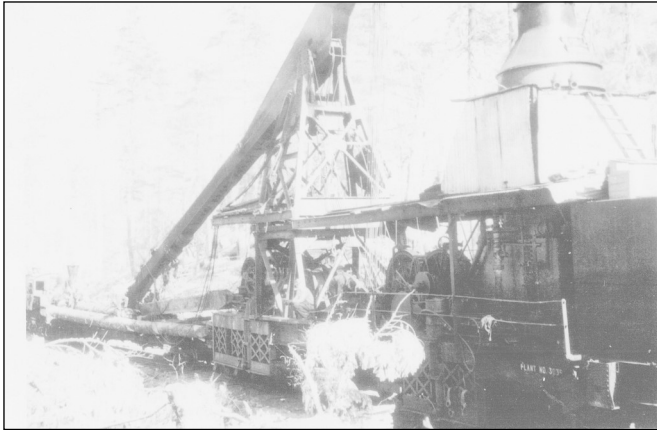


Loading 'skeleton cars' with the "Lidgerwood"

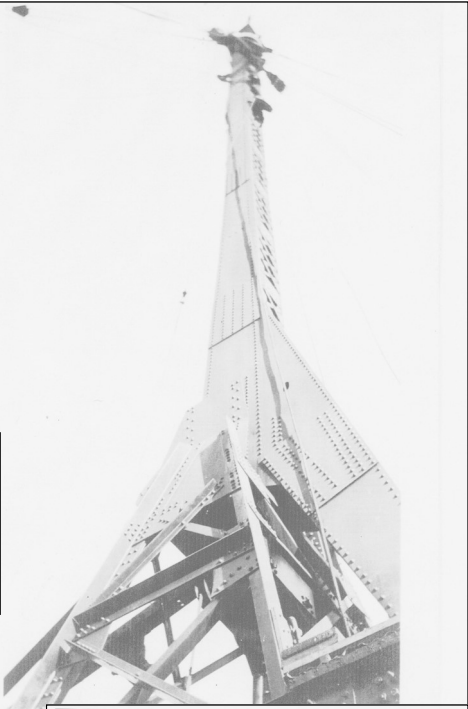
The loading boom had one tong and "heeled" the log onto the cars. When the skidder arrived at a new 'side', it would be jacked up and blocked into place. Then, the tower was raised and the guy lines anchored. [See next page] Sometimes, the unit was jacked high enough for the skeleton cars to pass underneath; other times, it was beside the track. There would often be a stub spur beside the skidder for a fuel tank car. Note the 'spotting line' to pull the next car into place.

When a setting was finished, the unit was lowered on to two skeleton cars—one for the machine; another for the tower and boom.

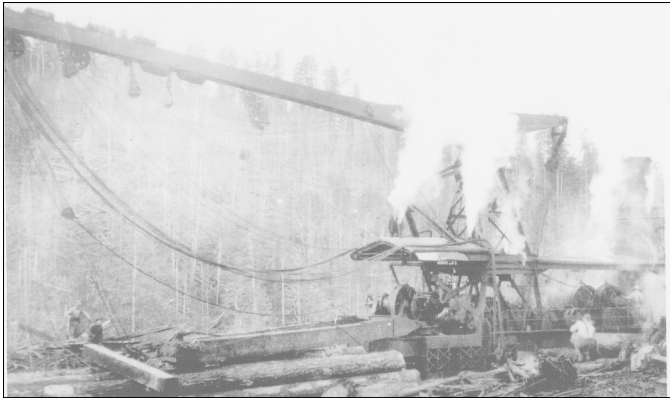
Ed. Note: Any errors are mine alone. Refs: "Sawlogs on Steel Rails" by G. McKnight; "Logging by Rail" by R. Turner; "Never chop your rope" by J. Garner



Steel Tower



SKIDDER "YO-3" on the move (Franklin River)
 Note the tower and boom resting on logs on skeleton car in front.
 (below) **Raising the tower on "YO-3"**
 Note the guy lines hanging down. The boom is still resting on the car.



(r.) 1927 advertisement for "Lidgerwood" skidder in "The Timberman" magazine.

LIDGERWOOD
Steel Spar Skidder
QUICK MOVING

THE LIDGERWOOD STEEL SPAR SKIDDER is the most portable self-contained Logging Unit in operation today. Complete moves are being made in from three to eight hours by the operators of these machines. This great advantage makes it possible to keep the machine as close to the timber and log the ground in the natural way, leaving as little damage as possible.

The 24-Wheel Moving Car, carrying the Skidder in working condition, has less load per axle than a car of logs, and can take turns at 90° and over. Quick moving, able to take advantage of the Lidgerwood Steel Spar Skidder will also save you money on your operation.

Ask us for further information

LIDGERWOOD PACIFIC COMPANY
 NEW YORK SAN FRANCISCO SEATTLE
 TACOMA U.S.A. PORTLAND ORE.
 VANCOUVER, B.C.



"Lidgerwood" derailed (1945)
 "YO-3" derailed while moving to a new setting at Franklin River. It took 4 locomotives to put it back on track: a 90-ton "Shay", a 70-ton "Shay", a 50-ton 'Climax' and a 60-ton "Shay".

"Almost ready to log"
 Note the fellow in the rigging.

RESTORATION COMPLETE!

1944 "International" 6 x 6

The rusty wreck donated by the family of the late Don Rowe three years ago has been transformed into a showpiece that is a testimonial to the skills of the volunteers that have worked on this massive project. Congratulations to Tom Maher and Russ McCoy for leading the project to conclusion!

The war surplus truck was first made into a log hauler. The 6-wheel drive gave it an advantage in those earlier days of truck logging. Rowe, a local contractor, later made it into a



BEFORE



AFTER

gravel truck. Hopefully, "Elmer Fudd" will make its parade debut on July 1st. Watch for it!

(l.) Tom Maher cleans the engine.

(below) Russ ReCoy painting the frame.



(Below) Truck and Trailer
Russ and Vic Laughlin fit the hood.



(above) A new "headache rack" was fabricated.

(below) Les Stevens fabricates patch for the cab.



(below) Hood & fenders back in place.



FINISHING TOUCHES
Tracey Golden puts the original lettering on the door of the truck.



RESTORATIONS on Parade

The Centennial Committee asked to use the City's 1st Fire truck—a 1928 'Chevrolet' - as the focal point for their float promoting Port Alberni and the City's Centennial celebrations this summer. Although the restoration is not yet complete, it still received a lot of admiring looks on its first public appearance, at the May 21 Parade in Victoria.

The 'Railroad Mack' and the 1937 'White' followed the float down Douglas St., publicizing industrial heritage tourism in the Alberni Valley. This was our first participation in the Victoria parade since 2008, when the funding cuts began. July 1st will be the first official outing for the fire truck under its own power.



Coun. Wendy Kerr



Centennial float on Douglas Street
Fire truck, followed by "Mack" & "White"

Finances

Due to unexpected circumstances, the Society actually did well in 2011, thanks to hosting nine 'Conductor Training' sessions. As well, after the critical Report of the Triplett Commission on "Gaming in BC", the Government reinstated the other half of the amount we applied for as a 'Community Gaming Grant', to a total of \$27,000 for work on I.H.S.-owned projects. That has kept our restorations going.

The Fire Department and the City underwrote the restoration of the "Chev" fire truck as a Centennial project.



Photos: D. Hooper



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. 390-7508

10

"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
Tel. 724-5509 or e-mail: dshooper@telus.net