

SPOT NEWS



Western Vancouver Island Industrial Heritage Society

Issue 56
June 2014

(l.) **High Riggers** Aaron Thom (above) and Gerard Martin rig the newly-raised spar tree.

(r.) **Project Leaders**
Les Stevens (l.) - steam donkey
Jack James (r.) - spar tree

(below) **Steam Donkey at work**
(l. to r.) K. Young, G. Erickson,
H. Bakken



Photos: D

STEAM DONKEY RESTORATION & RELOCATION OF OLD-TIME LOGGING SHOW
Stories inside. See Pages 4, 5, 6 and 10.

Photos: D. Hooper

ALBERNI PACIFIC RAILWAY

The summer season will soon be upon us but APR personnel have been busy on various projects this spring, as well as completing the annual maintenance of the 1929 "Baldwin" locomotive—the "Number 7". Dan Gledhill has received a lot of assistance from Ted Mollet and Dave Newman this winter. The doors and window frames on the engine cab were stripped and repainted by Dave. The smokebox was further reinforced with steel plate.

The two diesels—the "RS-3" (8427) and the ex-"M&B" "Number 11" have both been operating in the new year—the former for 13 days and the latter for 6 days—mainly for the BCIT Conductor Training Practicum.

Some track work was completed in April when members of the Alberni Valley Hill-Climbers quad club joined I.H.S. volunteers to repair the truck cut by vandals at Mile 31.7, East of Smith Road. Using the "Hi-railer" and the 'A-6' speeder, Ken Fyfe's excavator, replacement rails, ties and tools were hauled to the worksite. By the end of the day, the job was complete. A second bee took place May 31 to repair the track cut at Mile 31.5. A special "Thanks" to Ken Fyfe and his excavator—fuelled by 'Buckley's Mixture' - which made the job manageable. [See photo.]

Pete Geddes and Chris Duncan have been working at the Roundhouse, too. They completed the decking on the Water

Car and have been working on the big yellow "CL&R" crew speeder. Frank Holm has been weed-whacking the Yard.

BCIT Conductor Course

In early April, BCIT sent 3 groups of six students to practice their skills on APR equipment and tracks. Fourteen I.H.S. members came out to staff the course and man the equipment over the nine days. The next courses are in 2015.



"SOUPERVISION"

K.G. Campbell ('Soup') (r.) who organized the bee, watches



"Number 11" at work for BCIT course (l. to r.) P. Geddes, T. Mollet & R. Hurst await the next move from the students.

(r.) **Spiking down the rails**
H. Grist, K.G. Campbell and B. Simpson at work.



WORKING ON THE RAILROAD



(l.) Pete Geddes & Chris Duncan working on the CL&R Speeder with RS-3 in background.
(below) **Flag Lady** Sally greets BCIT students.



Model RR Show—Nanaimo
K. Rutherford & R. Lord (seen below with daughters Leanne & Denise) organized the show once again.

Manning the I.H.S. table at Model RR Show
(l. to r.) Dave Taberner, Irv McIntyre and Hugh Grist display some models of APR locomotives and promote the Alberni Pacific Railway in Nanaimo.



B.C.I.T. TRAINING
Conductor trainees pose with APR personnel at the Station.
Hugh Grist, John Land (Enr.) and Bert Simpson are on the engine; David Hooper is on the platform, beside John Wetzel, BCIT Instructor.
This is the only BCIT training which will take place in Port Alberni this year.



RELOCATION OF LOGGING DEMONSTRATION SITE AT McLEAN MILL

Due to the relocation of Kitsuksis Creek "off-line" from the Mill Log Pond, the steam donkey and spar tree (1)—the whole logging 'show' - had to be moved 200 feet up the road. This is a major job, the more so as the "JJ Logging" crew had just raised the new spar last year.

Brad Berry moved the spar tree with his excavator. A 'gin pole' had to be found, rigged and moved (2) into position at the butt of the spar tree, which was anchored to two nearby stumps. All of the blocks, straps and guy lines had to be located. (3) Anchor stumps had to be notched.



1

Ron Dick on spar tree

(4) Three blocks were hung on the spar, as well as the two on the top of the gin pole. This created 'two and a half block purchase', multiplying the force of the "Murdie" winch on the donkey. (The gas



2

donkey ("Ford V-8") was used this time.) The 'main line' of the winch was run through the five blocks, pulled through by the 'straw line'. (The crew pulled a lot of straw line on this project!)

The raising was done in two stages this time: first, the gin pole was raised for the visiting ADSS Forestry class, with teacher Ryan Dvorak; then the spar tree was raised.

Photos: D. Hooper



3



6

6. Blocks & lines ready for the lift.



4

3. Sixteen blocks
 "Hey, Jack. Which ones do we use?"
 (JJ's answer: "All of them".)
 4. Al Green & Ron Dick (l.) (below) Ron, Tony Super and JJ at notched anchor stump.



5

5. (l. to r.) Al Green, Ron Dick, Tony Super, and Ted Maurice set block on gin pole.



4

5. Attaching block to top of gin pole

- This page sponsored by "Kingsley Trucking" (Scott Robinson) -

RAISING THE SPAR TREE (Again)

The 'gin pole' was raised May 12, with the ADSS Forestry Class witnessing an almost forgotten skill in logging. The spar tree was raised May 25, in front of 80-90 spectators. The spar tree rose smoothly to the vertical under Jack's watchful eye



Gin pole going up



ADSS Forestry class with J.J. Logging crew

then, the crew went into action, spiking the three guy lines onto the anchor stumps.

We had the luxury of TWO high-riggers—Aaron Thom of Port Alberni and Gerard Martin of Powell River - to rig the tree. This was likely the first time two riggers have worked together on a wooden spar here since the 1960s.

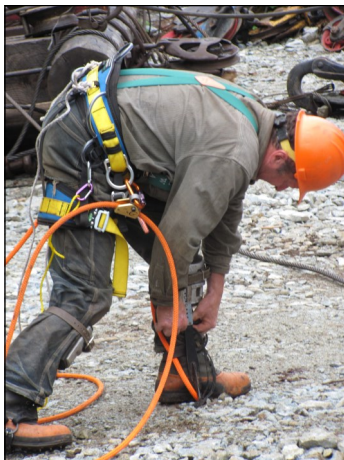
(Gerard's dad used to log with Jack more than 50 years ago.) [Photo below: Aaron & Gerard work to wrap a guy line around tree.]

Once the rigging is done, and the heel boom put back in place, the yarding and loading

Gin pole ready to lift the spar tree.

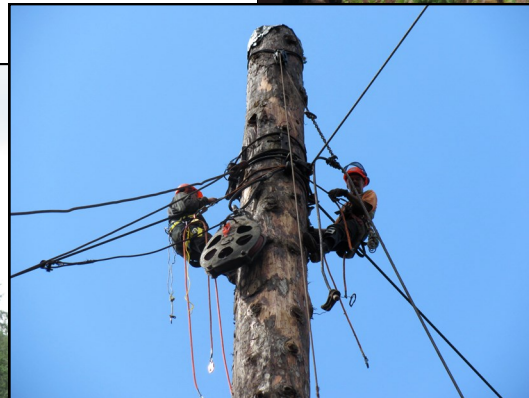


Up goes the spar



(above) Gerard straps on his climbing spurs.

(right) Gerard on the way up the tree. Note the McLean Mill water tower in the background and the abutments for the bridge across the new Creek channel.



(right) **Rigging half complete**

The top guy lines have been hung and tightened. The buckle guy lines are still hanging down.

The 'Bull block' and 'Haulback block' have been hung at the top of the tree.

Photos: D. Hooper

donkeys will be moved into position to work.

(Story to be concluded in next issue. -Ed)



Re-assembling the "Washington Iron Works" Steam Donkey at McLean Mill



After the re-tubing of the boiler was completed at the Industrial Heritage Centre in Port Alberni, the boiler was low-bedded out to the McLean Mill. [See photo at left.] Brad Berry loaned his excavator to lift the boiler back onto the donkey sled, on the far side of the relocated Kitsuksis Creek bed. (The bridge has not yet been placed over the new channel and is visible in the foreground.)

The boiler was lifted to the vertical, then lifted and swung over to the waiting sled. [See below.] Les next proceeded to bolt the boiler down [bottom of page] and he and Keith Young re-attached all of the 'plumbing', gauges, water-glasses, etc., to make the



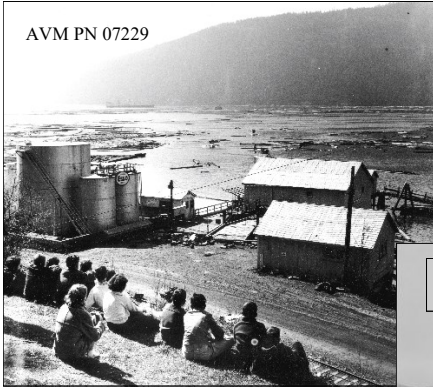
donkey operational again. The next task was to lift the 'house' (shelter for boiler and operators) back on to the donkey sled. The excavator made easy work of an awkward job. (below left) Les guides the house into place.) The finishing touch was when the chimney was dropped into position by operator, Cliff West. [above, left]



AFTERMATH OF THE 1964 TSUNAMI

The tsunami of March 28, 1964, as well as causing a lot of damage in the low-lying residential neighbourhoods of Alberni and Port Alberni, as the "Twin Cities" were known then, caused tremendous damage and disruption to the industrial facilities on the waterfront. The Plywood Mill, Alberni Pacific Division Sawmill, Somass Sawmill and the Alberni Pulp & Paper Mill—all owned by forestry giant, "McMillan-Bloedel", were inundated and knocked out of production for varying lengths of time while clean-up and repairs were carried out.

Numerous electric motors in the mills had to be replaced and/or repaired. The pipeline bringing fresh water to "Alpulp" was ruptured, giving another reason for that mill's shutdown. Lumber stacks were knocked askew, spread all over the millyards in a hopeless tangle that had to be sorted and re-stacked by hand. The mess had to be cleared away for the mills to re-open. Jan Jansma, who worked at Somass Mill, remembers finding dead fish amongst the lumber and that the job got smellier as the days passed. That Mill was off production for 3 to 4 weeks.



AVM PN 07229

The Day After—foot of Argyle St. People looking over the harbour full of logs and floating debris.

Thousands of logs were swept loose from their 'tie-ups', ending up floating free in the Harbour or swept ashore.

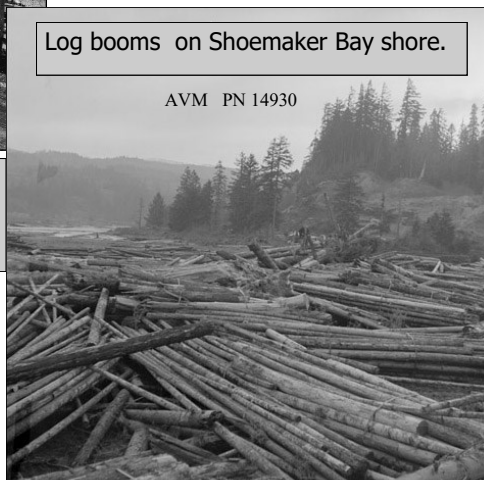
'Soup' Campbell spent several months working for Ray Grumbach, who

got the contract to salvage those logs. He remembers that many of the booms ended up on the flats around Shoemaker Bay. He said that as many as six booms piled up, one on top of the other in places. [See photo above]. Extracting the logs from that tangled mess was 'quite a challenge', Soup recalled. It was hard, dirty work, especially for the 'chokermen' who had to set chokers on the wayward logs. There was the added hazard of slipping in the mud and falling into the channels that threaded through the estuary. "You almost needed snowshoes to get around." Other logs ended up in the sewage lagoons, and 'that was unpleasant work.'

They built two rafts from 66-foot 'boomsticks' and mounted 'A-frames' and yarders on board to pull the logs from shore back into the water. Grumbach also got a 'water buffalo' - an amphibious tank from World War II—but it was not very successful. They had to work with the high tides, so they could get closer to the stranded logs. Soup operated one of the yarders and Paul Hertel was his 'hooker'. The salvaged logs were stored in 'bag booms.'

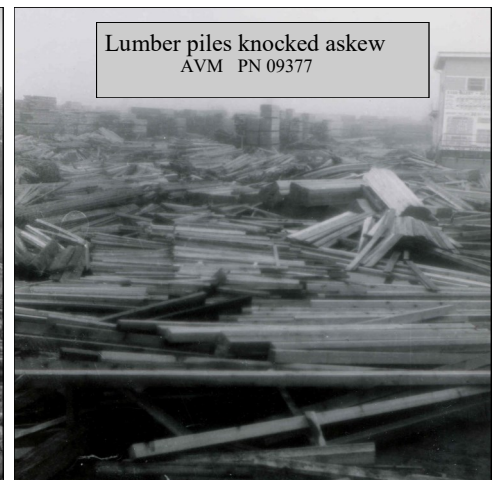
Soup remembers that the backwash of the tsunami washed a lot of the mud out of Shoemaker Bay, exposing several ancient First Nations fish weirs.

[Thanks to Jan and Soup for the memories.]



Log booms on Shoemaker Bay shore.

AVM PN 14930



Lumber piles knocked askew
AVM PN 09377



Log Salvage in Shoemaker Bay. Note -logs in bag booms
AV Museum PN 09696

INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE ATTRACTIONS IN PORT ALBERNI



RIDE THE TRAIN!

Starting June 28

Departures 10 a.m.
2 p.m.

(Thurs. & Saturday)

Friday & Sunday 10 a.m.

Information & Booking: 250-723-1376
Reservations recommended.

OLD

TRUCKS!

Check them out:

Industrial Heritage Centre

At 10th & Dunbar Tues. 7-9 p.m.

Sat. 9 a.m.-noon

Train Station

"Truck Bays" from June 29

Antique Truck Show - Aug. 30-31 at
the Industrial Heritage Centre.

STEAM DONKEY



OLD-TIME LOGGING!

With

"J.J. LOGGING"

Every Friday & Sunday at 11 a.m.

From June 29

Steam yarding & Loading demos at

The Spar Tree

McLean Mill National Historic Site

Editor's Notes:

A few acknowledgements: a big 'Thank you' to the sponsors of this Newsletter. This permits two extra pages, in colour. Please support them, too.

"Thank you" to the Government of British Columbia, for the 'Community Gaming Grants' that have funded the restoration of five vehicles, the maintenance of several other units, the painting of five rail cars and the insurance on our two prime movers over the past five years.

Thanks to Doug Harrison for his presentation on 'Memories of APL "Camp One"' at the Annual General Meeting in February.

Thanks to Museum staff for their help with old photos for this newsletter.

And thanks to the many people, local and from out-of-town, who support the I.H. Society in its efforts to preserve and promote the industrial heritage of this place. A special 'shout-out' goes to the Boilermakers at this time.

**Please keep July 26 free to be able to attend the 80th Anniversary event at McLean Mill, in honour of Franklin River logging camp.

MEMBERS at WORK



Russ McCoy with 'Reid' oilfield pumping engine at Echo.



Bob Pfannenschmidt learns about small engines from Heritage Fair participant.



(above) Mike Hobson with restored 1938 'Railroad Mack'.



Pete Geddes has had the 'Lobster' and tractor mower working on the rail road tracks. ['Lobster' seen to the left, crossing Rogers Creek.] Vic Laughlin continues restoration of the '51 "Hayes" chain-drive. [right].



REGIONAL HERITAGE FAIR 2014

Part of the I.H.S. involvement in the Fair was to transport the 118 children, shown here boarding at the Station, out to visit the McLean Mill on the APR. "Number 11" did the honours, with R. Hurst on the throttle, T. Mollet in the Fireman's seat and D. Taberner, Conductor.

Twenty I.H.S. members took part in the Regional Heritage Fair at Echo Center May 2-3. Two were Judges, three brought restored machines [See photos at right] to the "Community Day", twelve did 'hands-on' activities with the children, using peaveys, a fire-spotting plotter scope, timber stamps and bucksaws. Three ran the train for the children.

Jake Heid (r.) has taken the lead on setting up the 'Train Model Room' at the Station, installing panelling and wainscoting. He is seen here with Ray Barron's skeleton car.



Pete Geddes has had the 'Lobster' and tractor mower working on the rail road tracks.



MEMBERSHIP IN THE W.V.I.I.H.S.

\$15 / year Cash or cheque to:
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"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

RE-TUBING THE McLEAN STEAM DONKEY BOILER

The 1929 "Washington Iron Works" steam donkey, bought second-hand by "R.B. McLean Lumber Co." in 1942 for their logging operations on the Beaufort Range, was last re-tubed in the 1980s, when it was sent to EXPO '86 in Vancouver. It then lay dormant, quietly rotting and rusting at the Mill for the next 30 years, until Jack James spear-headed the set-up of the "Old-Time Steam Logging Demonstration" six years ago.

Keith Young and brother, Ron, restored the boiler to service while Jack and his crew built a donkey sled and set up a steam Yarding and Loading operation. The "JJ Logging" crew have done more than 80 Logging demonstrations for visitors in the past four years so it was time for the boiler to receive some major "TLC".

Les Stevens took charge of the project. The boiler was removed from the sled, then taken to the Industrial Heritage Centre to be worked on. Les contacted the Boilermakers' Union and the members offered to re-tube the boiler FOR FREE—a huge contribution! Les ordered the 206 tubes needed, then cut out all of the old ones [Photo at left] so that the Boilermakers could just fly straight at the re-tubing job. The I.H.S. used "Community Gaming Grant" money from the BC Government to buy the special tool for rolling the new tubes. This made the job go faster.



Les picked up the new tubes in Vancouver. [1] They were then cut to length by Vic Laughlin and prepped by Rocky the Boilermaker. [2] Omer Pelletier donated the band saw. The tubes were fed into the holes in the 'tube sheet' and fitted into the matching hole at the other end of the boiler. Surplus tubing was cut off. [3] Then, the end of the tube was 'rolled' tight into the tube sheet by two men holding the air-powered tool. [4]



An apprentice [below] was brought along by the Boilermakers to give him the chance to work on a 'real boiler'. (Cont. p. 6)



Photos: David Hooper



10 Les & Rocky rolling tubes

