

July 2015
'Steam Up'
McLean Mill



SPOT NEWS

Western Vancouver Island Industrial Heritage Society

Issue 57



October 2014



At Qualicum Beach Station 100th Anniversary Celebration August 2014
I.H.S. Members Hugh Grist (l.) and Pete Geddes with Shaw Cable crew on hand car.
Photo: D. Hooper

ALBERNI PACIFIC RAILWAY

Another season has ended and the 'Number 7' has kept chugging along. There were ten runs, including charters in the pre-season and 59 runs on the official summer schedule. There were seven more runs in September. There were only two cruise ship charters this year, out of Nanaimo. There was one wedding train and a couple of special events with 'waterfront runs'. There were several evening runs during the 'Thunder in the Valley' weekend in August and rides on the big crew speeder during the 'Franklin River 80th Anniversary' event in July.

With the very dry summer, after the first week, the water car was part of the train, damping down the right-of-way. The 'Hi-Railer' ran Fire Patrol behind the train each way. There were no bush fires this year along the track.

Pete Geddes ran the 'Lobster' and others with weed-whackers and mowers kept the vegetation down from town to the Mill. Frank Holm kept the Yard clean.

The Industrial Heritage Society played a big part in the 100th Anniversary event at the Qualicum Beach Station August 23. Ten members went



Enr. John Land & 'No. 7'

Photo: D. Hooper



Photo: G. Grenon

over, with the velocipede and two hand cars. A display was set up and there were line-ups to ride the handcar the whole time!

In September, an excursion group of speeder owners visited the Alberni Valley, running in from Parksville on two different runs. Member Don Wigen was the 'Wagon Master' for the visitors to Island railways. Pete Geddes, Don, Gordon Grenon, Ken Fyfe, Glen Cleveland and members of the EETG made sure that the tracks were brushed out between Smith Road and Parksville. Ken hosted the visitors at 'Fyfe Sid-ing' for a Corn Boil.

The second section of tracks which had been cut by vandals near the "Log Train Trail" crossing on the 'Alberni Sub' was repaired in early September by Society members and volunteers from the "Hill-Climbers Quad Club", in time for the speeders to pass through. Naturally, it was raining heavily! The East Side crew dealt with the big fir that bent a rail on the 'Hump'. [see photo above—Don W. & tree]



Photos: P. Geddes



WORKING ON THE RAILROAD



(l.) **Track Repair near Bainbridge**
 Ken Fyfe's excavator is beside the repaired track. The machine simplified the job immensely. The 'Hi-railer' and the 'A-6' speeder transported the crew and the excavator on its rail car out to the site.
 (l. to r.) Soup Campbell, Harold Carlson, Ken Fyfe, Don Wigen.

(below left) **Ready to spike... or not**
 (l. to r.) D. Wigen, Mr. X, Pete Geddes

(below) **The Flag Lady at work**
 Sally Anderson (aka "The Flag Lady"), in one of her many costumes, is ready for a Cruise ship excursion to pass.



Photos:
D. Hooper



(below) **Maintenance of Way**
"Pete, go mow the lawn"
 Pete Geddes mowing the track between Compton Road and Kitsuksis Road under the watchful eye of Track Foreman Rob Gair.

(below right) **The 'Lobster'**
 Don Wigen on the "Lobster", This machine worked between the Station and Mile 30. The 'Grenon Grass Gobbler' and the Fyfe Mower cleaned from there to Coombs.



FRANKLIN RIVER LOGGING 80TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT

On July 26, the 80th anniversary of the start of logging at Franklin River was celebrated, with activities at the Station, on the railroad and at the McLean Mill. Don Watt, Fred Boyko and Tim Woodland brought photo and memorabilia displays to the McLean Mill. Hundreds of former employees took the train (sponsored by Western Forest Products and Island Timberlands) or drove to the Mill to renew acquaintances, gather around the displays and exchange memories.

The big speeder offered rides from the Station along the waterfront all day long.

The "JJ Logging" crew did two shows that Saturday, under the critical eyes of old loggers, many of whom stayed to swap stories with Jack James.

'Probyn Log' was also a sponsor of this event.

"CL&R" crew speeder waits at the Station



(right) **Reunion**
Dave Turner and Karl Breidenbach visiting with Jack James after the Logging Show.



Photos:
D. Hooper

Fred Boyko with photo display

Photos: D. Hooper

RESTORATION OF 1951 'HAYES' in 2014

A crew, led by Vic Laughlin, restored the 1951 chain-drive flatdeck, built by "Hayes Trucks" to haul a 'D-6" cat for B.C. Pulp & Paper at their mill at Woodfibre, in Howe Sound. The I.H.S. collected the truck from the BC Transportation Museum when it closed in 1992. Now, 22 years later, it has finally been restored. Tracy Golden kindly painted the "AVM" logo on the door, as a finishing touch.



(above) **BEFORE**

(right) ATHS members checking progress.

(far right) **AFTER**
[See photo p. 10]

Some minimal restoration was begun in Cloverdale but most work remained to be done: new electrical harness to be made, doors to be re-fitted, window-winder mechanism repaired, windshield replaced; running boards fabricated, deck re-built; chains re-aligned, etc. Restoration was completed in time for the 2014 Truck Show at the IHC. A 'Cat' "Twenty" will be set on the deck, when the truck is "on show".



IN MEMORIAM—Dave Tranfield (Feb. 16, 1938 – Sept. 12, 2014)

All members of the I.H.S. were saddened to receive the news that Dave Tranfield passed away yesterday.. Dave was a long time Port Alberni resident. He was a certified Welder, a fisherman, hunter and last but not least, a passionate supporter of the I.H.S. in it's efforts to acquire, restore and operate heavy industrial artifacts associated with the Pacific Northwest forest industry. Up

year ago, Dave Manager of the [Old Arena]. ration projects on his watch. ly with the Mu- and document curacy of the Collection. He age Centre parade exhibits, insurance mat-Event celebra-He loved to Santa Runs as teer. Dave was ly man and all are saddened Very special



“Dave’s Crew” at the Heritage Center. Almost every working day for a decade, Dave could be found in their presence. He enjoyed the constant banter, camaraderie and pleasure associated with volunteer work in a heavy industrial setting.

“Until we meet again, rest in peace, Dave”

until about one was the Volunteer Heritage Center Many fine resto- were completed He worked close- museum to ensure the historical ac- present Industrial organized Herit- tours, signage, budgets, ters and Special tions (Christmas). work the APR a Safety Volun- a cheerful, friend- of us at the I.H.S. by his passing. condolences from

Gary Murton
President, Industrial Heritage Society
September 13, 2014

The Industrial Heritage Society held a Memorial Reception in honour of Dave at the Industrial Heritage Center on October 9, 2014.



Dave was the driver of the 1947 McLeans' "Hayes" that day.



At the July 1st Parade

OLD-TIME STEAM LOGGING DEMONSTRATIONS—McLean Mill

The “JJ Logging” crew did 30 shows for the public in 2014, the last one on October 2. Highlights were demonstrations for the Franklin River reunion, for a group of international Forestry students, for a tour of Swedish woodlot owners and a session for the ADSS Forestry class.



Art Thompson (l.), who donated the spar tree, with **Jack James**. Joan Thompson is with Donna James (right). Art worked for McLeans in the 1930’s.



At the “Washington Iron Works” Coffee Bar Barista **Ken Fyfe** (donkey doctor, poet, etc.) serves up a cup of ‘Donkey Coffee’ to another happy customer.

After having to re-tube the steam donkey boiler, move the operation 200 feet due to the Kitsuksis Creek relocation, having to raise and rig the spar tree again, and hang the heel boom, [See June ‘News’] there remained a lot of other tasks to do to make the site operational, safe and accessible for the public. And all this with the Relocation Project continuing around the site all summer.

Tony Super-vised the construction of a new Rigging



The new Rigging Shed

Shed to store equipment. A Fire Protection system had to be rebuilt to allow us to operate during the hot, dry summer. The seating area had to be levelled and groomed. The ongoing construction made this challenging but the crew acknowledges the help and co-operation of Brad Berry and Doug Poole.



(above) ADSS Forestry students on crosscut saw

(below) Tony spiking a guy line to stump



(left above) Ted Maurice, Bob Dingsdale & Tony Super test the new porch.

(left) **Choker girl & the Punk** Kate Thomas (l.), J.J. and Emma who worked all summer on site.



"50 Years Logging at Franklin River" —Jack Bell

—reminiscences of Jack Bell of early days at Franklin River logging camps, collected by Merv Johnson in 1996, during a visit to Vancouver Island. Merv is Associate Editor of the logging heritage magazine, "Timber Times", published in Portland, Oregon. He works to keep alive the memories of old-time logging in the Pacific Northwest. The magazine has graciously permitted us to reprint the story. [Ed]

"Bloedel Stewart & Welch started to log at Franklin River in October of 1934, with two cold-deckers and a steam trackside and one locomotive.

The logging equipment and locomotive came from the Menzies Bay operations by tug boat and scow around the bottom end of Vancouver Island and up the Alberni Inlet to Camp "A" at the mouth of the Franklin River. The track-side machine was an 11 x 13 "Willamette" steam donkey unit.



Photo courtesy AVM— PN17877

Franklin River Camp "A" at the mouth of Franklin River

Railroad tracks to Log Dump and to the Dock visible at the left.

(Below) **Bunkhouses** and a boxcar on the tracks through the Camp

Buildings were built on skids and designed to fit on a skeleton car for moving to a new site. They were never thought of as 'permanent' structures. [Ed.]

The cold deck machines were a "Tacoma" 9 x 11 steam donkey and a 200 hp. "Clyde" gas donkey. This logging started on Branch One and was limited to a small scale until the construction crew could complete the drilling and blasting of the railroad grade through the Franklin River Canyon. The locomotive was a 70-ton "Shay" called the "9-Spot". After the steel rails were laid through the rock cut, more equipment was brought in from Menzies Bay and Great Central Lake operations, consisting of two locomotives, two steam trackside and three more cold-deckers.

July 1935, the first steam steel tower 'Lidgerwood Skidder' was purchased from Simpson Bros. Logging Co. in Washington, USA. This machine weighed 260 tons and took two locomotives to move it from tide water up to the woods.

Roy Olson was transferred from Menzies Bay to Franklin River as Superintendent. In 1945, he was fatally injured when he fell off a bridge. Harold Brownson came from Great Central Lake as General Foreman at the same time.

In the spring of 1936, Camp "A" was divided, with the largest portion of the buildings moved seven miles up into the woods on the banks of Corrigan Creek and called

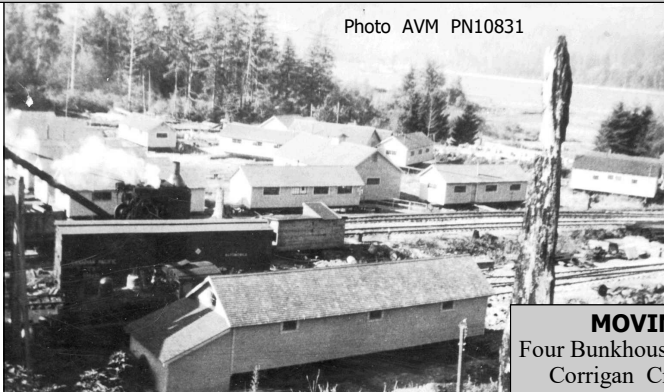


Photo AVM PN10831

MOVING DAY to Camp "B"

Four Bunkhouses from Camp "A" en route to Corrigan Creek behind a steam loci.

Camp "B" The Company then built seven family houses at Camp "B" and three at Camp "A".

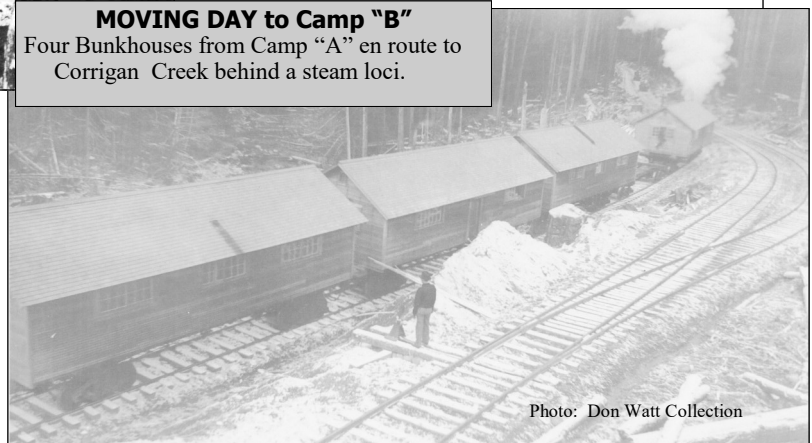


Photo: Don Watt Collection

50 Years Logging... (cont.)

An interesting event happened during the camp move. One of the bunkhouses fell off the flat car while being moved and landed on its roof, causing considerable damage. It was salvaged and made into the first school to accommodate the children of the families as they moved into the family houses. There were only six children old enough to go to school and the School Act said there had to be a minimum of seven, so Roy Olson entered the name of the bed maker, Leo DeFrame, as a pupil and permission was granted by the Department of Education to start the school in September 1937.

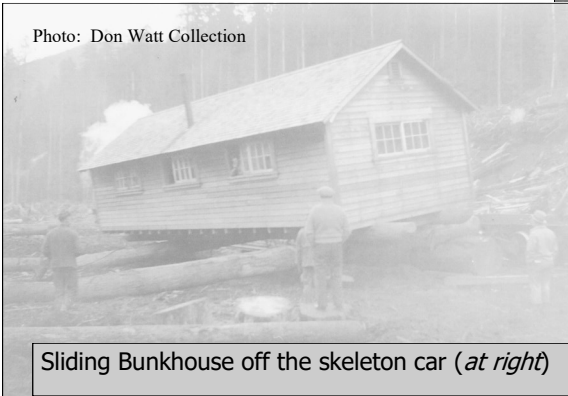
Camp "B" stayed at Corrigan Creek until 1940 and then was moved along the old Canadian

Photo: Don Watt Collection



Three Bunkhouses being 'spotted' by the loci before unloading. Note the logs at right angles, ready to be used to slide buildings into place. A 'Cat' is ready to the left, to pull the bunkhouse off the skeleton car.

Photo: Don Watt Collection



Sliding Bunkhouse off the skeleton car (*at right*)

Northern Railroad grade, which the Company purchased, out to Parsons Creek. [From]there the camp was moved to it's present location [Coleman Creek] and more accommodations were added until there were 75 families and 550 men in the bunkhouses, making it one of the largest logging camps on the Pacific Coast.

In 1955 Camp "B" was converted to truck logging from railroad as it became more diffi-

cult to ascend the steep mountain-sides [all of the valleys having been logged out by then].

Incidentally, there was a third camp called Camp "C", consisting of accommodations built on railcars. This was a road construction camp and moved ahead of the logging activities. This camp was done away with in 1939 and the buildings integrated with Camp "B". Camp "A" remained as headquarters for the Boom and Shop crews until the road from Port Alberni to Camp "B" was completed in 1954, when the Shop crew was moved to Camp "B" and the Boom crew moved to Port Alberni and commuted by bus."

First Camp "B"
Corrigan Creek
1935-1940

Photo: AVM PN 13567



Some Franklin River Firsts

- Power saws first used in 1936. ("Stihl" saws from Germany; unobtainable after 1939, due to WW II.)
- Hard hats introduced by Charlie Wiseman, Safety Director, in 1942.
- First Cat logging in the Alberni Valley started at China Creek in 1946.
- First "Davis Rafts" made in the Alberni Valley in 1935 at Camp "A". Used to transport logs to 'Bloedel-Donovan Mill at Bellingham Bay, USA.

INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE MEMBERS at WORK

I.H.S. members had a busy summer. With Jake Heid taking the lead, the Antique Truck and Rail display in the Station Truck Bays was open 2-3 days a week. More than 1000 people visited the display. The 'Model Railway Room' is now an attraction at the Station as well.

The "Railroad Mack", the "Farquhar" steam traction engine, the "Reid" oilfield pumping engine and the Small Engines display went "on the road" often during the summer to publicize Industrial Heritage and Port Alberni. Some events attended were the "Show 'n Shine' at Westwind Pub, the Alberni Co-op "Members' Day", "VIEX" at Nanaimo, the Courtenay Fair and the Alberni Fall Fair. Thanks to Les Stevens, Russ McCoy, Vic Laughlin and Bob Pfannenschmidt. Also to Hank and Cliff, who drove hundreds of miles. "Old Bertha" got a real workout!

Our truckers took part in the two local Parades, the AHS Truck Show (Duncan Forest Museum) and hosted our own 'Antique Truck Show' in August.

Station Truck Bays Display
1928 Chev Fire Truck



RR "Mack" at Co-op 'Members' Day'



(left) **Waiting for the Parade**
Tom Maher & Kate on 1944 "International"
— "Don Rowe Truck"



D. Taberner & grandson—Model Railway Room



Photos: D. Hooper

"Farquhar" dominates at VIEX Nanaimo



(right) **'Euclid' at Work**
Tony Super directs as Cliff West dumps a load of fill as a base for the new Rigging Shed. The "Euc" was a real workhorse all summer at the McLean Mill.



EDITOR'S NOTES:

Over the past season, the Industrial Heritage Society has received much support from various local businesses and organizations. Here, we recognize the generosity of Western Forest Products, Island Timberlands and Probyn Log, for making possible the Franklin River 80th Anniversary Event. "Thank You" to Coastal Community Credit Union, Alberni District Co-op and Kingsley Trucking for supporting the Antique Truck Show. Also, a big acknowledgement that the Government of BC, through a 'Community Gaming Grant', helps to fund our restoration projects and display programme.

—D. Hooper, Editor

MEMBERSHIP IN THE W.V.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
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ANTIQUE TRUCK SHOW August 30-31, 2014

For the eighth time, the I.H.S. hosted an Antique Truck Show—this time at the Industrial Heritage Centre in Port Alberni. There were 58 vehicles on display and more than 600 visitors checked out the site. Many I.H.S. members pitched in to make the event a success. Coastal Community Credit Union sponsored the Show and several staff members helped out. The Children’s Activity table, manned by Olivia Simon, Cathy Bagley and Serena was quite popular with the younger set, as was the Trucker Sandbox. Lou Desbiens and friends’ radio-controlled models demonstrations, sponsored by the Alberni Co-op, were a great success once again.

“Mack Row”

The 1923 “Mack AC” chain-drive (r.) from “Nanaimo Mack” received a lot of attention, next to two 1955 log trucks—a ‘B-60’ model and a “B-61”.

(below) 1951 “Hayes” chain-drive (r.) attends its first Truck Show since restoration by Vic Laughlin.

(below r.) “Kenworth” Mini-Clone? Lou Desbiens’ R/C model pays a visit to Gordie Isaacson’s 1972 “Kenworth” LW924 logger.



AFTER THE SHOW
1918 ‘Maxwell’ & 1949 “Diamond T”
loaded for return to Duncan BCFDC.

Burger Department
F. Bradley, G. & A. Blake (n/a)
fed the multitudes at the Show

