

SPOT NEWS

WESTERN VANCOUVER ISLAND INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE SOCIETY

Issue 63



October 2016

"COASTAL HERITAGE " ART SHOW

Nov. 17-19, 2016 at the Train Station
-featuring Doug Harrison, with Michael Dean.
Opening: 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 17



PORT ALBERNI TRAIN STATION—1916

Coastal Heritage artist Doug Harrison recently painted this scene depicting a train about to depart with Alberni volunteers, heading off to fight in the 'Great War'.

By Permission of Doug Harrison

ALBERNI PACIFIC RAILWAY

Another summer season has come to an end. There are two more steam runs scheduled in October before the APR goes into winter maintenance mode.

From May to the end of September, the "No. 7" made 78 runs to the McLean Mill, including five Cruise ship and one other charters. The MBL "11" made 7 runs and the "CL&R" Crew speeder made 9 runs, including several 'waterfront excursions'. The Scheduler was busy rounding up crew for all this activity. "No. 7" missed only one run, due to burner problems, which is not bad for an 86-year old locomotive.

The biggest runs were for "National Forests Day", September 21, when more than 320 Grade Five students rode the train to activities there.

There has been the new personnel being trained both Conductors and Engine is our newest Fireman. Hobson are in training. Conductor's Certificate, as Stark is in training. Rod locomotive Engineer papers Steam Engineer's Certification on the "112" - 1923 "Baldwin"



tember 21, when more than 320 Grade Five students rode the train to activities there. healthy situation of to crew the trains—Crew. Casey Greggain Kate Thomas and Mike Frank Holm got his did Bill Walker. Steven Gledhill got his Diesel and Ted Mollet, his cate. Work continues



(top r.) J. Land & T. Mollet in cab of "MBL No. 11".
(above) R. Hurst in "No. 7"

(r.) Kate Thomas—Trainee
(Below) Barry Miller - non-Trainee



This past season, the APR ran a "Wednesday Train" - the MBL "No. 11" one week; the "Comox Logging & Railway" Crew Speeder the next. Here, "No. 11" is about to leave for the McLean Mill, with John Land and Ted Mollet in the cab and Frank Holm as Conductor.
Photos: D. Hooper
(Below) "CL&R" crew Speeder picking up passengers.



Rollie Hurst presents certificates to Casey (left) and to Frank (right).

Photo: T. Mollet



190 years of Truck-driving—Five Lives

This is a continuation of the article from the last "Spot News". It will be continued in the next edition as this article only involves two of the five drivers interviewed. Editor

Vic Laughlin

"Trucks hum now; they don't growl." This was Vic Laughlin's response when asked about how trucks have changed during his working life.

Vic spent a lifetime working with trucks, starting with a "Mack" B-30 gravel truck. His favourite truck? - the "Pacific" P-9 highway truck that he bought in 1974. He bought it with a rock box but soon after, converted it to a logging truck and ran it like that for the next 23 years. He said that Cliff Coulson and John Casanave advised him to get into log-hauling and he observed that it turned out to be good advice.

One of his first jobs with the "Pacific" was salvaging logs off Long Beach after a barge flipped and lost its load off the West Coast of the Island. John Casanave put a log loader on the Beach and they worked three weeks steady to salvage the wood, hauling it to the pulp mill in Port Alberni.

"We (Vic and Mac Macdonald) double-shifted the "P-9" and never shut the engine off, except to service it, for the length of the 3 week job. That contract paid for a big chunk of my new truck!" Then, he took it to the Nimpkish Valley on Northern Vancouver Island to become a contract hauler for "CANFOR".

Vic changed the "Pacific's" engine three times and shortened/lengthened the frame three times during that period. He said that he had less down-time with that truck than with any of his newer trucks.

Trucker and Movie Star

As mentioned in the last "Spot News", Vic has a soft spot for "Big Red" - the 1945 "Hayes" bought new by the "R.B. McLean Lumber Co." It was one of Vic's highlights when the producer of the movie "Snow Falling on Cedars" asked for this vintage truck in the early 1990s. The movie was shot in Greenwood, in the southern Interior, and was set in the 1940s.



"P-9" loaded for EXPO '86 Fair
(below left)
"Red" hauling logs in Greenwood.

"Red" was lowbedded over the mountains and Vic drove the truck in the movie. He also ended up as the Mechanic that kept the other old machines going during the filming.

Unlike Vic, Alex Spencer said that he was never tempted to set up a trucking business of his own, stating that he had seen too many truckers lose their shirts in downturns or a run of bad luck and breakdowns.

Alex' favourite truck was the 1954 "Hayes" HD that he cross-shifted with brother Ed for three years at Sproat Lake Logging Division. Ed had the day shift; Alex drove afternoons.

Some trucking stories – Ed Spencer

Before he got married, Ed had worked for several different companies, at many different sites, all over Vancouver Island. He picked up a lot of valuable experience and learned many different "tricks of the trade".

On one job in Comox, Ed learned that a small crew, with minimum equipment, could still produce a lot of logs. It was a 2-3 week job, working for "Tiny" Seymour. There was Cliff Coulson with a 'Cat'; Tiny, a chokerman and Ed (the driver) & nice old growth. Ed was to haul the logs to the 'dump' on Comox Harbour, in front of the Indian Reserve. (cont'd. on P. 4)

There was no Log loader or 'gin pole'. At the 'Dump', there was no machine or "A-frame" (or gin pole) for dumping the logs. It was all "Do it yourself."

For loading, Cliff built a ramp for pushing the logs up onto the truck. At the Dump, the road was dug out deeper on the water side so that the truck was tilted and the logs would roll off on their own. Ed noted that he was "Glad that it did not rain at the time!" But, this small crew produced a lot of wood.

Another related story happened when Ed was hauling logs for "Milligan Brothers", from Powder Point on Nanoose Bay. It was a 'Cat show' and he was loaded at a 'gin pole', hauling eight loads a day. After making several runs, Ed noticed that there was a fellow following him back and forth, but at a discrete distance. Ed finally pulled over, got out and asked the man, "Any problem?" He answered, "No. But you're moving twice as much wood as the previous driver and I am trying to figure it out."

Ed worked for or with the Milligans – a well-known West Coast logging family – on several different occasions. He was hauling poles for Milligans out of a "BS&W" cutblock, before the main logging was to take place. They were using horses to skid the poles out to the landing. "BS&W" had already gone to truck logging by this time (late 1940s), with "S&S Trucking". The trucks were picking logs up off the right-of-way of the road into the new cut block. It was very muddy, very "greasy" and trucks were always getting stuck.

Joe got a great sense of satisfaction.... and "haw-haw"... as he hooked his horse teams onto the "Macks" to get them moving again!

In 1952, Ed got married. He figured that it was a good idea if he could find a steady job in the Alberni Valley. He started as bottom driver for "BS&W" at Sproat Lake. He was given a "Sterling" chain-drive truck, with 12-foot bunks. He was issued rubber gauntlets that reached to his armpits – for servicing the chains and sprockets. With 13-foot bunks, the truck became side-heavy, affecting the handling. The chains had a tendency to 'walk off' on a heavy pull. There were no spare trucks in Camp at the time. One day, the clutch went on his truck but Ed did not want to go back to Camp or he would be put on "clean-up" for the rest of the day. So, he drove all day with no clutch. "Good driving practice," was all he said.

..... *To be continued.....*

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EDITOR'S NOTES

We wish to acknowledge the (belated) support of the Government of British Columbia, via a Community Gaming Grant, for many of our projects, ongoing work and events. The Grants have permitted us to restore five trucks, to operate our four 'work' vehicles and rail maintenance equipment, to paint the passenger coaches and to have signage for our displays.

We acknowledge the support of the City of Port Alberni and the AV Museum and personnel and the support of local businesses and individuals, as well as others outside the Valley. A special "Thank you" to "Kingsley Trucking" for being the major Sponsor of the "Antique Truck & Machinery Show" and helping in other ways this year. "Thanks", too, to the "Co-op" and to "Coastal Community Credit Union" for supporting the Show and other endeavours, and to Brad Berry for making it possible for us to get the "Hayes" chain-drive to the "Woodfibre Reunion". Do not forget the good folk who sponsor the pages of this Newsletter!

2017 CALENDARS FOR SALE

There are "Trucks in Alberni" calendars available from the Editor, as well as an "Old-time Logging" edition @ \$15. (\$20 if mailed in Canada.)

An "Industrial Heritage Calendar" (includes "Alberni Pacific Railway" scenes) will be available by late November.

"STOCKING STUFFER"?

T-shirt with 1944 "International" 6 x 6 — only \$10



"J.J. LOGGING" CREW



The Logging Crew did 28 demonstrations at the Steam Donkey/Spar Tree site at the McLean Mill this year. The biggest day was on September 21, when they did four shows for more than 300 Grade Five children. It was "National Forests Day".

Another highlight was the visit of the Swedish "Family Woodlot Owners". This was the third visit by this group. The organizer plans to organize a visit by the "Swedish Forest History Association" next season.

We had three generations of the Grieder family on the Crew this year—Grandfather Art, son Cameron and grandson Dylan. Dylan was broken in as the "Whistle Punk" (*photo below left*) and became quite proficient with the signals.

Logging Crew on "National Forests Day"
(l. to r.) Dylan Grieder, Bert Simpson, Ron Greene, Jack James (seated), Joe Netzer, Art Grieder, Tony Super, Eric Netzer, Keith Young, Ted Maurice (seated).
(Missing - Alex Whipp)



"Steam Donkey Coffee" (*below*)
Engineer-Barista, Ken Fyfe supervises the brew while Art Grieder keeps his distance.



National Forests Day
All of the Grade Five in SD#70 came to take part in the events.

Swedes photograph Jack James & Sven Josefson



Page sponsored by "Azalea Florist" -

FAIRS and EXHIBITIONS



“I.H.S. CORNER”
at the AV Fall Fair.
[Inset: Mike Hobson makes
steam with the 1917
“Farquhar” engine.]



(r.) Courtenay Fair
The “Farquhar”- with
steam drag saw, 1938
“Mack” and the “Reid”
oilfield pumping engine
were on display.



Extra Steam at the Mill
Mike and Les have connect-
ed the steam from the
‘Farquhar’ to power the
1923 “Keystone Steam Drill-
er”.
Photos: D. Hooper

Recent restorations of steam machinery were a featured display at events attended and organized by members of the I.H.S. this season. As well as the Courtenay Fair, the “Farquhar” and steam Drag saw were also a big draw at the “VIEX” in Nanaimo.

Mike Hobson & Les Stevens spent the summer at McLean Mill, doing daily steam demos and restoring machinery to operation in the Millwright’s Shop, beside the Jack Ladder.
(See more photos P. 8)

MEMBERS AT WORK

Ten years ago, the IHS 'Trucking Division' had just moved into the old Municipal Arena after the huge work of converting the interior from hockey rink, with boards, glass and bleachers, into the present Workshop and Display facility that is the envy of vintage vehicle clubs everywhere.

In the decade since, a lot has happened at the "Industrial Heritage Centre". As well as continuing maintenance on the vehicles in the "Industrial Collection" of the AV Museum, at least ten vintage trucks have been rebuilt and several more restored. Other vintage machines have been 'resuscitated', including the unique 1917 "Farquhar" steam traction engine, the 1928 'Buda' gas locomotive, the 1929 steam donkey – all three from the City's "McLean Mill Collection" - as well as a 1923 "Keystone" steam driller and a 1940's-era logging Crew Speeder.

I.H.S. volunteers, with an amazing range of skills and experience, have worked to achieve all this. One such volunteer is **John Reeves**, who lent his talents to many of these projects, until health issues curtailed his activities.

Amongst his many talents, John is known as a wood worker. In his Manitoba youth, he started out as a Cabinet Maker. He used these skills during the restoration of the "Comox Logging" crew speeder and even more, when he led the job of building the wooden 'C-cab' for the 1918 "White" truck. He also handled the wood framing for the cab and door of the 1932 "Hayes-Anderson" log truck.

Photos: D. Hooper



(above) John & Tony Super work on assembling the frame of the 'C-cab'

(below) The "CL&R" Crew Speeder
Gordon Blake working with John on the interior of the Speeder.



John in the "C-cab" of the **1918 "White"**

(Below) Cab & door of the 1932 'Hayes-Anderson'

(Below middle) John made a new 'Springboard' for Jack James at the Old-time logging demonstration.



I.H.S. "HERITAGE CUSTODIANS" AT WORK



Work proceeds on the 'Strathcona' Parlour Car. (left) Experimentation continues on best methods of removing 'curdled' varnish from the more delicate woodwork.

Tom Maher collected some of the light fixtures from the AV Museum, including an ornate kerosene lamp holder [Inset Photo] to see about re-mounting.

As well as restoration and maintenance, display is a part of custodianship, so that the public can actually see parts of the community's heritage. This is why I.H.S. members maintain displays at the Train Station "Truck Bays" in the summer, do the Steam Logging Demonstrations, organize Steam and Truck Shows and attend events out of town... and operate the Steam Train on the "Alberni Pacific Railway"!



(left) Dan Jones prepares Omer Pelletier's 1957 "Hayes" for the Truck Show (above) Mike Hobson adjusts the mechanism on the Steam driller.

(below) Jan Jansma - host at the "Truck Bays" display.

(below right) "Ottawa" gas drag saw - Donor Pat Hunter (r.) with operator, Pete Geddes at the "Antique Truck and Machinery Show."



MEMBERS at WORK

A crew of volunteers have been salvaging rail from the "Catalyst Paper" former Railyard. The Company has kindly allowed the I.H.S. this materiel so, Ken Fyfe and his excavator (*below*) picked up the rail and carried it to the the "Patrick" articulated crane, beside the fence. The "Patrick" lifted the rails over the fence, onto the waiting flatcar. The "MBL No. 11" diesel—which used to work in the Yard at the Pa-permill—was used to move the railcar.



Randy Catto has completed the "Logging Diorama" at the Industrial Heritage Centre. Hank Bakken donated his logging machine models and Randy, with other members, has built a display at the East end of the Centre. The collection of old-time logging paintings by Andrew Kiss make a good backdrop to the display.



Logging Diorama under construction

Hank Bakken (l.) and Randy Catto with model "Butler Bros." truck and "Madill" Grapple Yarder, built by Hank.

(*below*)

Model "Challenger" truck

Hank has almost completed this unique project, which was begun by Metalwork students at Alberni District Secondary.

Ken Rutherford—"Manager"

Ken stepped in to manage the McLean Mill and the APR when Neil Malbon was recovering from kidney transplant surgery this summer.



ANTIQUE TRUCKS & MACHINERY SHOW



(r.) Artist Michael Dean talking with John Casanave.

(below)

A fine row of tired iron

Photos: D. Hooper



(r.) Hank Bakken & logging models.

September 3-4, the I.H.S. hosted their 9th 'Antique Truck & Machinery Show' at the Industrial Heritage Centre and surrounding lots.

There were 56 vehicles and machines on display, with a lot of the machinery in operation from time to time. Les and Mike's 'Steam Corner', with 'Farquhar', stationary engine, drag saw and Ken Fyfe's big Steam Driller, was a popular attraction.

The new diorama of logging models was another big draw, especially on Saturday, when Hank Bakken came to put the models to work. The 'Strathcona' restoration was another attraction, with Tom Maher and Jan Jansma hosting the visitors. Lou Desbiens always had interested viewers at his radio-controlled models display.

Thanks to our major sponsor, 'Kingsley Trucking', and also to Alberni District Co-op and Coastal Community Credit Union.



"Mayor's Choice" plaque went to Mike Hobson



"Steam Corner" with Les supervising

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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